



Policy: **Policy on Professional Development for Academic and Administrative Staff**

AUM Policy Category: Staff

Policy Title	Policy on Professional Development for Academic and Administrative Staff
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Responsible Office	Office of Vice President for Administration and Development
Responsible Executive(s)	Coordinator of Centre of Excellence

1. Preamble

The American University of Malta strongly believes that its human resource is surely its most valuable asset. AUM is conscious that its ability to meet its institutional objectives is dependent on the aggregate attributes and contributions of its staff, whether in terms of knowledge, skill or potential. In order to sustain a quality culture, and as part of an overall of a continuous improvement plan, AUM seeks to ensure that all its employees are part of a process of continuous professional development that not only ensures their personal growth within the University, but also enables them to optimally harness their potential. Furthermore, AUM recognizes that for it to be effective, any development process needs to be embedded in an all-inclusive open communication culture which promotes high levels of engagement from employees.

Accordingly, and as part of AUM's quality assurance strategy, this policy for professional development is established. To implement this policy, AUM commits to allocate the needed resources, tangible or intangible, and will provide the processes, systems and physical infrastructure.

The elements of this policy are listed hereunder.

- a) AUM will encourage all its members, whether academic, administrative or operational, to commit to a process of professional development.
- b) AUM will support and facilitate its employees through their professional development endeavours.
- c) As AUM acknowledges the different needs and motivations of its workforce, it will seek to customize professional development to the individual's needs and aspirations while maintaining their alignment with those of the institution.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all staff employed at the American University of Malta, both academic and administrative.

3. The Centre of Excellence

With reference to (1a), (1b), and (1c) above, AUM will instigate, equip and mobilise its “Center of Excellence” as a logical medium to facilitate the development of its staff. The Center will operate under the leadership of the Vice President for Administration and Development and will coordinate its activities with academic faculties, various administrative units including the Human Resource Department as well as external professional bodies and specialized training service providers.

Staff professional development is understood as the acquisition of knowledge, skills and behaviours that enable employees to perform better at their jobs and evolve in their career. This may take many forms including formal training, specialized courses, seminars, workshops, in addition to mentoring and coaching. As such, the Center of Excellence is conceived as that enabling unit that is responsible for the following:

- a) Organising and scheduling training courses delivered in-house AUM staff or by external experts.
- b) Hosting seminars and workshops on new topics and technologies of relevance to the evolution of AUM and to the professional development of its community.
- c) Providing mentoring and coaching opportunities to AUM staff to help them achieve their aspirations and progress in their careers.
- d) Disseminate information of relevance to professional development.
- e) Advise AUM staff on development opportunities.

4. Academic Staff Development

It is well appreciated that academics can be quite proactive in professional development. As such, they are expected to define and organise around 60% of their professional development in the form of conference attendance, training on specialized hardware or software technologies that will advance their research or teaching, etc. In addition to this, AUM, through its Center of Excellence, will organize professional development activities that are pertinent to improving the operation of AUM. Examples could include new policy awareness, innovations in education, etc., and these may account up to 30% of the academic’s professional development activity. Furthermore, it is expected that an academic attends professional development activities organized by external agents to further their knowhow in innovations in teaching and learning management, pertinent regulations and quality assurance.

5. Administrative Staff Development

Generally, administrative staff development is of a different nature to that of academics. It involves different elements and may include capacity building along the lines of operational software,

communication skills, teamwork, etc. Additionally, training may also include components relating to AUM policies, operational procedures as well as its quality systems.

6. Closure

This policy paper reflects AUM's commitment to the development of its staff, both academic and administrative. AUM will commit the necessary resources for its implementation and will ensure that all AUM employees benefit from it. The Center of Excellence is central to the whole exercise as it is the main body that will implement, monitor and evaluate the success of the professional development endeavours.