Arab Open University
Community Engagement and Outreach Policy

Version 2

Approving Body: University Council No. 63

2018

Version History	Approving Body	Date
1	University Council #59	May, 2017
2	University Council #63	July, 2018
Next Review Date		

Note: *A policy can be reviewed before the designated review date should there be a need to.*

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Policy Statement

Community engagement and outreach at AOU refers to any or all activities wherein AOU engages directly with the community through exchange of knowledge, skills and resources towards community development.

Policy Declaration

The premises on which Arab Open University was conceptualized rests on the basic principle and value of community engagement and outreach wherein the vision and mission was to make education a reality for all.

Arab Open University is committed to social responsibility as part of its vision and mission and does not discriminate the right to equal opportunities towards higher education based on nationality, gender, class or creed. As part of its mission, AOU shares the following objectives in attaining its mission:

- Foster values that enable human dignity towards betterment of society
- Produce conscientious students who are aware of their social responsibilities and contribute meaningfully towards it.
- Contribute to social development by making available University's expertise, resources and facilities where required.

Policy Objectives

The purpose of the Community Engagement & Outreach Policy is to:

- Clarify how the University interprets the notion and meaning of community service
- Ensure that ongoing community services at AOU are identified and fit for purpose with University's vision and mission.
- Specify how it aims to achieve its mission in this area of community engagement and outreach.
- Ensure that all community engagement and outreach activities are communicated to staff, students and the wider community

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- Promote community service as a form of higher education transformation, both in relation to working with the community towards a better future and generating graduates who have a sense of civic responsibility

Context

The context in which this policy will operate but is not limited to are the geographical areas within which the eight branches are located. The Community Engagement & Outreach policy must be read in conjunction with the document "AOU Framework of Community Engagement and Outreach" (see AOU Framework of Community Engagement and Outreach).

Policy Implementation

The Actions and Processes by which the Objectives of the Policy will be Achieved:

The Community Engagement & Outreach Officer, at the respective Branches, will implement the Community Engagement & Outreach Policy. The officer will be responsible for steering and facilitating the formulation of a strategy of the University's community engagement activities involving its community development partners, which include the local bodies; corporate or local NGOs, and other private sector bodies and community at large. The Community Development and Engagement Department will be the interface between the AOU Branch and the community. The Officer has the central role of ensuring that Community Engagement initiatives are in line with the University's Strategy and core functions.

Communication of Policy:

The respective Branch authorities within and outside the University through website notices and other official internal and external communication channels used will communicate the Community Engagement & Outreach Policy.

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Implementation of Policy:

- The implementation of the Community Engagement & Outreach Policy at all branches would entail that the activities carried are in alignment with the University's vision and mission and are sound in quality and towards the development of the community.
- The respective AOU Branches will be responsible to identify how its resources can be beneficially used for community engagement activities.
- The Community Engagement and Outreach Department at the Branches would be responsible for ensuring that adequate resources and enabling mechanisms will be made available for effective implementation of the policy.
- The various University community engagement initiatives will be fostered, thus facilitating the staff and student's participation in Community Engagement and outreach activities.
- A database of Community Engagement activities and staff and students participating in it will be maintained and made available on the University website.

Policy Monitoring

- Reporting will take place via the Community Engagement & Outreach Officer through the respective Department, which will report to the Branch Director.
- The authorized department will be responsible to ensure quality in Community Engagement initiatives.
- The report on the Community Engagement and outreach programmes will be integrated into the Annual Monitoring Review.
- The Community Engagement and outreach activities will be updated regularly on the University Website.