



**The Arab Open University Award Bylaw
in Teaching Excellence**

الجامعة العربية المفتوحة
Arab Open University

Approved by University Council No. 63

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Introduction

The teaching process has been considered the main axis in the establishment of the Arab Open University (AOU). It is also deemed as the principal target of its inception. The success of the constituents associated with this process is seen as the true success of AOU's message and objectives. Since the teachers are considered the mainstay of this system, attention accorded to them and motivation provided for them shall reflect inevitably on the teaching process, and shall play an important role in achieving the aim sought by the University. Hence the University's interest in allocating the Teaching Excellence Award in each of its branches.

Article 1: Title

The present bylaws shall be named: "The Arab Open University Award Bylaw in Teaching Excellence."

Article 2: Definitions

Unless the context indicates otherwise, the following words and expressions shall have the meanings specified hereunder:

The University	The Arab Open University
The Director/Rector	The Director/Rector of an Arab Open University branch or campus
The Branch	An Arab Open University branch or campus

Article 3: Award Objectives

The prize aims to:

- Upgrade teaching standards in all AOU branches to compete better with other universities in the same areas.
- Motivate the teaching staff to adopt the best teaching methods and to create effective ways to deliver the academic content of the courses.
- Encourage academic staff to make optimal use of modern technologies that suit blended education.
- Encourage the teaching staff to contribute to the development of teaching material that suits AOU's message.

Article 4: Award Types

The prize is assigned and presented annually to winners. There are two types as follows:

- 1) A prize awarded in each AOU branch to the distinguished teaching candidate chosen from all academic departments.
- 2) A prize awarded for each academic programme (department) to the distinguished teaching candidate at AOU level (single winner).

Article 5: Award Components

The prize consists of the following:

- 1) A certificate and shield bearing the AOU title and the name of the winner.
- 2) A monetary prize of US \$2,000 for each winner, as detailed in Article 4 herein.

Article 6: Nomination Conditions

- Nominations are open to all teaching staff members other than high administrators, such as University President, Vice Presidents, branch Rectors, Deans and others holding similar positions.
- The nominee ought to have been working on a full-time basis for at least two years.
- The winner may be nominated again for the same prize at least three years after the previous win.

Article 7: Award Announcement and Awarding Procedures

The prize is announced and awarded as follows:

- 1) The Vice President for Academic Affairs and Scientific Research (VPAA&SR) shall announce the start of application and nomination for the Teaching Excellence Award. Subsequently, all AOU teaching staff members and the like are informed of the nomination conditions by the branch Rectors.
- 2) Applicants shall submit their applications to the department head/programme coordinator alongside the following documents:
 - An updated curriculum vitae (CV).
 - Students' evaluations of all the sections of all the courses taught by the nominee during the covered period.
 - Candidate performance reports presented by the Rector/Programme Coordinator/Student Affairs Department during the covered period. The reports must be placed in sealed envelopes per AOU bylaws and regulations.

- 3) The department head/academic programme coordinator in each branch shall peruse the applications for the said prize to ascertain that the candidate(s) have met the University's conditions. Once this is done, the applications are sent to the Dean via the Rector. However, in case the applicant is the programme coordinator him/herself, the Rector must inform a committee of staff members to revise the application.
- 4) The concerned Dean shall then form a committee headed by him/herself and includes two faculty members to undertake the process of perusing each application.
- 5) The aforementioned committee shall choose the winner(s) in each branch. Quorum is met by a simple majority and so are its decision. Such decisions are not subject to appeal.
- 6) Names of proposed prizewinners are then sent to the VPAA&SR for knowledge, approval and announcement.
- 7) The VPAA&SR may express reservation concerning the recommendation of the branch committee.
- 8) The committee that is formed by the Dean may withhold the prize if the nominations were not up to the required standard. In this case, a detailed report explaining why the prize was withheld ought to be sent to the VPAA&SR's office., and another candidate shall be proposed for the same year.

Article 8: Principles of Selection

Selection of winners must be based on the following benchmarks:

- 1) Student appraisal.
- 2) Appraisal by the candidate's superiors.
- 3) Diversity in teaching courses on Bachelor's/Master's levels.
- 4) Optimum use of the Learning Management System (LMS).
- 5) Communication and contact with the students.
- 6) Positive use of teaching strategies and classroom meetings.
- 7) Contribution to the development of teaching materials (in the candidate's specialization) and of University programmes.
- 8) Holding academic activities (such as workshops, seminars, and conferences) for students on a regular basis.
- 9) Participating in activities contributing to the induction and training of new staff members.

Article 9: General Provisions

- A) The current bylaws herein shall override any previous bylaws relating to or having the same title or subject matter.
- B) Rectors of AOU branches are responsible for implementing the decisions made according to these bylaws.
- C) The University Council shall deal with matters not stipulated in these bylaws.