



Ain Shams University Strategy

2018-2023



Ain Shams University Strategy for 2018-2023

Vision: Ain Shams University aspires to achieve a global competitive advantage in managing innovation system in education, research, knowledge and community.

Mission: Ain Shams University is a research, educational and service institution that adopts innovation and qualifies a graduate capable of competing in the labor market and community service in accordance with the latest international developments.

Goals: Ain Shams University aims to create an innovation-stimulating environment, internationalize its activities, provide full access to education and research, and develop skills and intellectual discipline to meet the ever-changing needs of the society.

Values:

- ✓ Excellence
- ✓ Innovation
- ✓ Openness to the world
- ✓ Equal Opportunities
- ✓ Quality Assurance and Performance Evaluation



Strategic Goals

- 1. Promoting education and learning through innovative and future-oriented visions**
- 2. Encouraging scientific research and supporting innovation**
- 3. Sustainable development and internationalization of university services**
- 4. Developing ASU administrative apparatus and automating its services**
- 5. IQA and performance evaluation systems**

Goals and Objectives

1. Promoting education and learning through innovative and future-oriented

- a. Innovation in teaching, learning and assessment.
- b. Internationalization of educational activities to raise ASU global profile and to support international students.
- c. Increasing ASU staff based on and in proportion to student numbers in light of standard rates.

2. Encouraging scientific research and supporting innovation

- a. Enhancing the infrastructure for scientific research and innovation.
- b. Developing scientific research resources.
- c. Developing and training researchers to pave the road for innovation and technological advancements.
- d. Promoting technology, technological incubators and entrepreneurship through local and international partnerships.
- e. Full integration of research labs and optimum use of our resources.
- f. Promoting cooperative research between ASU, community institutions and labor market.

3. Sustainable development and internationalization of university

- a. Innovation in marketing and internationalizing university services
- b. Strengthening the role of ASU in community development to meet the requirements of sustainable development.
- c. Developing ASU abilities in terms of alumni employability and career support.
- d. Improving infrastructure, ICT performance and learning environment.
- e. Boosting the performance of ASU centers and units and developing our own resources.

4. Developing ASU administrative apparatus and automating its services

- a. Training, qualifying and developing the capacities of ASU administrative apparatus.
- b. Automation of administrative services by computerizing files.
- c. Developing administrative procedures and helping sub-departments to become ISO-certified.
- d. Promoting a positive work environment and maximizing its efficiency.

5. IQA and performance evaluation systems

- a. Enhancing ASU to get accredited locally and internationally.
- b. Proceeding with the accreditation of ASU's faculties and institutions.
- c. Harnessing technology to create a system for internal quality assurance (IQA) and performance evaluation.

Our Strategic Vision: An Overview

In this strategic plan, we invest many of ASU strengths such as its long academic history, time-honored university traditions, and widely acknowledged achievements in academia, research and community. These points reinforce our presence both nationally and internationally and create an environment conducive to the promotion of innovation culture which plays an important and pivotal role in this plan.

This plan is a high-level agenda that aims to develop our knowledge-sharing ability locally and internationally by opening up to the world and sharing experiences with various academic, research and community institutions in order to achieve balance and integration between our national and international activities.

Improving ASU world ranking is an important strategic avenue in the current strategic plan. This approach has been adopted after a lengthy discussion with all relevant stakeholders concerned with ASU performance, and a comprehensive detailed study of potential risks that might threaten the work of universities, and in accordance with state policies and directives in the forthcoming period. This approach will be strongly evident in all university activities, so that internationalization becomes a fundamental characteristic of the strategies of education, learning, scientific research and community development.

In its strategy, ASU is fully committed to developing the values and skills of its students as well as improving the quality of the education provided, the diversity of evaluation methods and qualifying its graduates for the labor market and enhancing their affiliation to ASU. We are also aspiring to effectively contribute to the cultural, social and financial life of the students through promoting entrepreneurship. We are also striving to contribute to the recruitment of ASU top alumni in a manner that ensures equal opportunities.

The strategic plan is comprehensive and realistic, given that it takes into consideration the current status of ASU and the requirements of national development based on the guidelines set out by the Egyptian Government and the National Strategy for Higher Education 2030. The plan has never lost sight of the aspirations and ambitions of all relevant parties. We have conducted a study of the needs of some staff members, students, alumni, employers, government bodies and ministries in order to identify what they need from the educational, research and community services provided by ASU. Extensive studies of interdisciplinary nature have contributed to this plan that fulfil the needs of different parties and outlines ASU future visions.

This plan provides the basis on which further strategies for ASU faculties and institutions will be built. Such strategies shall be consistent with ASU visions and its future directions. ASU shall adopt a continuous assessment of performance approach in light of the abovementioned strategic goals and objectives. It shall also monitor the progress made using specific KPIs and shall provide the required resources to implement the plan. ASU shall guarantee the continuous implementation of the strategic plan to meet the academic, research and community needs of the university through several alternative plans that might be proposed during implementation.

The Priorities

The university has set a number of basic strategic priorities in addition to the tasks which will be implemented by the faculties, institutes and departments to achieve the future goals of the university.

The first priority for the university is to gain international recognition and to develop its international status to get a more advanced international ranking. This is to be done through incorporating new trends of thought in various specializations. International interaction through the academic scholarships and the exchange of staff members and students can guarantee the university a higher international ranking. Also, such exchange grants both the staff and the students international experience in their work and study. Moreover, part of this strategy is represented in our powerful contribution on the web and the other technological communication channels. The university would continue developing its educational resources seeking to achieve a broader accessibility to attract international students. The university shall also make the necessary decisions to guarantee the best realization of such goal.

We hope that Ain-shams University shall become a national and international educational resource that is capable of enriching the academic and research environment; a resource that realizes our vision for the university as a global center for intellectual contributions and a key participant in the national projects that aim at solving the community problems.

As the University is looking forward to reaching a global level and to achieving a higher rank among the top international universities, its role should not be limited to focusing on the basics only. Rather, it should extend to achieve excellence in the different fields. If the University manages to achieve excellence in performance, this will be a fundamental factor in getting the international recognition. Since universities all around the world are different regarding their fields of excellence, Ain-shams University has considered focusing on education and learning programs in addition to business entrepreneurship programs and their spin-off companies which have been recently established inside the university campus.

Since the solution to the worldwide unemployment problem is linked to the employment of the graduates, the University has considered giving due importance to this issue in the coming period. This constitutes the second biggest challenge to the University: the growing need to technically and professionally support the students to make them qualified for the job market and to provide them the services that facilitate their communication with the employers. Although different employers have praised Ain-shams University graduates and their values and professional manners, the employment rates of the University graduates need to be worked on. Also, the technical support and professional guidance services that the University provides for its students need to be further enhanced.

Furthermore, one of the University's target is to provide a unique educational experience for its students through enhancing the infrastructure, the technological means, the traditional and digital libraries, students' activities, medical care services, internet-supported computer labs and wi-fi coverage inside the university campus and dormitory. This necessitates more attention to the development and maintenance of the University facilities.

The University gives utmost priority to the academic research, hoping that it would affect the educational experience positively, offer solutions to national problems and serve the community in general. Also, the University is trying to overcome the dilemma of the weak fund dedicated to academic research through a number of decisions that work as incentives towards more research and funds. Such decisions include offering rewards to the research groups, developing our research capabilities, getting accreditation for the research labs and developing a plan to increase our researches' impact factor.

The implementation of this strategy is to be supported through establishing an integrated unified information system for the University that links the different faculties and institutes to the university presidency. Also, accessibility to the electronic services including e-learning shall be granted. The mentioned plan shall be implemented under the umbrella of the quality assurance strategy that guarantees the good performance of the university and its continuous evaluation.

Learning and Teaching at the Undergraduate and Postgraduate Levels

Goal 1: Promoting Education and Learning through Innovative and Future-oriented Visions

Adopting innovative strategies in teaching, learning and assessment

Internationalizing educational activities, with the aim of putting the University on the map of international education, and focusing on international students

Increasing the number of academic staff to be in proportion with the number of students as per the standard international

Promoting student activities that focus on skill development

The learning and teaching strategies adopted by Ain Shams University are at their core informed by the University's own strengths. These manifest themselves in the University's concentrated effort to pursue an innovative approach to enhancing access to learning and teaching, and to actively support non-traditional methods of teaching and learning, such as modelling, field training and technology-assisted teaching. The University is also seeking to foster opportunities for introducing independent learning, promoting skill development for students, internationalizing academics and providing diverse learning resources, all with the aim of boosting the University's ranking to match its long history and equally long list of alumni who went on to become luminaries in their respective fields with contributions that can be seen and felt, not only in the Arab world, but across the globe.

Moreover, the University is committed to adopting advanced student assessment strategies to ensure fairness, objectivity and equal opportunity, thus maintaining the University's academic, pedagogical and social integrity.

To further ensure equal opportunity, the University supports students through various channels with the purpose of meeting their unique financial, social, psychological and medical needs. This is in addition to providing full-board accommodation for both home and international students at the University's dorms.

The University is also working towards designing educational programs flexible enough to adjust to change and to the shifting requirements of local and national development plans. This should in time lead to developing entirely new programs and curricula, or updating existing ones, bearing in mind the importance of engaging local, national and international stakeholders in the process of designing and developing these educational programs. Meanwhile, the University is now beginning to embrace interdisciplinarity at the undergraduate and postgraduate levels, albeit with an emphasis on maintaining quality indicators in educational programs at both levels.

Instead of perceiving professor and student as parties to a knowledge transaction, current university strategy places both players at the front and center of the education process as evident in the University's efforts to provide a conducive educational environment, maintain essential infrastructure, and offer the support and training needed for skill development, capacity building and fulfilling other relevant needs, with the ultimate goal of this strategy being to enable graduates to compete in the market and keep up with its shifting needs.

Research and Innovation

Goal 2: Encouraging Research and Supporting Innovation

Improving research and innovation infrastructure	Development of research resources	Training qualified researchers who show readiness for innovation and are capable of engaging with modern technology	Supporting technology in all fields and technology incubators, as well as entrepreneurs hip through national and international partnerships	Supporting integration between research labs and investment in our resources	Promoting research cooperation channels connecting the University, community organizations and the market
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Ain Shams University has a long history of enriching the academic community with distinguished published research output spanning different areas of knowledge, including highly specialized STEM fields. The University's arguably most notable research goal, however, as promoted through its new strategy is establishing 'Science Park' in the Oubor campus extension, which promises research-informed technological output and an increase in the University's research resources to the point where external funding will be no longer needed.

In adopting this strategy, the University anticipates research's potential economic outcome and the ways in which this outcome can contribute to enriching the students' educational experience, solving community problems and increasing the University's income through its research output. Given the University's interest in applied research that does not isolate itself from relevant community issues, the University has initiated communication with the concerned ministries to decide their research needs. Based on the responses received, research cooperation programs were put into effect that promote communication between the University on the one hand and government bodies and national projects on the other, so as to produce original, state-of-the-art research that still manages to stay in touch with the reality and problems of the community in which it is conceived.

With regards to the internationalization of research and our international partnerships, international reports suggest a growing cooperation between Ain Shams University and other universities of international standing that rank among the 500 universities in the world. Such partnerships are important to build on and invest in. One major characteristic of scientific research is that it is constantly and rapidly changing. This requires competent development of a set research agenda for the University, which involves defining research priorities in all fields, without restricting academic freedom.

Another aspect of the University's future plans focuses on supporting innovation in research, encouraging applied research, developing research resources, providing research infrastructure, continuing to accredit laboratories, upping the amount of international publishing awards, ensuring access to e-libraries and research information systems and maintaining effective communication with the Egyptian Knowledge Bank. Other plans include establishing centres of research excellence in various sectors, providing research-supporting software, introducing junior researchers to the basics of international publishing, and requiring postgraduate students to publish their research in peer-reviewed journals with high impact factor. In the upcoming period, the University will launch plans for integrating the work of faculties, institutes and research centres and finding out the optimum method to invest in their combined research resources. This requires creating a university database cataloguing all the available devices and equipment and listing current and future research projects as well as partnerships. the University has already started implementing this integration policy with the integration program currently in effect at CARE research centers.

Based on environmental analysis conducted by the University, a number of factors that negatively impact the rate of international publishing were found. One example of these factors is the minimal international visibility of research published in Arabic in the areas of pedagogy, social sciences and the humanities, which undermines the quality of the University's research output, resulting in a ranking well below that which is proportional to the University's actual research competence. To overcome these obstacles, the University has developed an ambitious strategy to increase the rate of international publishing and address these obstacles through cooperation with international publishers and the Egyptian Knowledge Bank, besides supporting the University's own journals specializing in STEM fields, social sciences, the humanities and pedagogy.

Community Service and Environment Development

Goal 3: Sustainable development and internationalization of university services

Innovation in marketing and internationalizing university services	Promoting the University's role in community service in response to sustainable development requirements	Enhancing the University's capacity to employ its graduates and supporting them professionally	Improving infrastructure, technological performance and educational environment	Upgrading the performance of the University's centers and units and developing resources
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Ain Shams University is aware that it should establish strong connections with the world to provide community services, develop the environment and receive public opinion. The ultimate aim is to meet the community's requirements in terms of educational and research programs. In light of the rapid and great changes in all fields, universities should not be isolated from the community, and their mission should not be limited to traditional educational and research performance.

This requires intensive efforts because the role of the University is not restricted to providing support or facing societal problems. The community is now represented by businessmen, industrial sectors, ministries, national entities, research bodies, and civil society organizations. It is important for the University to contribute to sustainable development and participate in large projects. Thus, the role of the university's special units emerges as unique on the local and regional levels.

The strategic mission of the University, as embodied in innovation in teaching and learning, internationalization, upgrading the University's international ranking, supporting the students' professional future, entrepreneurship, and engaging the community in effective research, require effective and ongoing communication with the local, regional and international communities. Therefore, the University is looking forward to drawing up a plan to interact with the community, a plan for marketing university services, and a plan for internationalization and attracting international students. In addition, a plan for the development of resources is being prepared. The University will establish databases for the job market to support graduates and develop their careers. The University will also take necessary measures to support the students' skills in light of the requirements of the job market. It might be also beneficial to make use of the University's good connections with employers and different national entities in training students in real work environments and engaging the job market in the design of some educational programs in a way that matches the University's capacities and improves graduates' potential.

As the students' IT expectations rise, the University is concerned about the threats that face traditional education in light of the boom of virtual worlds and virtual educational applications. Thus, the University aims to improve its technological infrastructure and to establish advanced computer labs in all the University's institutions so as to meet expectations in terms of quality. The University will cope with the several changes in information technology through administrative mechanization plans and e-learning services. The above details are just examples of the activities that support the University's strategic vision and motivate its academic and research performance.

Administrative System and Administrative Development

Goal 4: Developing ASU administrative apparatus and automating its services

Building the capacities of the administrative system	Automating the administrative services through applying IT systems to filing	Developing administrative procedures and obtaining ISO certification	Improving the work environment and enhancing its efficiency
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The University's administrative system is one of the cornerstones of the work process in the University because it deals with all the parties involved in the university's work. It carries out many major works that help the University achieve its goals. The administrative data are also crucial for decision-making if presented in a statistical way that shows the points of inflation or deficiency in different organizational structures, the distribution of human resources across the University's institutions, the numbers of teaching staff members, and the numbers of students, as well as other details that pertain to all the University's sectors.

Ain Shams University, hence, pays special attention to the training and capacity building of its administrative staff according to their actual requirements, taking into account their satisfaction and needs. Prioritizing these aspects will have a great impact on their performance and efficiency.

The University also aims to bridge the gaps in the processes of recruiting administrative staff, support flexibility in administrative decisions, improve cooperation among different departments, promote the work environment, supply work requirements, and support libraries with qualified specialists who can deal with digital libraries. The University also seeks to apply performance assessment criteria and develop administrative leadership.

Regarding the nature of administrative tasks, the University has already obtained the ISO certification in terms of the services of the University's central departments. We also plan to improve the performance of other departments so that they could obtain the ISO certification. Besides, the University looks forward to mechanizing administrative services to cut the long filing processes short, facilitate the extraction of certificates, computerize the systems of leaves, and establish an electronic file for each staff member, as well as other administrative tasks. Since the machine-based administrative system relies on limited human resources, this trend will help in facing the problems that arise from the declining number of administrative officers in the University now.

Quality assurance systems and performance

Goal 5: IQA and performance evaluation systems

National and international accreditation of Ain-shams University

Resuming the process of accrediting the rest of the faculties and institutes

Utilizing technology to establish internal quality assurance and evaluation systems

The internal quality assurance systems are the umbrella under which all the university activities should be implemented. Without such systems, we can never verify the validity of our measures or the efficiency of our performance nor guarantee the satisfaction of our services' beneficiaries. The University has exerted huge effort in establishing internal quality systems in all of the university faculties and institutes. Such step managed to grant 60% of the faculties accreditation and to allow the university to apply for international evaluation. Following such achievements, the University aims at formulating a strict and unified quality assurance system inside the university under the central management of the University quality assurance center. Such system is to be applied in the branches of the quality assurance units inside each and every faculty and institute. Through this system, the University aims at unifying the measures, procedures and even the timings of the implementation of the internal quality audits. In addition, it seeks to provide fair standard criteria to compare the results; the matter that necessitate preparing a group of unified questionnaires to be implemented in all the faculties and institutes simultaneously to guarantee the unification of the internal evaluation criteria in all the University's institutions.

Moreover, the organizational, administrative and financial structures of the faculties' quality units shall be unified. Also, the timings of the quality check procedure shall be fixed and the job responsibilities of the active parties in this system shall be set. In addition, the accessibility to the results of the performance assessment shall be verified. We are working hard to guarantee that the quality assurance measures are inclusive, effective and sufficient to verify the efficiency of the educational and learning process, the academic research, the University's interaction with the community and satisfaction of all the related parties. The system shall also evaluate the sufficiency of students' support services such as: the library services, information technology services, graduates' employment services in addition to the international services. The quality assurance center also provides technical support to the faculties and institutes and conducts simulation accreditation visits.

Information technology can no longer be isolated from establishing internal quality assurance systems. For instance, the electronic questionnaire is a successful model in this respect; as it can be analyzed automatically to display the results for the staff member, the students, the quality assurance unit and the academic leadership. It is also reviewed by the university's presidency in an automatic and effective system that save much time, effort and even resources such as the operational material and paper work used in the analysis. Furthermore, employing technology in managing the internal quality assurance systems of the university can result in the creation of the electronic documents of the students as well as the e-documents of the syllabus taught by the staff member. Thus, the strategic plan aims at getting both the national and international accreditation of the University along with its academic institutions.



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