

Admission Policy and Procedure

Arab Open University

Admission Policy and Procedure

Policy Title:	Admissions Policy and procedure
Version Number	2
Description	Admissions policy to admit prospective students to Academic Programmes of Study
Executive Owner:	Vice President Academic Affairs and Scientific Research
Approving Body	University Council # 77, 2022
Policy Reviewer& Approval:	AOU Academic Committee
Policy Implementation:	Heads of Admission and Registration Departments at AOU branch/campus
Policy Monitoring	Quality Assurance and Accreditation Units at AOU branches/campus Registration and Examination Office at AOU-HQ
Next Review Date	December 2027

Admission Policy and Procedure

Policy Statement:

The Arab Open University (AOU) is committed to its mission of widening access and providing higher education opportunities to aspiring individuals. It is committed to a fair admission policy that considers applications for admission per the academic qualifications and individual merits of each applicant. The Arab Open University will apply the principles of its equal opportunity and respect for diversity policy to all applicants. This policy has been developed to ensure that the university practices are fair, explicit and that consistent admissions procedures are adopted across AOU branches/campus. It sets out conditions and procedures for the admission process, including admission appeals and complaints processes.

Scope:

The policy applies to all prospective students applying to join any of the Arab Open University Academic Programme including applicants for AOU undergraduate and post-graduate validated and local programmes.

Principles:

The underlying principles of the policy are as follows:

- To provide equal opportunities for applicants regardless of age, gender, religious or social background, etc.
- To recruit applicants who can succeed and complete their programme of study.
- To ensure that selected applicants are appropriately matched to a suitable programme of study.

- To ensure that applicants with disabilities are fully supported during the application and admission process.
- To ensure that applicants with disabilities have the potential to complete their selected programme of study.
- To maintain a fair and transparent admission process and a safe recruitment procedure.

The University will ensure the following:

- All promotional materials are accurate, relevant, current, and accessible to applicants/ prospective students to enable them to make informed decisions.
- Sufficient guidance and support are provided to prospective students during the application and registration process.
- Applications will be processed promptly on receipt.
- All applicants/prospective students should be informed of the admissions entry criteria required for their programme of study.
- Applicants /Prospective students receive clear information before enrolment; of tuition fees and other expenses as related to their programme of study.

Responsibilities:

- The Vice President for Academic Affairs and Scientific Research office has the executive responsibility and strategic oversight of the Admissions Policy.
- The Branch/campus/campus Rectors are responsible for the effective implementation of the admission policy and procedures.
- The Admission and Registration Departments are responsible for the

day-to- day administration and implementation of the policy and the respective procedures.

- The Student Affairs Offices, Quality Assurance, and Accreditation Units at the branches/campus and the Registration and Examination Department at AOU- HQ Branch/campus/campus all have a responsibility to ensure that the policy is well recognized and properly implemented.

Application for Admission:

- Prospective students can submit their applications electronically through the university website.
- Online applicants will receive an automatic reply confirming receipt of the application.
- Prospective students may need to submit their applications to the Admission and Registration Office in person if an online admission service is not available or accessible.
- Prospective students with disabilities may require assistance from admission staff to complete their applications.
- Prospective students are requested to read this document alongside the 'Student Terms & Conditions to studying at AOU'.

Processing Applications:

- Prospective students applications are first assessed against the entry requirement of the academic programme applied for.
- Applications may further be processed to determine the suitability of the applicant and their potential to succeed in the programme (specific programme entry criteria).

- Applications may also be processed against any required regulatory check- ups or safe recruitment conditions.
- During the assessment phase, applicants may be contacted for further information or clarification.
- Applicants must respond to information requests and provide all required documents on time.
- Upon the completion of the processing stage, a decision will be reached, and accordingly, the applicant may receive an offer for admission or notification of rejection.

Responding to the Admission offer:

- Prospective students must accept the offer formally to secure their place in the programme of study. This should be done within 7 working days.
- Prospective students should meet any outstanding requirements including submission of original copies of relevant documents and authenticated certificates.
- They must pay the fees, complete and sign the student declaration form.
- No response may result in an offer decline.
- Prospective students may withdraw their application or turn down the admission offer any time before enrolment.
- Withdrawal after enrolment will be treated as stipulated in the Bachelors' and Masters' Degree requirement bylaws.

Prospective Students' Appeals and Complaints:

The Arab Open University is committed to providing prospective students with fair, efficient, and transparent admissions services. However, the AOU recognizes that there may be instances where a prospective student feels aggrieved with the University admissions decisions or processes and wishes to bring their concerns to our attention either formally or informally.

The Prospective students' appeals and complaints procedures apply only to prospective students and should not be confused with the continuing students' appeals and complaints process and procedures, which operate differently and are not open to applicants/prospective students.

AOU is very keen to respond to prospective students' queries, concerns promptly and provide efficient channels of communication to all applicants. The University provides also formal Appeals and Complaints procedures for those applicants who would like to pursue a formal appeal or complaint.

Process and Procedures:

Appeals:

An appeal is a formal request from an unsuccessful applicant/prospective student to review the outcome of an admissions decision.

- Prospective students who feel that they have grounds for appeal should appeal within 15 working days of receiving the admission decision.
- Before submitting an appeal, the prospective student must be aware of the AOU Admission policy, Admission criteria, and the University terms and conditions.
- The prospective student should submit the appeal in writing through

a formal letter to the Head of Admission and Registration Office.

- The Appeal should be submitted directly by the prospective student unless a third party has the explicit consent to act on their behalf.
- Any appeal will be handled by the university in a fair and transparent matter.
- Any appeal will be considered in isolation from the application and the appellant will not be disadvantaged in any way.
- The University will investigate any prospective student appeal under the following conditions only:
 - The appellant/prospective student can demonstrate/evidence that the University has not followed its admission policy and procedures.
 - There is a perception or indication that the prospective student has been treated differently to another applicant in a similar situation.
- The Head of the Admission & Registration Office will review the appeal and prepare an official written response to the appellant.
- The prospective student will be notified of the university response within 15 working days of the date of appeal submission.
- Where the prospective student remains dissatisfied with the outcome of his/her appeal, the prospective student may re-appeal to the Branch/campus/campus Director/Rector to review and reconsider the first appeal outcome or the initial admission decision.
- The prospective student must present clear reasons or evidence for requesting a review.

- The Branch/campus/campus Rector will review the prospective student's appeal in consultation with the Assistant Rector for Academic Affairs and two independent staff members from the admission and registration, students affairs offices and take a decision to uphold the appeal or to reject it .
- The decision will be considered final and the prospective student will not be able to take the matter further.
- The Student will be notified with the decision through a formal letter from the Branch/campus/campus Rectors' office within 15 working days of the submission date of the reappeal letter.

Complaints:

An expression of dissatisfaction about the admission services or about an attitude of admission staff member.

- Prospective students who wish to make a complaint about the admission process or any related issue is requested to submit a formal complaint in writing to the Head of Admission and Registration Office.
- The complaint should be submitted directly by the prospective student unless a third party has the explicit consent to act on their behalf
- The topic of complaints and related concerns should be clearly mentioned in the complaint letter.
- The prospective student /Complainant is requested to make their

complaints as soon as possible and with 15 working days of the incident.

- Complaints about the admissions process will be investigated by the Senior admission staff in consultation with other staff where necessary.
- The outcome of the investigation and any recommended action will be communicated to the complainant in writing within 5 to 15 working days.
- If the prospective student/complainant is not satisfied with the outcome of the complaint, he/she may re-complain directly to the Branch/campus/campus Rector.
- The Branch/campus/campus Rector will review the complaint in consultation with the Assistant Rector for Administrative Affairs and two independent members from the Admission& Registration and Student Affairs offices and take a decision to uphold the complaint or to reject it.

The decision will be considered final, and the prospective student will not be able to take the matter further.

The student will be notified with the decision through a formal letter from the Branch/campus/campus Rectors' office within 15 working days of the submission date of the re-complaint letter.

Appendix

AOU Admission Criteria

General Admission Criteria (Bachelors' Programmes):

- To be admitted to any bachelor programme the applicant should have fulfilled the following conditions:
- Obtain a general secondary school certificate or equivalent.
- Fulfill any other conditions determined by the University of competent authorities of the AOU Branch/campus/campus country.
- The Branch/campus/campus Council shall devise and approve a specific admissions policy according to admission requirements in the Branch/campus/campus country.
- Any applicant who meets admission requirements and who could not be admitted due to competition may re-apply in any forthcoming opportunity.
- The students 'intake in any programme will be decided as per the numbers set by the Ministries of Higher Education in each branch/campus/campus Country.

General Admission Criteria (Masters' Programmes):

An applicant to the Master's programmes should meet the following:

- Should have a bachelor's from the Arab Open University, or its equivalent from a recognized university according to the conditions specified by the competent Deanships and per the local accreditation requirements.
- Should not have been dismissed, for academic reasons, from the programme to which he/she is applying.
- Should meet any specific criteria required by the concerned academic programme deanship.