



Al Ain University

4.3 > SDG4 - 4.3.5

Al Ain University's Policy on Diversity, Equity, and Non-Discrimination

Commitment to Diversity and Equal Opportunity

Al Ain University (AAU) maintains a clear **Non-Discrimination Policy** to ensure that all university activities and programs are accessible to everyone, regardless of ethnicity, religion, gender, disability, or other personal characteristics. AAU strongly believes that diversity is fundamental to academic excellence, and it upholds equal opportunity in education as a deeply rooted value aau.ac.ae. In practice, this means the university is committed to providing a welcoming, inclusive environment where **all individuals** – students, faculty, and staff – have fair access to opportunities.

Code of Conduct

https://aau.ac.ae/uploads/2019/09/al_ain_university_student_handbook_2019_2020_en.pdf

The statements hereunder define some areas of ethical conduct that govern AAU members' behavior towards their peers, faculty members, the University, and the community. These statements do not address every situation; rather, they aim at providing the student with an overview of a general perspective on the code of ethics governing Al Ain University.

17.1 Compliance with AAU's Rules and Regulations

All students at AAU shall abide by the rules and regulations applicable at AAU. If the student is uncertain about any issue, s/he may refer to the HR Manager, the Department Head, the College Dean, AAU Vice President, or AAU President.

Harassment or Discrimination

Al Ain University upholds the principle that all individuals have the right to be treated with respect and equality. **Any harassment, discrimination, or prejudicial treatment towards peers, faculty members, or administrative staff on grounds of ethnicity, religion, national origin, gender, age, or disability status undermines the AAU's essential ethics and shall not be tolerated.**

Equal Access for Students and Staff

Admissions and Academic Access:

AAU operates a non-discriminatory admissions policy that evaluates all applicants **solely on merit and qualifications**. All prospective students – including women and individuals of any ethnic or religious background – are given equal consideration for admission. No one is denied access to courses or programs on the basis of personal attributes. In fact, Al Ain University explicitly guarantees access to its undergraduate programs and extension courses under this non-discrimination principle, ensuring that traditionally underrepresented or disadvantaged groups have the same opportunities to enroll and learn. This reflects the UAE's broader commitment to educational access for all and AAU's own dedication to equity in education aau.ac.ae.

Diversity in the University

<https://aau.ac.ae/en/about-aau/diversity>

AAU strongly believes diversity to be fundamental to academic excellence as the values of equal opportunity to access education are deeply-rooted in the UAE diverse community. Experience has shown that the more varied the backgrounds and perspectives of students and faculty, the richer the academic experience becomes.

For faculty and professional staff, diversity reinforces ties in the workplace leading to the ultimate success and realization of goals. Similarly, for students, learning in a diverse educational environment affords students the opportunity for personal growth, instills the values of mutual respect, and builds the spirit of teamwork leading to a generation of professionals who will be able to help build a closely-knit community.

Moreover, working towards the future requires raising a generation of professionals who are able to work in a diverse, pluralistic workplace, and who deal with others on the basis of contribution and character. To that end, AAU strives to create a healthy diverse atmosphere where students and faculty from all backgrounds and origins can positively interact and effectively contribute to the exchange of information and the flow of knowledge in a way that assists each and every one of them in the pursuit of their goals hence contributing to achieving the mission of AAU.

At AAU's diverse learning environment, faculty and students come together in a welcoming and respectful setting that allows access to education for all and offers them the maximum opportunity for a culturally diverse experience.

Employment and Staff Inclusion:

The university's commitment to equal opportunity extends to its hiring and employment practices as well. AAU has adopted an **equal-opportunity, non-discriminatory recruitment policy** for faculty and staff, aiming to select the most qualified candidates **regardless of the applicant's gender, race (ethnicity), religion, or physical disability** qaa.ac.uk. In other words, recruitment and promotion decisions are based on merit and performance, not on personal characteristics. The university's Human Resources department provides guidance to ensure that everyone involved in hiring or promotion observes this non-discrimination policy at all times qaa.ac.uk. This policy helps foster a diverse workplace and inclusive campus culture, with staff and professors from many nationalities and backgrounds contributing to AAU's academic community qaa.ac.uk.

Teaching staff

Institutions should assure themselves of the competence of their teachers. They should apply fair and transparent processes for the recruitment and development of the staff.

Findings

5.1 AAU aspires to attract and hire faculty members from reputable and prestigious international universities. To assist the institution in meeting the objective, vacancies are advertised widely, including through the AAU website, electronic and print media, social media and other forums. The selection process for faculty members is underpinned by the requirement to possess an excellent academic record, research potential and effective teaching experience. Vacant posts are filled through a hiring process implemented by a Faculty Recruitment and Hiring Committee, which is headed by the college Dean, with representation from each programme in the college. The team found that AAU follows clear, transparent and fair processes for staff recruitment and has suitable conditions of employment in place.

5.2 AAU issues an annual Faculty Handbook which is produced for academic staff and includes details about the organizational structure of the University, duties and responsibilities of faculty members together with faculty appointment and recruitment arrangements. The handbook is a comprehensive guide for faculty members working at AAU and complies with the structure indicated by the CAA standards. Professional support staff recruitment is described within the AAU Staff Handbook which outlines the staff recruitment process and procedures. The team considered that information pertaining to critical policies and procedures that staff are required to follow were clearly and comprehensively contained in relevant handbooks.

5.3 AAU has adopted an equal opportunity and non-discriminatory recruitment policy, which aims to select qualified candidates regardless of the applicant's gender, race, religion or physical disability. As of 2023, AAU had 209 full-time faculty members across two campuses and distributed among its six colleges. A significant proportion of faculty (more than 75%) were from, Jordan, Egypt, Canada and Pakistan. Male colleagues constituted 65% of teaching staff and the remaining 35% were women. The distribution of faculty rank was as follows: Professor (19%), Associate Professor (34%), Assistant Professor (39%) and Instructor (8%).

AAU Goals and Objectives

<https://aau.ac.ae/en/ce-goals-and-objectives>

- to ensure that faculty and staff are equipped with the knowledge and skills to undertake their roles effectively;
- to ensure that the development needs of individuals and teams are met in line with organizational need;
- to ensure that effective systems and processes for the identification and support of development needs are in place;
- to ensure that staff development needs are addressed equitably and fairly within the University's diversity and equality frameworks;
- **all staff, regardless of grade, experience, length of service, level within the organization, or location should have access to appropriate developmental opportunities.**

Inclusive Environment and Zero Tolerance for Discrimination

AAU's policy framework **rejects all forms of discrimination** and actively promotes a campus environment of respect, dignity, and **human rights**. The university upholds the principle that every individual has the right to be treated with respect and equality, and it embeds this principle in its codes of conduct and operations. Accordingly, any form of **harassment, prejudice or discrimination** – whether based on race, color, gender, religion, social class, disability, or any other factor – is strictly not tolerated. There are clear procedures for reporting and addressing grievances related to discrimination or harassment, ensuring that such issues are handled fairly and promptly. This stance is supported at the highest levels of the university's governance: AAU's leadership and policies emphatically affirm that **diversity and inclusion** are core values of the institution qaa.ac.uk.

Non-Discrimination Policy

[MOE_Strategy.pdf](#)

Al Ain University guarantees access to both extension courses and undergraduate courses using Non Discrimination Policy, which allows free access to women, people of different religions, sexual orientation to any type of training in the development of free personality, then the policy developed by Al Ain University is observed.

Table 1. Non-Discrimination Policy Al Ain University

Subject	Governance and Management	Policy number	1.0
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		Effective Date	Sep. 2018
Title of the policy	Non Discrimination Policy	Latest Revision	Sep. 2019
Approval Authority	University Council	Due Date for Next Review	Sep. 2023
Implementation Authority	HR, Deans Council	Pages of this policy	1
Definitions	Discrimination and harassment as a form of discrimination is a negative attitude/action that is directed towards someone based on protected element during the course of work/education life: following are the elements of discrimination: • Gender • Marital Status • Ethnicity/nationality • Age • Religion • Disability/Special Needs		
Purpose	The Objective of the policy is to promote fair and equal treatment during the day to day operations of university and protect our employees and stakeholders from any harmful offence arising from discrimination, This policy supports our commitment to happier and safer work place for all.		
Scope	The policy scope covers all the employees of AAU as well as the students.		
Statement	AAU in line with UAE core values, upholds the principle that all the individual has the right to be treated with respect and equality. Any discrimination, or prejudicial treatment towards students, faculty members, admin staff, and or other stakeholders; undermines the AAU's essential ethics which shall not be tolerated.		
Procedures	All the AAU community is encouraged to report the cases witnessed or experienced. The incident can be reported through the set standards of grievance procedures. (for grievance procedures see policy 4.k.1 and 4.k.2)		

Support and Safety Measures:

In line with its equity and diversity commitments, Al Ain University provides support mechanisms for anyone who might face bias or mistreatment. The university has put in place measures for the care and assistance of individuals affected by **gender-based violence or harassment** in any university context (whether on campus or in virtual environments). Incidents of gender-based violence are taken seriously and handled with confidentiality and support – victims are offered assistance and referral to appropriate services, and the university works within legal frameworks to address the misconduct. By enforcing these measures, AAU strives to maintain a safe environment for all genders. Moreover, the institution emphasizes that academic and professional opportunities – such as training, research participation, career advancement, and leadership roles – are open equally to all members of the university community.

Work-Life Balance and Inclusion:

Al Ain University also recognizes the importance of accommodating personal and family needs as part of an inclusive campus. Its policies aim to help students and staff **balance their work, family, and academic life**. For example, the university provides flexibility and support where possible (such as maternity leave policies, accessible facilities for people with disabilities, and counseling services) so that no individual is unfairly disadvantaged in their educational or career progress due to their personal circumstances. This holistic approach ensures that equity and inclusion are not only about admission and hiring, but also about day-to-day participation and success within the university.

Conclusion

AAU as an institution has robust policies to ensure equitable access and inclusion. The university's official non-discrimination and diversity policies guarantee that access to academic, professional, and extracurricular activities is available to all **regardless of ethnicity, religion, gender, disability, or background** qaa.ac.uk. These policies are applied across the board – in student admissions, in faculty/staff recruitment, and in campus life – thereby fostering a diverse community where everyone has equal opportunities to learn, work, and grow. Al Ain University's stance is clear: it *rejects discrimination in all forms* and is committed to upholding the rights and dignity of every human being in its community qaa.ac.uk. This commitment to equity and diversity is integral to AAU's mission and helps create an inclusive atmosphere that benefits academic excellence and social development alike.

[View Page](#)