

PROTESTANT INSTITUTE OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES (PIASS)



ADMISSION AND REGISTRATION POLICY

Admission and registration policy, adapted with improvements by the Senate 2024

1. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF PROTESTANT INSTITUTE OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

The institution which later on became the Protestant Institute of Arts and Social Sciences was founded in 1970 by mainline protestant churches that were operating in Rwanda. The institution was then called “Ecole de Theologie de Butare: ETB” (Butare School of Theology). In 1990, it was upgraded into Faculty of Protestant Theology of Butare (FTPB) which got official accreditation in 1993 by the convention No 1552 of 09 December 1993. In the same year, the convention No 1554/09.2/01/02 acknowledged the degrees delivered by the FTPB.

In the aftermath of 1994 genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda, the founders of the institution, in the collaboration with the FTPB national and international partners deployed a lot of efforts to help FTPB resume its activities in such a way that specific needs of a recovering society could be met. In that perspective, a so-called Special Program was launched in 1995 and lasted till 2001: three successive intakes of students have been trained over two years and educated in contextual and practical theological training through those kinds of crash courses. The graduates of the Special program were awarded with Diploma in Protestant Theology. As of 1999, the FTPB returned to the ordinary four years’ program of Hon. Bachelor’s degree in Protestant Theology.

In 2009, the FTPB grew up and was supplemented by two new Faculties: The Faculty of Education (FED) and the Faculty of Development Studies (FDS) within the new framework of “Institut Protestant des Sciences Humaines de Butare (IPSHB)”. Those two new fields have been chosen based on the experiences and expertise acquired by Protestant Churches in Rwanda. In 2010, the French name was changed to Protestant Institute of Arts and Social Sciences (PIASS). The new Institution (PIASS) has been respectively accredited by the Ministerial Order no 09/11 of November 2009 licensing “Institut Protestant des Sciences Humaines de Butare (IPSHB)” and the ministerial order n°29 of 19/07/2010 recognizing the Institute under the new name of Protestant Institute of Arts and Social Sciences (PIASS).

1.1. PIASS Philosophy

PIASS holds the view that faith and science are indispensable tools for any society to survive and harness moral obligation of people to creatively improve the socio-economic environment in which they can survive and realize their potential. This can only be achieved through a well-conceptualized educational and scientific package through which everyone must rightfully experience and acquire the tools to facilitate this philosophy.

1.2. PIASS's Statement of Faith

PIASS affirms the following as fundamental to Christian belief, practice, and behavior.

1. The Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, as the written Word originally given by God through revelation to humans, are inspired, true, and entirely trustworthy in all that it intends to teach, and have supreme authority in all matters of faith and conduct since they contain all things necessary for salvation.
2. There is ONE GOD, eternally existent in Three Persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
3. God is the Creator and Sustainer of the world and of life thanks to His universal sovereignty over all that He has made in heaven and on earth.
4. Our Lord Jesus Christ, incarnated God, was conceived through the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary, true God, and a true man without sin. His bodily resurrection, His ascension, His present mediatorial work, and His personal return in Power and Glory to judge the living and the dead remain a firm source of our hope for the present and life to come.
5. The Holy Spirit, one of the persons of the Trinity, witnesses to Christ, regenerates, and sanctifies us. His indwelling enables us to witness and serve the Triune God and humankind through different spiritual gifts and talents.
6. Man and woman were created by God in His image, free and responsible to choose good or evil. By sin, human beings were corrupted in their nature and were separated from their Creator.

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7. Salvation for humans remains the work of God, accomplished through Jesus Christ's expiatory death and bodily resurrection. In His grace, God justifies the sinner through faith alone.
8. The unity of all those who, through believing and confessing that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and the Saviour of the world, form a community of children of God, the Church, the Body of Christ of which He is the Head.
9. The bodily resurrection of all the dead, the final judgment, and the establishment of the eternal kingdom of Christ.

As a Church-owned institution, PIASS's overall conviction and calling are to build a world in which the love of God for His creation and that we have for one another is visible and lived in concrete experiences. To stand firm in its faith and succeed in its mission, the following commitments and strategies are set as safeguards:

1. PIASS is committed to reading, teaching, and preaching the Holy Scriptures in their plain and canonical sense through an in-depth analysis, and to applying their message.
2. PIASS is committed to promoting Ecumenism within it and among Protestant Churches in Rwanda and beyond as an opportunity and strategy to affirm our Christian witness and fight against separatism, destructive fundamentalism, and any form of extremism.
3. PIASS is engaged in the ministry of reconciliation and search for peace within surrounding communities, in the Rwandan society, and in the Great Lakes sub-region.
4. PIASS is committed to supporting initiatives likely to improve the living conditions of communities.
5. PIASS is committed to supporting the weakest among us and to building healing communities where everyone finds a place.

1.3. PIASS Vision

“To be a reference university, fostering knowledge development and research that is relevant for the society and inspired by Christian ethics and values.”

1.4. PIASS Mission

“To provide Society and Churches with well trained personnel who are inquisitive, solution oriented, committed and equipped with intellectual tools that enable them to meeting specific needs of societies that are moving to a global, modern and pluralistic world.”

1.5. PIASS Moto

Fides et Scientia (Faith and Science): By this moto, PIASS assumes that faith and science are interwoven to ensure the quality of life.

1.6. PIASS Objectives

PIASS as Higher Learning Institution has the following objectives:

- To develop practical and applicable knowledge in social as well as economic development.
- To impart a high-quality teaching enabling creation of employment and that proves relevant to communities is close to reality, helpful for the society at large.
- To contribute to the positive transformation of society using short teaching and training, research, consultancy and projects and respect to ethical dimension.
- To contribute to local and national sustainable development by promoting scientific and technological research as well as research for integrated development.

1.7. Principles and values

Being a Protestant institution of Higher Education, PIASS ethical values are grounded in its statement of faith.

- **Liberation:** As the Gospel of Christ liberates from all human alienations here and now, bearing witness to it cannot go without running social dialogue with the society and serving the poor.
- **Relevance:** Higher education plays a key role in construction and development of a just, equitable and stable society through the training of committed, responsible and professionally competent citizens.
- **Unity in Diversity:** Open and respectful exchange of ideas along with evidence-based documentation is essential to higher education contribution to a pluralistic society.

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- **Effectiveness and efficiency:** Finding out the optimal and cost-effective way to reach objectives, in changing environment and limitation of resources and keeps on being result and solution oriented.
- **Quality Service Delivery:** Training, research, and services to both national and international communities must be qualitative and competitive.
- **Innovation:** Teaching and learning processes are considering changing needs of churches and society and therefore programs are continually assessed and improved accordingly in a spirit of creativity and entrepreneurship at all levels.
- **Responsibility:** Teachers, students and administrative staff, to achieve their job, are expected to make decisions, act upon their choices, delegate and report openly.
- **Solidarity:** Promoting a gender balanced culture and stressing on the needs of disadvantaged groups.
- **Collaboration:** Fostering team spirit and looking for win-win partnerships with other institutions of higher learning.
- **Transparency:** Managing resources of the institution in a rigorous and transparent manner.
- **Good Governance:** Fairness, equity without discrimination, clear delegation and decentralization are adopted at all levels of the institution.
- **Prayerful life:** Prayer as a conversation with God and a means for self-examination can bring about a sense of inner peace, spiritual refreshment, and more commitment to sever God, fellow humans, and the whole creation.
- **Hard work:** The necessity for hard work is not only a way to attain prosperity and wealth for oneself and society, but it also remains a calling to fulfill the mandate given to human beings to take care of creation and fructify it in a sustainable way.
- **Equality and Inclusivity:** All members of the PIASS community are equal. We believe in a fair and respectful manner so that each member of the PIASS community has an equal opportunity to contribute to the University's operations. We promote the safety, security and wellbeing of society and our environment by acting in accordance with the University's equality and diversity policy.

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ACADEMIC PROGRAMMES

PIASS is a growing HLI which aims at development of knowledge and skills in social sciences and other related sciences. It is offering academic programs in the field of Education, Development Studies and Theology so far.

Modular system is used to enable students own taught knowledge and internal as well as external student mobility. The medium of instruction is English.

Bachelor's program completion requires three academic years. However, those who seek diplomas are required to fulfill one year and half as indicated in national qualification framework provided by Higher Education Council (2007).

GENERAL ADMISSION RULES AND REGULATIONS

Art 1. PIASS is open to every person fulfilling the requirements set by PIASS Senate in addition to the National Council for Higher Education of Rwanda in regard to the admission to the university studies in Rwanda.

Art 2. PIASS admits new students in two distinct intakes in a single year. Deadline for application is scheduled three weeks after the beginning of teachings.

Art 3. PIASS provides a wide range of undergraduate programs and Master's program which are essential to the National needs of Rwanda. Individual candidate is free to register in appropriate program on his/her democratic choice provided that entry requirements are fulfilled.

Art 4. Students normally register for an academic year, on either a full-time or part-time basis. Exceptions may include students registered for modules on a credit accumulation basis, students repeating modules, those on exchange visits, students who may have taken an approved interruption of studies (Dead year or Dead semester).

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Art 5. A part-time student has permission to cover the same ground over a longer period and so to take fewer credits in a given academic year

Art 6. To be admitted to lectures or other teaching/learning activities of the institution or to examinations or other assessments, students must be registered on the appropriate programme.

Art 7. To be admitted to the first year of an undergraduate programme it is necessary to have a Rwandan National Examination Certificate with at least two principal passes or a qualification or other evidence of ability to study on the programme applied for considered equivalent. Applicants must also demonstrate sufficient competency in English to study at higher education level (pass entry English examination with 75%). Otherwise he/ she must register for Intensive English Training(120 hours).

Art 8. Students must register individually at Registry Services at the beginning of each academic year and Semester before the beginning of teaching. The academic year has two semesters. The offense to this shall lead to the cancellation of assignments and examination

Art 9. The dates between which students may register shall be advertised by the office of the Registrar one month before the end of the semester. Student may register for a semester not later than one week after the start of that semester.

Art 10. Students requesting entry with credit transferred from another Higher Education Institution must first seek the advice from the Dean of the concerned faculty. The later shall communicate to the office of academic Registrar whether the transfer is possible or not. In case of modules to be validated, the candidate is required to pay required fees for each module or unit. No candidate shall be admitted in level III, IV and V with core modules to validate in previous years (level I&II).

Art 11. To ensure the effective and fair transfer of academic credits for students transferring from other higher learning institutions, an evaluation process will be implemented based on content similarity between the courses or modules completed at the previous institution and those offered at our institution. Specifically, for a module to be eligible for credit transfer, the content covered in the external module must be assessed and found to be at least 80% similar to the corresponding module within our curriculum. This evaluation will take into account factors such as the scope of topics, depth of coverage, learning outcomes, and the overall instructional objectives of the module.

The comparison of content will be carried out by a designated academic review panel, which may include faculty members with expertise in the relevant discipline. In cases where the content similarity falls below the 80% threshold, the module may not be eligible for credit transfer, though the student may have the option to undertake supplementary assessments or enroll in the corresponding module at our institution to fulfill the credit requirement.

Art 12. Late registration may be accepted after a consultation between concerned departments: Service of academic registrar, directorate of quality assurance and faculty. But a late registration fee of five thousand (Rwf 5000) may be applied.

Art 13. A student's registration may be withdrawn at any time during the academic year by the senate through the Vice- Rector Academic on the grounds of a serious omission or false declaration at registration or an absence without permission or justification of more than a month during the academic year.

Art 14. The names under which students are registered will be used on all Institution documents. Any request for change of name must be supported by legal documentation.

Art 15. At registration step every student is given a registration number which will be used on all his/her Institution documents. Registration number is unique to the registered student. In case of duplication, students are highly requested to report to the office of Academic Registrar.

Art 16. Student shall be given registration number upon the payment of required direct university fees. These include application fee and first installment of tuition fees. Otherwise

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the issuance of registration number is possible when a justification from finance department is shown to registry services.

Art 17. Students are provided with provisional registration number along with green card after presenting bank slips showing the payment of application fees. Definitive registration number is issued once all required payment has made.

ADMISSION CRITERIA AND PROCESS FOR UNDERGRADUATES

Art 18. Candidates are admitted (or not) upon fulfilling the following criteria:

- a) Have a Rwandan National Examination Certificate with at least **two principal passes** or a qualification or other evidence of ability to study on the programme applied for considered equivalent. Applicants must also demonstrate sufficient competency in English to study at higher education level (pass Entry English Examination with 75%). Otherwise he/ she must register for Intensive English Training (120 hours).
- b) Interest in harmony with the Institute vision and mission without contradicting (a)

Art 19. Applicants with foreign academic qualifications shall obtain an equivalence of their certificates from Rwanda Basic Education Board (REB) before seeking PIASS admission

Art 20. The admission commission reserves the right to refuse admission of any student in case applicant does not fulfill the conditions for admission or in case of falsified documents.

Art 21. The admission commission is an organ in charge of issuing official academic admission after scrutinizing applicants' files. It is formed by all Deans, Academic Registrar and Director of Quality Assurance.

Art 22. Provisional admission may be granted to candidates who have been allowed to join the university program but do not have registered with department or faculty for registration confirmation. The list showing eligible candidates for admission shall be published one day

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after the meeting of admission commission.

Art 23. Full admission may be accorded to candidates who have registered with the department or faculty after payment of tuition fees and functional fees as indicated in fee structure and payment procedures.

Art 24. An international student will need apply for a study visa within two weeks (15 days) upon arrival. To do this, he/she will produce the following documents to the Rwanda's Immigration Services: a Police Clearance from the home country; a valid passport, a CV, application letter and Visa recommendation letter provided by Registrar's office, for more info about requested documents to apply for this visa the students should visit the Rwanda Director General of Immigration and Emigration website (www.migration.gov.rw).

Art 25. Students from other institutions of higher learning are informed about their admission Decision within a period not exceeding four days, and they must cover at least 240 credits at PIASS, and the credits transferred from other accredited institution should not exceed 240 credits.

Art 26. All new students receive special orientation during the induction period to acquaint them with the PIASS academic life. They are shown different classrooms and offices and are explained about services they provide, as well as other useful information, advice, and guidance necessary for their smooth integration.

Art 27. For students who register after admission, the period of admission validity is 6 years. For Students who are given the admission and do not register, the admission is valid for a period of three years

Art 28. Before admitting new students the office of Registrar through Career guidance officer guide students to their most suitable programs.

APPLICATION DOCUMENTS AND REGISTRATION PROCEDURES

Art 29. Candidate must submit required documents as listed in Art 29

Art 30. On application stage an undergraduate student shall present the following documents:

- Certified (Notarized) copies of the Advanced Certificate of Secondary

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education, or its equivalent.

- A copy of identity card or passport
- Two recent colored passport size photographs.
- Bank slip showing the payment of application fee (not refundable)

Art 31. Each new candidate must pick and fill in the application form available at PIASS reception office or on PIASS web. Registration of students is done at Registrar's office. Each registered student is given a green card which must be presented to the faculty, department and finance. The office of Registrar is responsible of issuing registration number and all matters related to student registry services. Existing students are registered upon the deliberation decisions following their progression (student flow) and payment of registration fee.

ADMISSION CRITERIA AND PROCESS FOR POST GRADUATES STUDENTS

Admission to Postgraduate diploma in Education (PGDE)

Minimum Requirements for Full Admission

- Applicants must hold an earned Bachelor's degree with honors from an institution accredited by the Rwandan accreditation agency, or its equivalent from an international institution with a similar level of accreditation or recognition by its home country.
- Applicants with foreign academic qualifications shall obtain an equivalence of their degrees from Rwanda Higher Education council (HEC) before seeking PIASS admission.
- Applicants must provide certified copies of their undergraduate degree and transcripts of the entire undergraduate program.

Other documents needed for admission are the following: two recent colored passport size photographs, a proof of payment of application fee (not refundable), an up-to-date curriculum vitae, a copy of the ID/passport identification pages (the two pages that include the candidate's photograph and detailed passport information).

Admission to Master's Programs

Art 32. Individuals apply to the Post-Graduate Committee for admission to a Master's program.

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Art 33. The Post-Graduate Committee assesses individual applications and communicates its decision in one month after the application deadline.

Art 34. The Post-Graduate Committee reserves the right to reject any application that does not fulfill the conditions of admission or contains falsified documents.

Art 35. Candidates can apply to a Master Program at PIASS by completing the application form and sending it together with the required application documents (see information on application form), by e-mail (Office-of-postgraduate@piass.ac.rw) or normal mail to the Academic Registrar's Office. The application form can either be picked up at PIASS reception or downloaded from PIASS website (<http://piass.ac.rw/studying-at-piass/admission>). The application deadline for international students is August 15. For Rwandan students it is September 15. Applicants are admitted to either full or provisional status.

Minimum Requirements for Full Admission

- Applicants must hold an earned Bachelor's degree with honors, second class, lower division with a cumulative grade of at least 65% (12/20 for those who followed the old four year course system), preferably in humanities,¹ divinity² or social sciences,³ from an institution accredited by the Rwandan accreditation agency, or its equivalent from an international institution with a similar level of accreditation or recognition by its home country. Applicants from other academic disciplines may be accepted and recommended to take particular compensatory modules.
- Applicants with foreign academic qualifications shall obtain an equivalence of their degrees from Rwanda Higher Education council (HEC) before seeking PIASS admission.
- Applicants must provide certified copies of their undergraduate degree and transcripts of the entire undergraduate program.

Other documents needed for admission are the following: two recent colored passport size photographs, a proof of payment of application fee (not refundable), an up-to-date curriculum vitae, two letters of reference (one preferably academic), a copy of the ID/passport identification

pages (the two pages that include the candidate's photograph and detailed passport information). Applicants are also requested to write a study plan.

Revised and approved by PIASS Senate Meeting at Huye on September 18, 2024

Office of Vice Chancellor