

## AUI 2015-2020 Strategic Plan Third Year Executive Summary of Progress

The university mission emphasizes our collective dedication to:

- Educating future citizen-leaders
- Using a global orientation
- Teaching and learning in the English-language
- Basing our curriculum on the American liberal arts system.
- Produce scientific research

Each of AUI's strategic units has a mission statement consistent with the university's mission. This ensures that the AUI strategic plan is in place and is constructed through on-going, campus-wide consultation.

Systemic evaluation is undertaken both internally and externally. Internally, regular program reviews occur. This occurs annually and is communicated to University constituencies through the Academic Council, the Advisory Administrative Council, the Student Government Association and faculty meetings across schools. External evaluations are required by our external accrediting bodies as well as by agreed upon external reviews by peers in the programs/cases where accreditation is not available.

Al Akhawayn University has made significant steps at building and integrating the necessary systems, processes and practices to ensure our mission's objectives. For instance, in order to respond to one of the main recommendations of NEASC which was to align planning with budgeting, the university introduced this year and is progressively implementing a 3-year budget. One of the main objective of this new way of dealing with budget is to make sure to mobilize and commit the necessary resources for the achievements of the priorities and objectives of the university Strategic Plan. Moreover, it is important to remember that quality assurance is a continuous process. In this sense, this section integrates the accomplishments and activity already documented earlier in this report such that the synergetic progress towards system-wide innovation can be seen.

In terms of the university current 2015-2020 Strategic Plan, significant progress has been made since its launch, particularly during the current academic year, as shown by the following evolution of the achievements in each one of the strategic priorities.

### **Annual achievement**

In this section, emphasis is given to each one of the six priorities of the university's Strategic Plan. Two types of updates are provided. The first one is the progress achieved during the current academic year, in numbers as well as in a narrative, while the second one is the progress achieved throughout the last three years, which are the first years of the current Strategic Plan. The objective is to note the progress made and to consider what remains to be done in the last years of the current Strategic Plan of the university.

### **Student Learning, Development and Success:**

After achieving 93% of the target over the first two years of the Strategic Plan in this priority, the university continued its steady progress and has achieved 94% of its target in 2017. This due to the steady improvement in student retention, in the completion/graduation rate, as well as the success of Al Akhawayn University students shown in previous parts of this report represent a clear evidence of the continuous progress the university is making in fulfilling its key mission. Student Satisfaction Surveys have also confirmed the improvements in student learning, development and success. Finally, the university has increased the involvement of its students in their communities, preparing them to be global citizens.

### **Quality Assurance and Enhancement:**

The university continued its steady and important improvements in terms of quality assurance and has fully achieved its target in the third year of the Strategic Plan as it evolved from an 80% achievement in 2016 to 100% in 2017. As a matter of fact, besides the fact that the year 2017 was the year the university obtained NEASC accreditation, the School of Science and Engineering obtained ABET accreditation, and the Bachelor in Business Administration was re-accredited, the university also created offices of quality assurance, internal auditing and institutional research. These offices are fully operational, and the pace of their establishment was accelerated due to commitments assumed within the NEASC accreditation process.

### **Internationalization:**

The university has made steady progress in its internationalization as it increased its achievement rate of its final target for the whole Strategic Plan from 69% back in 2016 to 72% in 2017. This progress was due to an increased international recruitment and retention of international students, faculty and staff.

Through its Office of International Programs (OIP), the University endeavors to support programs, activities, and actions that internationalize the university. This is primarily expressed through mobility programs for students, but also at the level of faculty, staff, partnerships, and curriculum. This year has witnessed an important increase in the number of AUI students who have participated in a program of study abroad, either at one of our partner institutions or through the Planned Educational Leave, PEL. The number of students who go on one of these programs in the summer has also increased.

The number of international students who come to AUI to study is another factor that partakes in the internationalization efforts of the University. The annual Arabic and North African Studies program, ARANAS, now in its 17<sup>th</sup> year, has attracted 51 students to its summer 2018 edition, representing an increase of 30% from last summer.

At the level of staff too, progress on this Internationalization priority has been made by the hiring of an American woman counselor. Hiring of this second full time counselor has reduced the wait time for students who need counseling and allowed the University to resume counseling services at its K through 12 school, ASI. Five international Presidential Interns are working in different departments contributing to enhancing the Liberal Arts approach and the international aspect of AUI. A new group is expected to be hired next year.

The College Consortium for International Studies (CCIS), of which AUI is now an Associate Member, is another platform through which the University advances on this front. It is worth noting that the current Executive Director of CCIS was a study abroad student at AUI in 2006.

**Advancement for Growth and Sustainability:**

This is one of the areas in which progress has been the lowest, as the rate of achievement went from 31% in 2016 to 47% in 2017. Indeed, although in terms of student recruitment, the university has not achieved its established objectives due to a changing national environment, and although the university has not launched any new programs during this academic year, it has increased the quality of the students it recruits, it as increased the number of minors and new concentrations, and it has reduced the campus costs through energy efficiency.

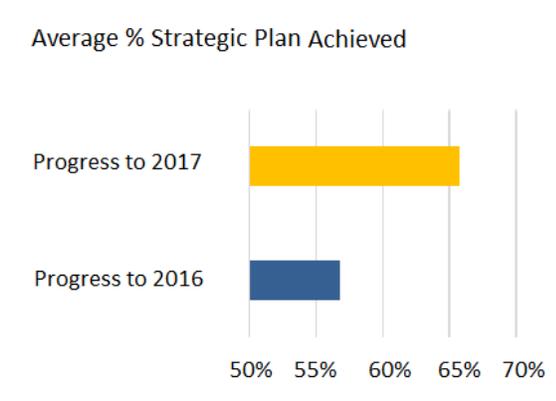
**Research, Innovation and Discovery:**

This is one of the most challenging strategic priorities for the university as it moved from an achievement rate - of the whole Strategic Plan - of 22% in 2016 to 36% in 2017. As a student centered learning higher education institution, the university aims at encouraging research and innovation without harming the quality of teaching it provides its students with. Nevertheless, during the current academic year, and through several actions and grants obtained by its faculty and researchers both at the regional, national and international levels, Al Akhawayn University has significantly contributed to the national debate on education through its research output. The Academic Council of the university has also approved the establishment of research units throughout the schools and centers in order to provide its faculty and students with a practical and useful research structure. However, the university has still not launched PhD programs, nor has hired faculty with an exclusive research profile.

**More Effective Communication:**

Effective communication has been one of the most challenging priorities for the university. During the current academic year, the achievement rate for the whole Strategic Plan period remained at 45%: although the university had a significantly enhanced presence in traditional and social media, it is only now shifting towards improving its communication across the university’s different units. This effort is being piloted by an intranet, and one of the major actions undertaken to this respect is that all policies and procedures are being placed in a central location.

**Graph 6.1** Average Overall Progress of AUI’s Strategic Plan compared to final objectives



**Graph 6.2** Average progress in each strategic priority:

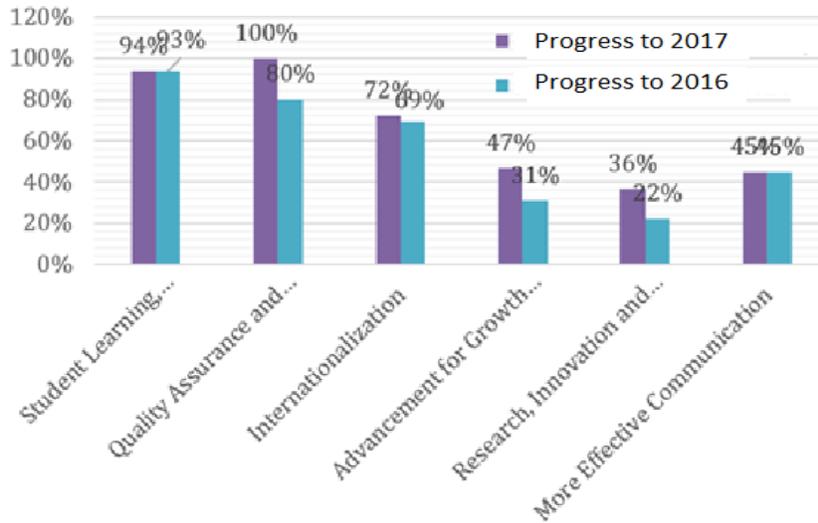


Table 6.1 monitors and summarizes the progress of the university towards achieving its Strategic Plan in 2020. In other words, if 100% is the target in 2020, the table shows the progress of the university in reaching each one of its strategic priorities over the last two years (2016 and 2017).

**Table 6.1:** Detailed Progress of each Strategic Priority

Strategic Priority	2017-2018 Progress
<b>Average % Strategic Plan Achieved (Average)</b>	66%
<b>Student Learning, Development and Success</b>	94%
<b>Quality Assurance and Enhancement</b>	100%
<b>Internationalization</b>	72%
<b>Advancement for Growth and Sustainability</b>	47%
<b>Research, Innovation and Discovery</b>	36%
<b>More Effective Communication</b>	45%