Doctor of Juridical Science (S.J.D.)

كليّة السياسات العامة
College of Public Policy
جامعة حمد بن خليفة
HAMAD BIN KHALIFA UNIVERSITY

Doctor of Juridical Science (S.J.D.)

The Doctor of Juridical Science (S.J.D.) is the College of Law's most advanced law degree. The program is one of the first research-intensive doctorate degrees in the MENA region and one of the few of its kind outside the United States. Dedicated to scholarship and teaching, the program aspires to create a vibrant community of legal scholars who will assume teaching and research positions in universities and government positions at institutions in Qatar, the MENA region, and beyond. The S.J.D. degree is designed to facilitate the relationship with the real world through world-class, innovative seminars and courses that prepare students to apply legal knowledge in multiple convergent legal systems. Research production in the S.J.D. program, as well as its interdisciplinary nature, allows for creative and problem-based approaches that can have societal or policy impact.

The main strengths of the S.J.D. program are its flexibility to accommodate students wishing to apply interdisciplinary research in a variety of areas, its focus on high-quality academic research, and its integration with all other existing College of Law degree programs.

Program Focus

The program emphasizes research methodology and legal ethics in the context of a globalized world. The S.J.D. degree enables students to engage in rigorous, analytical research, incorporating interdisciplinary and comparative approaches to address fundamental and contemporary legal issues.

Graduates of this program will be equipped to:

- Master theoretical and methodological aspects of law and legal scholarship.
- Demonstrate the ability to independently conduct original research and formulate reasoned arguments on their topic and related legal issues.
- Develop a dissertation of publishable quality that makes a substantial and original contribution to legal scholarship.
- Demonstrate effective communication skills, as well as the ability to teach and explain the law.
- Demonstrate the ability to independently choose ethical courses of action in legal research and practice.

Curriculum

The S.J.D. should be completed in 3.5 years after commencement. In the first year, candidates have a reduced course load to enable them to develop the necessary skills and competencies to undertake doctoral research. Candidates are required to take a course on Advanced Research Methods in Law and a course on Advanced Global Legal Ethics. They may also be required to take additional courses in research methods.

S.J.D. candidates also participate in the S.J.D. Colloquium, which provides them with fundamental knowledge of the practical and professional aspects of doctoral studies.

In addition to receiving feedback on their doctoral research, students engage in meaningful and constructive scholarly exchanges about publishing, grant writing, and conference presentations, as well as career paths in academia and private, public, and international spheres.

Dissertation

Students are required to complete a dissertation that makes a substantial and original contribution to legal scholarship.

Publications

Publication of S.J.D. candidates' work is a graduation requirement.

Residence

The minimum residence requirement for the S.J.D. program is four semesters of full-time supervised research at the College of Law.

Admission and Application Requirements

J.D. or LL.M. degree, preferably from HBKU's College of Law. Exceptional candidates from other universities may also be considered. Candidates with an LL.B. degree from a recognized university require the LL.M. degree, preferably from the College of Law or, in exceptional cases, from a recognized university. Candidates should have at least a 3.0 GPA (out of 4) in their previous law degree, with a strong preference for candidates with a 3.3 GPA (out of 4).

Unless exempt, applicants are required to submit an IELTS score of 6.5 or a TOEFL score of 79 to demonstrate their proficiency in English. Please visit our website admissions.hbku.edu.qa for more details on the language proficiency requirement and the process to seek exemption, where this is an option.

Application requirements

A completed online application form:
admissions.hbku.edu.qa

Academic transcripts
Official electronic copies of transcripts should be submitted as part of the online application. Final transcripts and graduation statements are required for all previous university studies. All transcripts submitted should include an explanation of the grading system. For those who have not completed their current studies, transcripts must include results from the last semester of coursework completed. An official translation must accompany transcripts in languages other than English or Arabic. Applicants who are admitted to the program based on copies of or incomplete transcripts will be required to provide original transcripts upon enrollment to register for courses.

Standardized test results
Official copies (where required) must be sent directly to HBKU. Please refer to the institutional codes below:

- TOEFL: 4981
- IELTS: No code required. Students should ask the IELTS center where they tested to send the IELTS TRF to Hamad Bin Khalifa University.

Applicants should also submit copies of their test scores with the online application.

Letters of recommendation
Two letters of recommendation from previous or current professors, employers, or other individuals familiar with the applicant's qualifications.

Personal statement of interest
The personal statement introduces the applicant to the Admissions Committee. Topics that may be discussed include personal or professional goals and personal, academic, or career history.

The Committee looks beyond test scores and grade point averages in making selection decisions. The personal statement gives the Committee a means to consider a variety of factors in assessing applicants.

Research proposal
Along with their application, S.J.D. applicants are required to submit a research proposal of approximately 1,000 words that illustrates their readiness to explore a particular research question.

Applicants are encouraged to contact prospective supervisors at the College of Law to discuss their research proposals.

Resume/Curriculum vitae
Applicants should submit a copy of their current resume or curriculum vitae as part of the online application.

Identification document
All applicants should submit an electronic copy of their passport as part of the online application. Nationals and residents of Qatar should also submit their valid Qatari ID.

Admission inquiries

admissions.cl@hbku.edu.qa