5.f. Professional Development for Faculty and Staff

Subject	Faculty and Professional Staff	**Effective From**	Sep - 2011
Policy #	5.f.	**Latest Revision**	Dec - 2023
Title of The Policy	Professional Development for Faculty and Staff	**Next Review**	Dec - 2024
Responsible Entity	Professional Development Unit	**Policy Pages**	6

Definitions	• Professional Development: Professional Development encompasses the provision of learning and growth opportunities and activities aimed at expanding and enhancing the professional capabilities of employees, both faculty and staff, in alignment with their respective roles and responsibilities. These activities leverage the collective knowledge and experience of employees, affording them opportunities to acquire, practice, and integrate new knowledge, thereby augmenting individual, group, and organizational learning and competencies. • Capabilities: Capabilities denote the amalgamation of attributes, qualities, skills, knowledge, and ethical principles comprehension that underlie the professional practices of employees, enabling them to perform at a high standard within their designated contexts and roles. • Career Development: Career Development entails the process of empowering employees to strategize their career trajectories and participate in career development initiatives aimed at enhancing their career prospects, job advancement, and promotions. • Career Management: Career Management denotes the proactive process of planning, overseeing, nurturing, and evaluating one's career progression. • Continuing Professional Development: Continuing Professional Development underscores the acknowledgment of employees as a professional cohort, underscoring a commitment to upholding elevated professional standards, cultivating professional capabilities, perpetually refining work practices, and optimizing career growth opportunities. • Approved Formal Award Courses: Approved Formal Award Courses encompass educational programs leading to nationally recognized qualifications within the higher education sector, as per the Qualifications Framework for the Emirates (QFEmirates). These courses must be pertinent to the employee's current role or career and offer substantial value both to the individual and the University. • Short Courses: Short Courses refer to brief-duration educational offerings typically ranging from half a day to five days. These courses are provided by external providers and do not typically ranging from half a day to five days. These courses are provided by external providers and do not typically culminate in qualifications under the QFEmirates framework.
Purpose	The purpose of this Professional Development Policy at AAU is multifaceted, designed to create a nurturing and enriching environment for all employees, including faculty and staff. We recognize that the quality, responsiveness, and professionalism of our workforce are intrinsically connected to the attainment of the University's mission and strategic

objectives. To this end, AAU commits to the following:

1. Enhancing Faculty Development: AAU is dedicated to offering faculty development activities that bolster teaching, research, and scholarship. These initiatives are subject to regular assessment to ensure their relevance and effectiveness.

2. Supporting Innovative Teaching Methods: We provide comprehensive support services and professional development programs for faculty members, focusing on a diverse range of instructional strategies and emerging technologies to facilitate active and dynamic student learning.

3. Leveraging Technology for Educational Excellence: AAU ensures that faculty members receive adequate training and support in utilizing software tools aligned with educational objectives

4. Fostering Research and Scholarship: Consistent with our mission, AAU demonstrates a commitment to furnishing faculty members with ample opportunities and resources for research and scholarly pursuits. This encompasses activities such as publishing research papers, organizing and participating in national, regional, and international conferences, workshops, seminars, exhibitions, as well as provisions for sabbaticals and specialized training.

5. Individual and Collective Development Plans: We emphasize that the outcomes of annual faculty and professional staff evaluations are instrumental in crafting individual and collective professional development plans.

6. Supporting Professional Staff Development: AAU extends professional staff development initiatives aimed at enhancing staff members' roles and overall performance, with regular evaluations to ensure their appropriateness and efficacy.

7. Budgetary Commitment: We allocate a sufficient budgetary allocation to underpin the professional development of both faculty and professional staff. Transparent evidence is provided to showcase responsible allocation and utilization of these funds.

8. Structured Orientation: AAU maintains a well-structured orientation system to facilitate the seamless integration of newly appointed faculty and professional staff into the University community. The overarching purpose of this policy is to achieve the following:

- Clarifying Responsibilities: This policy clearly delineates the roles and responsibilities of Managers and Deans in relation to professional development.
- Coordinated Provision: It outlines the pivotal role of the Human Resources department in coordinating the provision of professional development opportunities.
- Empowering Individual Growth: AAU actively encourages and supports all employees, including faculty and staff, to proactively pursue their professional and career development, considering it an integral component of their association with the University.

	• Individual Accountability: It defines the responsibility of each individual faculty and staff member to actively engage in their own professional development. • Comprehensive Opportunities: This policy elucidates the array of opportunities available for faculty and staff to pursue their professional development, fostering a culture of continuous growth and improvement within the University community
Scope	This policy applies comprehensively to all University employees, encompassing both faculty and staff members, irrespective of their employment status, including those on fixed-term and ongoing appointments. It articulates the fundamental principles governing professional and career development within the University. The policy specifically aligns with the University's commitment to support professional development initiatives that are unequivocally work-related and demonstrably advantageous to the respective department or the broader University community.
Statement	The University is firmly committed to a strategic approach that identifies and prioritizes organizational goals. To this end, we diligently develop and implement a wide range of strategies and programs dedicated to enhancing the capacity, skills, and professionalism of our valued employees. This commitment is driven by our unwavering aim to empower individuals to make meaningful contributions to the University's mission and strategic objectives, all while remaining agile and responsive to the evolving landscape of Higher Education. In pursuit of this commitment, the University extends to provide its employees with: **1. Capability Enhancement:** Opportunities to develop and refine their capabilities, fostering alignment with organizational objectives and contributing to the success of their respective work units. **2. Career Development:** The support required to create and pursue well-defined career plans. This includes active participation in career development activities aimed at extending and elevating their skill sets, thereby enhancing their potential for career advancement within the University. **3. Inclusivity and Accessibility:** A commitment to equity and accessibility, ensuring that all members of the University community have equal access to professional development opportunities, fostering an environment where growth and development are within reach for everyone.
Procedures	**1. Identification of Development Needs** **1.1. Integration with Performance Management:** The development needs related to knowledge, skills, and attitudes (KSA) are seamlessly integrated into the performance management process and actively identified. **1.2. Employee Input:** Faculty and staff members are encouraged to actively identify and propose learning and development solutions, including exposure, experiential learning, or formal education, to their managers and Deans. These proposals should be grounded in their current roles and career aspirations.

2. Creating and Managing Development Objectives

2.1. Development Objectives in Performance Work Plan: A development objective within the Performance Work Plan comprises six essential components: - Objective name, - Activities for achieving the objective, - Required support, - Timeframe for completion, - Preferred delivery mode, - Alignment with University goals.

2.2. Consideration of Multiple Factors: Managers and Deans identify development objectives, taking into account various factors including the University's strategies and plans, agreed performance objectives, the staff member's performance history, their role description, behavioral expectations, feedback from internal/external stakeholders, and the staff member's career aspirations.

2.3. Specification of Development Objectives: Both the staff member and their manager collaborate to specify the staff member's development objectives within the development section of the staff member's Performance Work Plan.

3. Submitting Development Plan to Human Resources

3.1. Submission Requirement: A copy of each staff member's work plan, including the development plan for the upcoming year, must be submitted to the Human Resources department.

4. University-wide Training Needs Analysis

4.1. Review and Alignment: Human Resource and Professional Development Centre conducts a comprehensive review of all staff members' development objectives to ensure that: - AAU's professional development program aligns with organizational objectives and behavioral expectations. - Staff development needs can be systematically identified and prioritized. - Professional development is tailored to local requirements.

4.2. Advisory Support: Professional Development Centre in co-ordination with Human Resources provides advice to managers based on the training needs analysis, outlining development needs and priorities for their respective work units.

5. Monitoring and Reviewing Development Objectives

5.1. Proactive Management: Staff members bear the responsibility for actively managing the attainment of their development objectives, with the support and approval of their managers.

5.2. Periodic Review: Development objectives should undergo periodic review as part of AAU's performance cycle to ensure their continued relevance and successful achievement.

6. Approval Process

6.1. Approval for Development Activities: All professional development activities, including those involving time release, must receive approval from the staff member's manager and be documented in the Performance Work Plan.

6.2. Funding and Leave Approval: Approval for related funding and leave must be granted in accordance with the Staffing Delegation Schedule and the Financial Delegation Schedule, and the details of such approval must be documented.

7. Funding and Financial Support

7.1. Criteria for Financial Support: Financial support for professional development is discretionary and must adhere to specific criteria determined by AAU. It is not considered an entitlement, and managers/Deans should assess these criteria when deciding whether to provide financial support.

7.2. Financial Support for Formal Educational Study: In cases where formal educational study is a condition of employment, specified in the staff member's contract, and is related to their current position or identified career plans, AAU may grant financial support of up to 50% (or a reasonable limit) of tuition fees and expenses. Staff members receiving such support must reimburse AAU pro rata if they leave the University's employment within two years of completing each course of study for which support was given.

7.3. Disclosure of External Support: Staff members receiving grants or travel assistance from external sources must declare this information in their application for financial support. Financial support provided by AAU may be adjusted if the total amount from all sources exceeds the actual expenses incurred.

7.4. Administration of Financial Support: Financial support can be provided through either upfront payment by the University on behalf of the staff member (considered for staff members with a minimum of 12 months' service) or reimbursement of costs paid by the staff member. Financial support is reviewed annually in line with the criteria for approving professional development activities listed in the Professional Development Policy. Continuing support is contingent on the staff member's satisfactory progress and completion of jointly agreed objectives, with milestones for review determined at the time of initial approval. In cases of formal educational study, any decision to discontinue support will be communicated at least four weeks before the course recommencement. If the University has made an upfront payment and the staff member fails a subject or the study, they must reimburse the payment to the University.

8. Dissemination and Application of Knowledge Gained

Faculty and staff members are responsible for ensuring that knowledge acquired through professional development activities is effectively applied, communicated, and shared with their managers and colleagues.

9. Monitoring and Recording

9.1. Ongoing Monitoring: All professional development activities must undergo regular monitoring and be recorded within the staff Performance Work Plan.

9.2. Reporting Qualifications and Achievements: Faculty and staff members should promptly inform their manager and Human Resources upon completion of formal

	educational study and/or attainment of qualifications, licenses, or registrations. Certified copies of qualifications should be provided to Human Resources for recording on the HR system.
	10. Cancellation of Development Activities Any cancellation or rescheduling of an approved professional development activity must be promptly communicated to the approving manager/Dean and the training provider. Costs incurred due to such cancellations or rescheduling may be charged to the relevant work unit. **11. Financial Support Decision** The decision to provide financial support to staff members engaging in professional development activities is made by the staff member's manager/Dean and the relevant delegated authority.
Recent Changes	