



Copyright © 2007  
Arab Open University  
Saudi Arabia Branch

Mapping the QAA Code  
Arab Open University  
This document was written by Saudi Arabia Branch  
For distribution to all tutors and staff tutors

---

# Mapping the QAA Code

Toward Meeting OUVS Accreditation Requirements

---

## Contents

Preface .....	2
Section 2: Collaborative Provision.....	3
Section 3: Students with disabilities.....	10
Section 4: External Examining .....	14
Section 5: Academic Appeals.....	17
Section 6: The Assessment of students.....	20
Section 7: Course Approval .....	24
Section 8: Career education, information and guidance .....	27
Section 9: Placement learning.....	30
Section 10: Recruitment and Admissions .....	33

# Preface

The *Code of practice for the assurance of academic quality and standards in higher education* (the *Code of practice*) is a publication from the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education. The *Code of practice* is intended to help higher education institutions to meet their responsibilities for the assurance of academic standards and quality, by providing a framework within which they can consider the effectiveness of their individual approaches to a range of activities.

Each section of the *Code of practice* indicates the key issues that we should consider in the respective areas of activity. The precepts encapsulate the matters that we could reasonably be expected to address through our own quality assurance arrangements.

The *Code of practice* does not, of course, cover all the activities of a higher education institution. Nor does it explicitly identify all the circumstances in which a particular section would be relevant - to do so would be impossible for a complex and innovative sector in which new developments take place all the time.

However, there are a number of principles that appear throughout the sections of the *Code of practice*; an awareness of, and commitment to, these key principles will help us to assure ourselves and others that we have developed and are applying good practice for our wide range of activities. The main principles identified in the *Code of practice* as underpinning good practice in assuring quality and standards in higher education are:

- A clear definition of responsibilities.
- Consistent application of policies and practices that are underpinned by principles of fairness and equality of opportunity.
- The availability of clear and accessible information.
- The competence of staff.
- Monitoring and review of policy, procedures and practices.

The AOU will not be asked about its adherence to the *Code of practice* on a precept by precept basis. Rather, we will be expected to explain in our self-evaluation documents how we have addressed the intentions of the precepts, including any resulting changes to our practices. Any areas of difficulty we have experienced should also be discussed in our self-evaluation documents.

The KSA Branch recognizes the role of the UKOU as an Awarding Institution, in certain respects, toward the AOU as a Partner Institution. The mapping contained herein is intended to serve as an opportunity to illustrate the Branch's understanding of and role in this valued partnership.



---

## Section 2: Collaborative Provision

---

### **Code percepts**

#### ***Part A:***

A1. The awarding institution is responsible for the academic standards ...

A2. The academic standards of all awards made ...

A3. Collaborative arrangements should be negotiated ...

A4. An up-to-date and authoritative record of the awarding institution's collaborative partnerships ...

A5. The awarding institution should inform any professional, ...

A6. The awarding institution's policies and practices should ensure that there are adequate safeguards against financial ...

### **Compliance & evidence**

The Branch understands and supports the role of the OU in working with the AOU and Branches to promote acceptable academic standards.

The AOU and the Branch work with the OU/OUVS to ensure application of accepted academic standards, especially the relevant Benchmark Standards set by the QAA Code of practice.

The AOU and the OU negotiated the current collaborative arrangement in 2000.

It is believed that the OU keeps such records, But for the AOU and Branches, there are no collaborative award arrangements with other parties.

The Branch shall do so when required.

The OU has always insisted on this aspect in order to safeguard the academic ownership of the institution by

	the concerned academic community of the AOU.
A7. Collaborative arrangements should be fully costed ...	<u>Standing Agreements</u> with the OUW provide full costing of the collaborative arrangements with the AOU.
A8. The educational objectives of a partner organization should be compatible with those of the awarding institution.	The goals and objectives of the AOU and the Saudi Arabia Branch are highly compatible with those of the OU, largely due to binding agreements.
A9. An awarding institution should undertake, with due diligence, an investigation ..	This is usually carried out via the jointly-appointed <u>External Examiners</u> and the periodic <u>OUVS Accreditation</u> and <u>Program Validation</u> , for which this document is intended.
A10. There should be a written and legally binding agreement ...	Collaborative arrangements with the OU are governed by a <u>Master Agreement</u> , complemented further by two other supporting agreements. Together, they provide a comprehensive framework of operational arrangements.
A11. The agreement or contract should make clear that any 'serial' arrangement ....	Agreements with the OU are limited to AOU, with no serial arrangement provided for.
A12. The awarding institution is ultimately responsible ...	The Branch and the AOU work closely with the OUVS/OU in order to make sure that AOU students achieve the academic standards required for the OU award. As an autonomous institution, the AOU issues its own awards as well. In turn, the AOU promotes similar achievement standards for its own awards. This is indeed one of the good side benefits to said collaboration.
A13. An awarding institution that engages with another authorized awarding body jointly to provide a program of study leading to a dual or joint academic award .....	The Collaborative Provision between the OU and the AOU provides for the awarding of dual degrees, one is issued by the AOU, and another issued jointly with the OU.

A14. The scope, coverage and assessment strategy of a collaborative program should be described in a program specification ....

Program specifications have been worked out jointly. Any modification by the AOU, for instance, to the core courses, must be screened by the OUVS/OU.

A15. The awarding institution should make appropriate use of the Code ...

OUVS/OU works closely with the AOU in promoting the use of the QAA Code. The Branch takes this seriously in the delivery of programs of study, student assessment, provision of student services, and other issues of concern.

A16. In case of a collaborative or FDL arrangement ....

The OU/OUVS works closely with the AOU on monitoring the delivery of programs of study for which the OU makes joint awards.

A17. The awarding institution should be able to satisfy itself that staff engaged in delivering or supporting a collaborative program are appropriately qualified ...

OU and OUVS have access to such data at the Branch. In particular, and in line with AOU policy, Tutors are appointed only if they hold a Master degree in the discipline; Staff Tutors must hold a Doctorate in the discipline.

A18. The awarding institution should ensure that arrangements for admission...

The Branch follows an open and equitable policy of student admission.

A19. The awarding institutions is responsible for ensuring that the outcomes of assessment ....

External Examiners, in particular, help both the OU and the AOU to keep assessment in check. Furthermore, the newly installed Course Assessment Committees, on suggestion of the OU/OUVS, serve to ensure the same.

A20. The awarding institution should ensure that a partner organization involved in the assessment of students understands and follows the requirements ...

At the Branch, there has recently been a more vigorous campaign of workshop training and awareness creation on needs and requirements of student assessment, with particular reference to issues of Learning Outcomes and QAA Subject Benchmarks.

A21. External examining procedures ....	Procedures for external examining at the AOU, involving the Branches, have been laid down in close consultation with the OUVS/OU.
A22. The awarding institution must retain the ultimate responsibility for the appointment and functions of external examiners. ...	A specific agreement on “ <u>Accreditation and Validation</u> ”, together with the <u>Master Agreement</u> , dictate that nominations are made by the AOU, and appointments approved by the OU/OUVS.
A23. External examiners of collaborative programs must receive briefing ...	In practice, EEs are always briefed on scope of mission, and on the AOU. The <u>External Examiners Handbook</u> contains such information. It is supplied to all EEs.
A24. The awarding institution should ensure that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It has sole authority ...</li> </ul>	For its awards, the OU has indeed the sole authority for various issues concerning OU-based awards. The Branch respects this arrangement.
A25. The minimum level of information that prospective and registered students should have about a collaborative program is the program specification ...	The Branch posts on its website, <a href="http://www.arabou.org.sa">www.arabou.org.sa</a> , detailed information on program description and learning outcomes for all programs of study, delivered under the collaboration of partnership.
A26. The information made available to prospective and those registered on a collaborative program should include information to students about the appropriate channels for particular concerns, ...	AOU students have direct access to the OU. Furthermore, student issues are invariably discussed between the two institutions in an open spirit of partnership.
A27. The awarding institution should monitor regularly the information given by the partner organization ...	The Branch welcomes the opportunity to supply the OU with any required information deemed of need for the operation of the collaboration.

A28. The awarding institution should ensure that it has effective control over the accuracy ...

Information on program of study is usually procured from the OU since they are under license for the OU.

**Part B:**

B1. Students should have access to: documents, ...; description ...; clear schedule ....

Full information on program description, learning outcomes, and study plans are available on the Branch website.

B2. The awarding institution, whether or not working through a program presenter, should ensure that students can be confident that: ....

Standing Agreements with the OU/OUVS require so. The Branch has made major renovation to its website in order to fulfill such aims.

B3. Prospective students should receive a clear and realistic explanations of the expectations ...

The platform of open education adopted by the AOU is well explained to students through published university literature and postings on the Branch website.

B4. Students should have access to: a schedule ...; clear and up-to-date information about the learning support; ...

Again, the Branch newly-renovated website has major information on learning support vehicles available. In particular, the Branch uses a special e-learning platform that helps facilitate the learning process further. In addition, the

B5. Students should have: ... regular opportunities for inter-learner discussions; etc.

AOU adopts a number of resources that aim to make the learning process more effective: regular weekly tutorial sessions; office hours by the Tutors; email and chatting facilities with the Tutors, and amongst students themselves; video streaming of lectures; etc.

B6. The awarding institution, whether or not working through a support provider, should be able to ensure that students can be confident that: staff ... have appropriate skills; support for learners meet expectations; etc. ...

B7. Students should have access to: information on the ways in which their achievements will be judged; timely formative assessment on their academic performance; ...

B8. The awarding institution, whether or not working with a program presenter or support provider, should ensure that students can be confident that: their assessed work is properly attributed to them; those with responsibility for assessment are capable; mechanisms for transfer of their work are secure; etc.

The OU is well aware of the quality of academic staff at the AOU and the Saudi Arabia Branch. They are well-qualified in the discipline of the program of study. University regulations of academic staff appointment dictate so.

Published AOU Award Regulations; Exam Regulations; and handouts of Course Calendars; altogether, make assessment and achievement principles quite clear.

The Branch is indeed working on the newly- adopted e-Learning platform to make sure that transfer of student work, and allocation of mark credits are made in a secure environment. Currently, these matters are handled by the Tutors directly with students.



---

## Section 3: Students with disabilities

---

### Code percepts

1. Institutions should ensure that in all their policies, .... consideration is given to the means of enabling disabled students' participation ...
2. Institutions should ensure that disabled students can have access to the physical environment ...
3. Institutions should ensure that facilities and equipment are as accessible as possible to disabled students.
4. The institution's publicity, program details and general information should be accessible to people with disabilities ...
5. In selecting students, institutions should ensure equitable consideration of all applicants.
6. Disabled applicants' support needs should be identified ...

### Compliance & evidence

The Branch is committed to enabling disabled student achieve their academic goals. Specific University policies need to be clearly put in place.

Disabled students are assisted to access physical resources via special elevators and pathways. More is planned in the design of permanent premises.

The Branch, for instance, locates tutorial sessions and lab sessions for the disabled at ground floor. Elevators are also accessible at ground floor.

Programs and opportunities of study are posted on the Branch website. It is recognized that Branch and University may need to provide more information on other opportunities which are tailor-made for the disabled.

The Branch admits all academically-qualified students, including the disabled.

The Branch acknowledges that the University needs to formulate special policies, and identify particular support needs for the disabled.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 7. The arrangements for enrollment, registration and induction ...  | The Branch makes every effort in assisting the disabled in these regards, with special consideration for the situation.   |
| 8. Program specifications should include no unnecessary barriers ...  | Fortunately, current programs of study have no particular requirements that may put the disabled at a disadvantage.   |
| 9. Academic support services and guidance should be accessible and appropriate to the needs of the disabled.                            | The Branch, especially in the design of its permanent premises, shall take this into serious consideration.   |
| 10. The delivery of programs should take into account the needs of disabled people ...  | As mentioned previously, disabled students are given priority to attend tutorial and lab sessions at ground floor.  |
| 11. Institutions should ensure that, wherever possible, disabled students have access to academic and vocational placement ...          | Current programs of study have no formal component of placement learning. But the Branch is committed to helping the disabled to find suitable placement learning opportunities if so sought. |
| 12. Disabled research students ...  | The University does not currently run research programs.  |
| 13. Assessment and exam policies, practices and procedures should provide disabled students with the same opportunity ...               | The Branch is omitted to that. Its <u>Equal Opportunity Policy</u> , posted on the web, states so.  |
| 14. Where studying is interrupted as a result of a disability-related cause, ....   | Again, there may be a need to formalize such a policy by the University.  |
| 15. Induction and other relevant training programs for all staff ...  | The Branch and the University need to initiate such action more formally.   |
| 16. Students with disabilities should have access to the full range of support services that are available to their non-disabled peers. | The University mission and the Branch commitment shall ensure the same.   |

17. Institutions should ensure that there are sufficient designated members of staff with appropriate skills and experience ...

The Branch needs to work on this. The Branch shall post a special mention on its website for disabled students to make their needs known to the concerned Office of Student Affairs.

18. Institutions should identify and seek to meet the particular needs of individual disabled students.

The concerned Office of Student Affairs shall be kept informed accordingly.

19. Internal communications systems should ensure that appropriate staff receive information ...

When detailed policy is drawn up, this will form part of it.

20. Institutions should have a clearly defined policy on the confidentiality and disclosure of information ...

Information on general issues of complaints is made available to all students on the Branch website; and so is information on academic appeals.

21. Institutions should ensure that information about all complaints and appeals policies and procedures is available ...

In practice, all types of complaints are usually lodged with the office of the Branch Director and/or Office of Student Affairs. In addition, the open forum on the website is another resource for students to channel their complaints.

22. Institutions should have in place policies and procedures to deal with complaints ....

23. Institutional information systems should monitor the applications, admissions, academic progress and nature of impairment of disabled students.

The Office of Student Affairs shall be instructed to keep track of academic and other needs of disabled students.



---

## Section 4: External Examining

---

### Code percepts

1. An institution should ask its external examiners to report on: academic standards, ....
2. Institutions should state clearly and communicate to all concerned the various, roles, powers and responsibilities assigned to their external examiners ...
3. Prior to the confirmation of mark lists, pass lists ...
4. Institutions will make every effort to ensure that their external examiners are competent ....
5. Institutions should define explicit policies and regulations ....
6. Institutional procedures should ensure that potential conflicts ....

### Compliance & evidence

The External Examiners Handbook, on-site briefing, and EE report form, all make this clear to the EEs.

The External Examiners Handbook, distributed to all concerned, makes this very clear.

The University has during last External Examining deliberations installed in place Course Assessment Committees. Each CAC is chaired by the concerned EE of the course.

The AOU appoints EEs, in collaboration with the OUVS, and makes sure that they are qualified in the discipline, and have experience as EEs.

Formal Agreements with the OU/OUVS dictate joint collaboration for appointments fo EEs.

AOU is aware of this, and has in the past refrained from certain appointments where conflict of interest was at stake.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 7. Institutions should ensure that, once appointed, EEs are provided with sufficient information ....          | EEs are provided, in advance, with a copy of the External Examiners Handbook. On-site, copies of TMA; MAs; Final Exam Scripts; course raw marks, etc. are all provided to them |
| 8. Institutions should state clearly, and communicate to all concerned the programs and awards ...             | Copies of programs of study are usually provided to the EEs.   |
| 9. Institutions will wish to agree with their external examiners the evidence ....                             | At the AOU, this has now become a standard practice: samples of students' work and course raw marks are provided.  |
| 10. Institutions should require EEs to submit at agreed times a written report ...                             | EEs do submit reports on standard, agreed-upon forms; and are asked to submit reports within short, reasonable times.  |
| 11. Institutions should indicate the required form ...   | Forms are standard, and are agreed-upon with the OUVS. EEs are supplied with these forms, and are requested to adhere to the same.   |
| 12. Institutions should ask EEs to send their reports to the head of the institution ...                       | The <u>form</u> and the <u>EE Handbook</u> dictate so. Also, practice has been so.   |
| 13. Full and serious consideration should be given by the institution to comments and recommendations ....     | EE reports, together with response of the concerned Faculty Council, are discussed in meetings of the Academic Committee, chaired by the Rector.                               |
| 14. Institutions should ensure that EEs are, within a reasonable time, provided with a considered response ... | Pursuant to deliberations by the University Academic Committee, EEs are provided with response via the concerned Dean of Faculty.  |



---

## Section 5: Academic Appeals

---

### Code percepts

1. Institutions should effective procedures...

2. The procedure should be ratified by the governing body ...

3. Institutions should ensure that their procedures are fair ...

4. Institutions should address student appeals and complaints in a timely manner ...

5. Information on complaints and appeals procedures should be published ...

6. Sources of impartial help ...

7. The complaints procedures should identify the persons or bodies from whom authoritative guidance ....

### Compliance & evidence

Branch abides by adopted University Rules & Regulations; Exam R&Rs, contained in the Handbook of Academic R&Rs; Rules are published in the annual Student Manual; Special Student Appeals Memo also announced to all students at the Branch.

Appeals procedures are ratified by the University Council.

Appeals are considered by the Branch Exam Committee, followed by the Faculty Exam Committee, and the HQ Central Exam Committee. Having more than one stop helps to promote fairness.; see Exam R&Rs.

Exam R&Rs dictate set reasonable time frames for each stage of consideration.

Information is published in Student Manual; Student Appeals Memo, and on Branch website: [www.arabou.org.sa](http://www.arabou.org.sa)

Students can always seek advice and help form their Senior Tutors and the Branch Management on cases of concern

Complaints are handled through a special online mechanism made available to all students, and announced on the Branch website

8. Those responding to, investigating or adjudicating upon complaints ...	No person who has been in the teaching and/or assessment, or has been party to the complaint, is allowed to sit on an investigation committee.
9. A complainant or appellant should be entitled to be accompanied ...	Complainants can seek outside legal advice.
10. The documents should indicate what further internal procedures ....	Matters of appeals are dealt with, in a final verdict, by the Central Exam Committee. Complaints, on the other hand, are usually dealt with at Branch level, thereby giving students full access to local system resources. However, students can pursue the matter at the HQ as well.
11. Institutions should ensure ....	Appeal cases and ensuing actions taken are documented; and outcomes are relayed to the student.
12. Institutions should meet reasonable and proportionate incidental expenses ...	Form past experience, no cases warranted meeting such expenses. But if matter arises, Branch shall deal with accordingly.
13. Institutions should have in place effective arrangements ...	Periodic review of rules and regulations are made at the University Council. Last modifications were made in 2006.
14. Institutions should keep their monitoring and review arrangements ...	Branches and Faculties can suggest review of rules & regulations when matter warrant the same, at next University Council meetings



---

## Section 6: The Assessment of students

---

### Code percepts

1. As bodies responsible for academic standards, institutions should have effective procedures ....
2. The principles, procedures and processes of all assessment should be explicit, valid and reliable.
3. Institutions should have effective mechanisms to deal with breaches of assessment regulations ...
4. The institution should implement effective, clear and consistent policies ...
5. Institutions should ensure that assessment is conducted with rigor and fairness and with due regard to security.

### Compliance & evidence

There are in place Exam R&Rs, approved by the University Council. Also, Final Exams are unified in content and time of presentation for all Branches; they get reviewed, and ratified by the External Examiners (EEs).

Exam rules are clear and documented.

Exam R&Rs, together with Student Conduct R&Rs make clear statements regarding breaches of Assessment Rules, and the ways for appeals.

Regulations stipulate clear policies for roles of the different bodies involved in handling assessment issues: the Course Assessment Committee; the Branch Exam Committee; and the Central Exam Committee; see Compendium of Academic Regulations.

The AOU and the SA Branch have introduced clear assessment guidelines for the TMAs and the Final Exams. Monitoring is also performed by the Staff Tutors. In addition, there are adopted General Marking Guidelines and a Group Marking Strategy, all to ensure rigor and fairness. Final Exams are handled directly by the Dean.

6. Institutions should ensure that the scheduling and amount of assessment ....

Assessment is spread over a range of tools, including Tutor-Marked Assignments) TMAs, Midterm Assessment, and Final Exams. There is, however, a feeling of over-assessment. The issue is under debate at University Council level.

7. Institutions should publish and implement consistently, clear criteria for the marking and grading of marks.

All assessment components have key answers/assessment guidelines approved by the Dean's office. The General Marking Guidelines and the Group Marking Strategy provide further guidelines in this regard.

8. Institutions should ensure that there are robust mechanisms for marking and for the moderation of marks

Regulations ensure that via approved Group Marking Strategy and dictated monitoring by the Staff Tutors; see Compendium of Academic Regulations.

9. Institutions should evaluate periodically the maintenance and development of its academic standards

The University Council usually does this. The office of Vice Rector for Research & Planning is mainly responsible for this issue.

10. Institutions should publish clear criteria for the aggregation of marks and grades ...

The University uses the Standard Deviation Method together with other indicators for aggregating the marks in a fair manner. The Branch supplies its input and recommendations in this regard.

11. Institutions should ensure that where they practice compensation ....

Condonation is allowed only for cases of approved excuses of absence from Final Exams, whereby makeup exams are allowed.

12. Institutions should ensure that appropriate feedback is provided to students ...

Tutors are required to provide sufficient feedback remarks on marked assessments of all kinds, especially the TMAs.

13. The institutions should ensure that all staff involved in the assessment of students are competent ...
- All academic staff employed by the Branch are qualified and competent. Tutors hold Master degrees in the discipline; Staff Tutors hold doctorates. University Academic Bylaws dictate so.
14. The languages of assessment ...
- English is the language of assessment. Towards improving student language competency, the Branch, early on, pioneered, and continues to run a special English Preparatory Program, followed by two courses in English language skills. The University Council is also considering adding a third technical English language course.
15. The institutions should ensure that where a program forms part of the qualifications ....
- No programs offered require special professional qualifications.
16. Institutions should have effective mechanisms for the review and development of assessment regulations.
- Branches, Faculties, and the HQ can suggest changes to the University Council. Indeed, changes have been made to Award Regulations and Exam Regulations, more than once, when the need calls for the same.
17. Institutions should ensure that assessment decisions are recorded ...
- Recommendations and decisions concerning assessment matters are recorded appropriately, including deliberations by the EEs.
18. Institutions should ensure that the decisions of relevant examination boards are published as quickly as possible ...
- The Branch is usually very anxious to publish decisions taken in this regard, especially ratification of final grades by the Central Exam Committee, as soon as made available.



---

## Section 7: Course Approval

---

### Code percepts

1. Institutions ensure that their responsibilities for standards and quality ...
2. Institutions should ensure that the overriding responsibility of the academic authority ...
3. Institutions make use of external participation ...
4. Approval, monitoring and review processes are clearly described ...
5. Institutions publish, or make available, the principles to be considered ...
6. Institutions ensure that program approval decisions are informed by full considerations of academic standards ...

### Compliance & evidence

The University Charter sets new program approval (financial aspect) by the Board of Trustees. Approval of program content and delivery (academic) is entrusted to the University Council, per Award Regulations.

Academic quality and standards are set by the University Council. Award Regulations set the general framework for program makeup.

At University Council level, input is assured from other Faculties and other Branches; thereby providing external participation to program locality.

Such processes, especially for monitoring, are described, in detail, within the Compendium of Academic Regulations, made available to all academic staff.

The Award Regulations contain part of the principles to be considered in course design; but perhaps there is a need to work out a general framework of principles for program and course designs.

Program design is Faculty-based, while program approval rests academically with the University Council; see Award Regulations.

7. Institutions routinely monitor (in an agreed cycle) the effectiveness of their programs ...
- Annual course reviews by External Examiners, and Deliberations by Faculty Council members, in addition to annual student evaluation of Tutors and courses, all together, contribute to the annual monitoring of program performance and effectiveness.
8. Institutions periodically undertake a broader review ...
- While parts of such reviews are carried out, in an ad hoc manner, at Faculty Councils and Branch meetings, perhaps there is a need to structure such reviews more formally, on annual bases.
9. In the event of a decision to discontinue a program ...
- The University is committed to run the program till all admitted students have appropriate opportunities to finish their studies. In addition, Local Accreditation usually requires such measures to be taken.
10. Institutions have a means of assessing the effectiveness of their program design, approval, monitoring and review practices
- The University Council is responsible for instigating such evaluation. Perhaps it should formally adopt policies which mandate the annual review of practices by Faculty Councils and the Branches.



---

## Section 8: Career education, information and guidance

---

الجامعة العربية المفتوحة

Arab Open University

### Code percepts

1. The institution should have a clear, documented and accessible policy ....
2. CEIG provision should be impartial, client-focused, ....
3. CEIG provision should be subject to the institution's quality assurance procedures.
4. The institution should seek to identify and cater for the special needs of students ....
5. The institution should ensure that its CEIG provision is designed to prepare its students for a successful transition to employment ...
6. The institution should ensure that CEIG interests are represented in appropriate decision-making forums.

### Compliance & evidence

Policy is published on the Branch website, at [www.arabou.org.sa](http://www.arabou.org.sa). Branch got this started in October 2006, under the name of Office of Career Counseling and Guidance (OCCG).

In operation, the Branch shall strive to make it so. This is a new experience for the Branch.

As this is a new experiment, the Branch shall, in collaboration with other parts of the AOU, work out quality assurance guidelines for such an office.

The proposed workshops which comprise an integral part of the tasks assigned to OCCG should address such concerns.

This is the central theme to the principles of operation of OCCG as declared in the list of its duties and responsibilities.

The OCCG is an integral part of "Student Affairs." Such a unit is represented in the Branch Council as dictated by the University Charter.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 7. CEIG should be promoted internally, with mechanism in place to support and encourage collaboration ....                                   | Perhaps a short exposure to this and other Student Services should be incorporated in the current General Requirement <u>course on “Independent Study Skills”</u> . The Branch will deliberate on this further. |
| 8. Students should be provided with information on the services available ....   | Information is provided on the <u>Branch website</u> .  |
| 9. The institution should make clear in its information to prospective an present students ...   | This type of information is posted on the <u>Branch website</u> under “ <u>Program Description</u> ”, for all programs.   |
| 10. The institution should promote close collaboration between employers and CEIG providers ...  | This is indeed the spirit behind establishing the OCCG. It is a main part of the tasks of said office.  |
| 11. The institution should ensure that its CEIG provision takes account of development in the employment market...                           | Again, this is a new experiment for the Branch. But its duties dictate so.  |
| 12. The institution should ensure that all members of its staff involved with CEIG provision, including academic staff, have the skills, ... | The Branch shall employ the experiences of the more senior staff to help in achieving such goals.   |
| 13. Providers of CEIG services should be required to account formally and regularly for the quality and standards...                         | This will be institutionalized as part of the <u>Quarterly Report</u> which the Branch provides to the AOU-HQ on regular basis.   |
| 14. The institution should ensure that data collected by the institution on graduate destinations informs its CEIG provision.                | The OCCG is required to collect and monitor such data. It is also intended to help build effective partnerships with the local job market.  |



---

## Section 9: Placement learning

---

### Code percepts

1. Where placement learning is an intended part of a program of study ...
2. Institutions should have in place policies ...
3. Institutions should be able to assure themselves that placement providers know what their responsibilities are ....
4. Prior to placements, institutions should ensure that students are made aware of their responsibilities and rights.
5. Institutions should ensure that students are provided with appropriate guidance ...
6. Institutions should ensure that their staff who are involved in placement learning are competent to fulfill their role.
7. Institutions should ensure that there are procedures in place for dealing with complaints ....

### Compliance & evidence

No program of study requires placement learning as a formal part of the program.

The Branch, on ad hoc basis, assists students who want to engage in placement learning as an enhancement to their education.

The Branch, in referring students to local placement learning providers, makes sure this is indeed the case. The newly-established Office of Career Counseling and Guidance (OCCG) may be asked to engage in such matters.

Students are usually made aware of these issues as the Branch tries to negotiate their proper placement in the industry.

The Branch believes that incorporating such duties under the OCCG may indeed provide a better setup for this operation.

Currently, practice is on ad hoc basis. Staff Tutors do the job; and , they are qualified for said task.

Currently, complaints are handled through the Staff Tutor concerned. He usually acts as the student's advisor.

8. Institutions should monitor and review the effectiveness of their policies ...

Neither the Branch nor the University has a policy in place as placement learning is not mandatory in any program of study.





---

## Section 10: Recruitment and Admissions

---

الجامعة العربية المفتوحة

Arab Open University

### Code percepts

1. Institutions should ensure that they establish policies and procedures for the recruitment and admission of students ...
2. Institutions should ensure that promotional materials are relevant ....
3. Institutions should ensure that selection policies and procedures are transparent ...
4. Institutions should ensure that applicants are made aware of the obligations ...
5. Institutions should ensure that prospective students are informed ...

### Compliance & evidence

The University has recruitment and admission policies ratified by its Board of Trustees. Branch follows same policy. Policy is published in University literature; see Compendium of Academic Regulations; and also published on Branch website.

Promotional material adheres to adopted policy. The Student Manual (in Arabic) has been used extensively for said purpose. As of 2006, however, many policy items, including the Admissions Policy shall be made available on the Branch website.

Admissions policy is clear and transparent. Furthermore, all qualified applicants have so far been admitted to the Branch.

Details of obligations are embodied in the University regulations: Award Regulations; Exam regulations; Student Conduct Regulations; etc. These are contained in the Student Manual (in Arabic); and published on Branch website.

All applicants are informed of changes during initial "Academic Advisement", on initial enrollment. Program details shall be updated on the Branch website.

6. Institutions should explain to successful applicants ...
- “Academic Advisement” has been a practiced ritual since early days. Same will continue. Staff Tutors, supported by Tutors take charge of the task.
7. Policies and procedures to admissions and enrollment should be kept under regular review ....
- Practices, in particular, are under constant review. Admission enquiries and the process of admissions are under way to be made completely online. For now, admission letters are issued directly to applicants.
8. Institutions should ensure that all those involved in recruitment and admissions are competent ...
- The Branch employs qualified staff in the Admissions Office. Branch plans future developmental training.
9. Institutions should have policies and procedures in place for responding to applicants’ complaints ...
- The Branch has in place, via Branch website, an arrangement for lodging complaints and/or making suggestions for operational improvement. Follow up by Branch management is assured.