



# ***Strategic Planning Monitoring and Evaluation Manual – Version 1.0***

***Ref: UC/ P 672/2024***

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meeting No. UC/04/2023-24 held on Wednesday the 3<sup>rd</sup> of January 2024.***

### 1. Introduction:

The purpose of this manual is to develop a clear framework defining the role of Strategic Planning Directorate and other related channels in the process of development of strategic plan and sub-plans, implementation stage and evaluation. The manual provides a full-fledged framework with clear roles and responsibilities, frequency of each delaminated process and expected deliverables. The manual describes development and approval process as well as adopted frameworks.

### 2. Strategic Manual Alignment with National and International Frameworks:

1. Higher Education Council Strategy in line with Bahrain Vision 2030
2. Bahrain Quality Assurance Standards
3. United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

### 3. Roles and Responsibilities of the Strategic Planning Directorate:

The Strategic Planning Directorate is responsible to facilitate the development of Ahlia University Strategic Plan and sub-plans and ensure it implementation across the university-wide structure and reporting lines. The strategic planning directorate is responsible to measure the process made to the strategic plan and report at executive level to University Strategic Planning committee recommendable actions towards the attainment of the university objectives. The strategic planning directorate is responsible to:

- Having oversight of the Strategic Plan
- Leading on the co-ordination of planning, setting of performance measures using Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).
- Facilitating business planning, risk mitigating and external and internal performance monitoring.
- Develop executive reporting facilitating senior level decision making in relation to strategy, policy, and related processes.
- Obtaining, developing, and analysing management information to enable the President and University Council to make informed decisions.
- Supporting on University-wide procedures and issues leading to the attainment of the university strategy.

### 4. Channels involved in the development, monitoring the implementation and evaluation of the strategic plan and sub-plans:

- **Strategic Planning Directorate** – To develop a progress report on the implementation of the annual operational plans and next year planning.
- **Centre for Measurement and Evaluation** – To provide analysis assessing stakeholders' feedback and satisfaction to be utilized for quality improvements and integrated within the annual operational plans.

- **Centre for Accreditation and Quality Assurance** – To ensure the process of operational planning is quality assured.

## **5. Professional Development**

Strategic planning directorate will conduct professional development workshops to Academic and Support Staff in relation to:

1. Development and Evaluation of Operational Plans
2. Awareness of Strategic Plan and Staff Engagement
3. Individual Contributions and Execution to the Strategy

## **6. Stakeholder Engagement and Communications**

Strategic Planning Directorate in coordination with Centre for Measurement and Evaluation will work in collaboration to capture stakeholders' feedback through multiple means including surveys, consultation forums etc.

During the mid-cycle and periodic review cycle strategic planning directorate will communicate to stakeholders' major achievement of the strategic and obtain feedback for future planning.

## **Sections of the Strategic Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation Manual**

Section 1 – Periodic Review of the Strategic Plan

Section 2 – Strategic New Cycle Plan Development and Approval

Section 3 – Strategic Plan and Sub-Plans Implementation

Section 4 - Strategic Plan and Sub-Plans Monitoring and Evaluation Stage

Section 5 - Strategic Plan and Sub-Plans mid-cycle review

## Section 1 – Periodic Review of the Strategic Plan

### 1.1 Periodic Review and Development of the University Vision, Mission, Values and Strategic Plan

The purpose of the review process and procedure is to assess the status of implementation of AU strategic plan and identification of new plan with major revision covering all elements of the strategic plan to tackle the challenges posed by the dynamic changes taking place in the external and internal environments. A structured and formal process for reviewing Ahlia University Strategic Plan will cover all the following elements:

- Existing Vision and Mission statements
- Existing Goals and Values
- Existing Strategic Objectives
- Existing Strategic Targets
- Existing Key Performance Measures

This process and procedure will be followed **once every 5 years** or as defined by the senior management of the University. The next section provides the procedure involved in the review process of AU strategic plan.

### 1.2 Periodic Review Procedure

- The strategic planning directorate will identify the next plan period in consultation with the senior management and define the framework as directed by the senior management for developing the strategic plan and sub-plans.
- The strategic planning directorate will provide a detailed analysis on the performance of the university against the strategic objectives, key performance indicators and performance indicators of the current strategic plan. The analysis will highlight strategic objectives achieved and provide findings on other objectives that require to be addressed in the next plan to maintain continuity and address challenges.
- The strategic planning directorate will conduct a benchmarking exercise against national and international universities to gain insights on the direction in which other institutions are progressing and the challenges being addressed by them. This exercise could be useful to overcome certain environmental challenges.
- The strategic planning directorate will conduct consultations and discussions with identified stakeholders to obtain data regarding the current vision and mission and take their opinion in the development of a new strategic plan for the next plan period. The suggested stakeholders may **include but not limited to:**
  - a) AU Students including students studying as part of Cross Border programmes.
  - b) Employers of AU Graduates
  - c) External Advisory Board Members
  - d) Alumni

- e) Faculty Members (Including Members from all academic ranks, Professors, Associate Professors, Assistant Professors and Lecturers)
  - f) Heads and Directors of Administrative Units
  - g) Senior Management
  - h) Board of Directors and Board of Trustees Members
  - i) Administrative Staff
  - j) Affiliates or collaborating organisations/institutions.
- The strategic planning directorate in coordination with the ad-hoc committee to conduct various analysis using data collected while scanning Internal and External Environment (including primary and secondary data) and present the findings to for development of the new cycle of the strategic plan for the plan period identified.

## **Section 2 – Strategic New Cycle Plan Development and Approval**

### **2.1 Strategic New Cycle Plan Development Process**

- The President of the University will form an ad-hoc committee to review the analysis of the university's performance, findings of internal and external environment scanning, recommendations of the benchmarking and stakeholder's input.
- The ad-hoc committee will be responsible for the analysis of the data collected and provide recommendations to prepare the first draft of the strategic plan developed for implementation during the planned period to USPC within the framework defined by the senior management.
- The ad-hoc committee will be responsible to ensure that that strategic plan is developed in line with adopted standards and regulatory requirements e.g., HEC, BQA, UNSDGs etc.

### **2.2 Strategic Plan Review and Approval process:**

- USPC to review the newly developed strategic plan and provide feedback if any prior to approval and forward it to UC with a recommendation to approve.
- UC to deliberate on the newly developed strategic plan and give feedback to USPC if any for incorporation in the newly developed strategic plan prior to approval. Once the necessary changes are incorporated UC to approve the strategic plan developed for implementing during the plan period identified.
- Upon approval by University Council the new cycle of the strategic plan will be forwarded to Board of Trustees (BOT) for review and approval. BOT to advise any changes to the plan prior to approval and send the advice to UC for incorporation in the newly strategic plan. After the changes have been incorporated, BOT to approve the strategic plan identified for implementation during the plan period identified.
- Once the BOT approves the newly developed strategic plan, the plan will be implemented from the beginning of the planned period.

## **Section 3 – Strategic Plan and Sub-Plans Implementation**

### **3.1 Strategic Plan and Sub-Plans Implementation Stage:**

The Strategic Plan and Sub-Plans are implemented through a detailed operational plan that are developed in sync with the university strategic objectives, sub-plans initiatives and measured through the annual KPIs. The procedure is implemented annually as per the below processes:

### **3.2 The process of development annual operational plans**

- The annual operational plan is developed by the unit/department as designated within the university organizational structure.
- The annual operational plan is developed based on calendar year starting from January until December of each year in line with financial planning and budgeting.
- Every unit should ensure aligning the operational plan with the university objectives and sub-plans using the university mapping matrix.
- The operational plan must include clear actions with expected deliverables assessed through the annual KPIs of the university strategic plan or sub-plans.
- The operational plan to be developed considering allocating annual budgeting and risk management to maintain sustainable operations.

### **3.3 The process of review of the annual operational plans**

- The operational plans must be reviewed by the overseeing channels as per the organizational structure reporting lines.
- **For academic departments/units, operational plans are reviewed by the department council and college council to ensure alignment with the College Mission, Vision, and Goals and forwarded to USPC and University Council for final approval.**
- **For administrative departments, operational plans are reviewed by USPC and University Council to ensure alignment with the University Vision, Mission, and Strategic Objectives.**
- The strategic planning directorate supports the units/departments to ensure alignment clear and smart objectives are set towards attainment of university-wide objectives and mapping between the sub-plans.
- Strategic planning directorate coordinates with Centre for Accreditation and Quality Assurance (CAQA) and Centre for Measurement and Evaluations (CME) to set priorities and ensure utilization of data towards continuous improvements.

### **3.4 The process of approval of the annual operational plans**

- Operational plans are approved as per the university organizational structure reporting lines.
- For academic related operational plans, the operational plans are developed at department council and approved by college council and forwarded to University Strategic Planning Committee (USPC) for further review and final approval by University Council (UC)

- For admin related operational plans, the operational plans are developed by the unit/department/centre and forwarded to USPC for further review and final approval by UC.
- All the operational plans are subjected for a review by University Strategic Planning Directorate, Centre for Accreditation and Quality Assurance (CAQA) and Centre for Measurement and Evaluation (CME) to facilitate decision making at USPC.

## **Section 4 - Strategic Plan and Sub-Plans Monitoring and Evaluation Stage**

### **4.1 Strategic Plan and Sub-Plans Monitoring and Evaluation Stage:**

The Strategic Plan and Sub-Plans monitored through annual evaluation of the extent of achievement of the KPIs cross referenced the planned actions within the operational plans. The process of monitoring and evaluations is classified below:

#### **3.2 The process of monitoring the Implementation of the annual operational plans:**

**Duration: Every Semester**

- At the end of each semester the strategic planning director requests a progress report on the annual operational plans from the academic deans, chairpersons, and directors.
- The operational plan progress reports are analysed in terms of extent of implementation, utilization of stakeholder feedback, challenges faced and accruing risks to be mitigated by Strategic Planning Directorate, CAQA and CME.
- The analysis of the progress made is forwarded to the owners of the operational plan including academic deans, chairpersons, and directors with suggestions (if any) and to USPC for further review and decision making.
- Strategic Planning Directorate in coordination with CAQA and CME develop an Executive Reporting with set of suggestions to be integrated within operational plans to maintain sustainable progress, status of achievement of objectives and recommendations in terms of KPIs assessment metrics to facilitate decision making.

#### **3.3 The process of Evaluation the Implementation of the annual operational plans:**

**Duration: Annual**

- On annual basis the strategic planning director requests a progress report on the annual operational plans from the academic deans, chairpersons, and directors.
- The operational plan progress reports are analysed in terms of extent of implementation, utilization of stakeholder feedback, challenges faced and accruing risks to be mitigated by Strategic Planning Directorate, CAQA and CME.
- The analysis of the progress made is forwarded to the owners of the operational plan including academic deans, chairpersons, and directors with suggestions (if any) and to USPC for further review and decision making.

#### **3.4 The process of Evaluation the Implementation of the annual Strategic Plan KPIs and Sub-Plans KPIs:**

**Duration: Annual**

- On annual basis the director of the strategic planning directorate will develop an annual report describing the extent of achievement of the annual KPIs and strategic objectives. The strategic planning director will develop an annual report for the following:
  1. Annual Strategic Plan KPIs
  2. Annual Sub-Plans KPIs reports (highlighting the core functions)

### **3.5 Executive Evaluation and Streamlining of operations:**

- Strategic Planning Directorate in coordination with CAQA and CME develop an Executive Reporting with set of suggestions to be integrated within operational plans to maintain sustainable progress, status of achievement of objectives and recommendations in terms of KPIs assessment metrics to facilitate decision making.
- The report developed by Strategic Planning Directorate in coordination with CAQA and CME is discussed at USPC, and decisions will be implemented for the following year operational plans by the concerned channel.
- The director of the strategic planning directorate is responsible to ensure that approved USPC decisions are utilized for the following academic year. The process of operational planning development and approval will be followed subsequently.
- The annual reports are forwarded to UC for final approval, upon approval it is forwarded to the Board of Trustees as per the University Bylaws.
- Suggestions or recommendations by the Board of Trustees (if any) are communicated to USPC through the chairperson of USPC.

## **Section 5 Strategic Plan and Sub-Plans mid-cycle review**

### **5.1 Strategic Plan and Sub-Plans mid-cycle review, evaluation, and enhancement stage:**

The purpose of the mid-cycle review is to provide the extent of achievement of the overall strategy, assess the challenges and risks towards sustainable operations. The mid-cycle review is conducted to evaluate and enhance the overall strategy which includes evaluating the overall objectives, KPIs metrics and feasibility of targets set. **The mid-cycle review is normally conducted during the end of the third year with a consideration of the following stakeholder's engagement:**

1. Internal Stakeholders (Academic Staff, Support Staff and Students)
2. External Stakeholders (Alumni, Employers of Graduates, Internship Site Supervisors, External Advisory Board Members)
3. Academic External Stakeholders (Dissertation Examiners, External Assessors and External Evaluators)
4. International Partners (Strategic Partners offering academic collaboration)

### **5.2 The process of mid-cycle review, evaluation, and enhancement:**

- A clear schedule will be developed by the director of strategic planning directorate including set of consultative meetings with relevant stakeholders with set of targeted sample size considering all specializations of the academic offering.
- The schedule is approved by USPC for activation of the mid-cycle review, evaluation, and enhancement process.
- The director of strategic planning directorate will activate the process as per the planned schedule in coordination with CAQA and CME for review, evaluation, and enhancement.
- The overall achievements of strategic objectives will be shared with the stakeholders and areas for improvements will be discussed for decision making.
- A survey will be conducted by CME to support the consultative meetings as both (qualitative and quantitative analysis) will be conducted as part of maintaining valid responses.
- The outcome of the mid-cycle review will include conducting a SWOT analysis of positioning Ahlia University among local, regional, and international higher education institutions and identify potential risks that may occur disturbing sustainable operations.

### **5.3 Executive Evaluation and Streamlining and Recommendation for Decision Making:**

- Strategic Planning Directorate in coordination with CAQA and CME develop an Executive Reporting based on analysis of relevant stakeholders' feedback and engagements. The report will include set of suggestions to be integrated within the strategic plan, sub-plans, objectives and KPIs to maintain sustainable progress.
- Suggested recommendations of the mid-cycle review are major revisions that are related to extending objectives already attained, revision of KPIs metrics to capture impact or adding new objectives considering the dynamic global changes.

- The report developed by Strategic Planning Directorate in coordination with CAQA and CME is discussed at USPC, any revisions made to the strategy will be forwarded to UC for final approval.
- The revision made to the strategy is forwarded to UC for final approval, upon approval it is forwarded to the Board of Trustees as per the University Bylaws.
- Suggestions or recommendations by the Board of Trustees (if any) are communicated to USPC through the chairperson of USPC.
- The director of the strategic planning directorate is responsible to ensure that the revised strategy is communicated to all stakeholders and implemented through the annual operational planning. The process of operational planning development and approval will be followed subsequently.