



The Bachelor Degree Award Requirements Bylaws

At the Arab Open University

Approved by the University Council in its meeting

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### Article 1: Title

The present bylaws shall be named: “The Bachelor Degree Award Requirements Bylaws at the Arab Open University”.

### Article 2: Definitions

The following words and expressions shall have the meanings specified hereunder unless the context indicates otherwise:

University	The Arab Open University (AOU)
President	The University President
Vice President for Academic Affairs	The Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA)
Dean	The Dean of an Academic Programme
Deanship:	The Deanship of the Academic Programme which offers the Bachelor Degree
Programme	Academic Major Accredited for Bachelor Award
Headquarters	The AOU Headquarters
Branch	An AOU Branch/Campus
Director	Director of an AOU Campus/ branch
Academic Committee	A permanent committee formed by the University Council
Tutorial	A face-to-face classroom teaching hour
Study Plan	Distribution of courses pursuant to the components of the accredited academic programme
Central Examinations Committee(CEC)	The Central Examination Committee at the University’s Headquarters
Faculty Examination Committee(FEC)	The Faculty Examination Committee in a deanship
Branch Examination Committee(BEC)	The Examination Committee at the branch level.

### Article 3: Study Plans

- a) The University Council shall approve the Bachelor Programme Study Plans pursuant to the recommendation of the competent Faculty Council and the endorsement of the Academic Committee.
- b) Academic Programme Study Plans shall be based on the credit hour system.

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- c) The total of credit hours required for obtaining a Bachelor award in any programme shall not be less than (128) credit hours distributed as follows:
- A Minimum of (18) credit hours of compulsory general university requirements.
  - 80-100 credit hours of a programme’s specialized requirements.
  - A minimum of 14 credit hours of Deanship requirements and the elective courses specified in the approved study plan of the Academic Programme.
- d)The distribution of credit hours in some AOU Programmes may not follow the distribution highlighted in (c) above provided that the overall credit hours (128) required for obtaining the Bachelor Award is maintained.

Article 4: The Academic Year

- a) The academic year shall consist of two semesters, each having a duration of 16 weeks including the final examinations period.
- The summer semester is optional, and shall cover a duration of 8 weeks including the final examinations period.
- b) The commencement of the academic year and semesters as well as examination dates shall be determined pursuant to the University Calendar as approved by the University Council.

Article 5: Admission

- a) To be admitted in any bachelor programme, an applicant should have fulfilled the following conditions:
- Obtained a general secondary school certificate or an equivalent certificate.
  - Fulfilled any other conditions determined by the University or the competent authorities of the country in which the Branch is located.
- b) The Branch Council shall devise and approve a specific admissions policy pursuant to admission requirements in the Branch country.
- c) Any applicant who meets admission requirements and who could not be admitted due to competition may re-apply in any forthcoming opportunity.
- d) The Branch may admit students willing to study specific courses (if exist) as non-registered students, provided that they meet any other conditions determined by the nature of these courses.
- e) A student who studied at the Branch as a non-registered student in previous semesters may submit an admission application to any of the programmes offered in the Branch after filling an application during the specified admission period

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announced by the branch. If admitted, and at his request, courses studied previously will be credited provided that they are consistent with the current study plan of the programme in which he/she is admitted and with local accreditation conditions. The grades he/she earned in these courses shall be entered onto his/her new academic record.

**Article 6: Language Placement Test**

- a) All freshmen shall sit for the Language Placement Test in Arabic and English pursuant to the standards approved by the University Council as shown in the table below:
- b) Non-Arabic speaking freshmen shall be exempt from the Arabic Placement Test and shall be treated pursuant to standards approved by the University Council.
- c) Students who obtain scores in the table below in the TOEFL or IELTS below shall be exempted from the English Language Placement Test, or from some courses as shown below. They ought to have taken either test not more than two years before.

LEVEL	TOEFL			IELTS	STUDENT IS EXEMPTED FROM
	Internet Based (IBT)	Computer Based (CBT)	Paper Based		
EL097	30	93	397	3	EL097
EL098	41	123	437	4	EL098
EL099	53	153	477	4.5	EL099
EL111	65	183	513	5.5	EL111
EL112	79	213	550	6.5	EL112  EXEMPTED FROM PLACEMENT TEST

- d) Students may be exempted from pursuing one or more Arabic University required compulsory courses pursuant to scores obtained in Arabic; in accordance with the

standards approved by the University Council.

Student's Grade in the Placement Test	Exempted from
0-59	No exemption
60-89	AR111
90 and above	AR112

For students who are taking the Updated University requirements, the exemption will be as follow:

Student's Grade in the Placement Test	Exempted from
0-74	No exemption
75 and above	AR113

- H) The freshman's academic record shall, on entry, contain a record of all courses from which the freshmen has been exempted as a result of his/ her performance at both Arabic and English placement tests. Such exempted courses shall be marked (CR). However, the credit hours due to such courses shall not be included in his/her cumulative averages.

#### Article 7: Duration of Study

The maximum duration for obtaining a Bachelor award shall be twenty-four semesters (12 years) taking into account local accreditation requirements.

#### Article 8: Study Load

The following is applicable to normal classes, other than classes offered in the summer, with due regard to local accreditation conditions required by each University Branch:

- A. Minimum Load:
  1. The minimum study load per student shall be eight (8) credit hours per semester. With the Branch Rector's approval, this load may be reduced to six (6) credit hours.
- B. Maximum Load:
  2. The maximum study load per student shall be 21 credit hours per semester. The Branch Rector may raise this figure to 24 credit hours for students who are expected to graduate in the same semester.
- C. Students with a cumulative average under 2.00 points shall not be permitted to register

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for more than 16 credit hours.

#### Article 9: Registration

A. Registration within the Study Plan:

1. Students must register for courses included in their study plan according to the sequence prescribed by the concerned deanship to obtain the required academic degree.
2. Students are not allowed to register for a course if they had not studied and passed its pre-requisite or obtained in its continuous assessment & its final exam not less than (30/100) of its full mark.
3. A graduating student may register for a course and its pre-requisite concurrently.

B. A student may be allowed to register for a course and its prerequisite concurrently in order to complete the minimum study load of 8 credit hours in a certain semester per the recommendation of the Programme coordinator and the approval of the branch Director.

C. Registration Outside the Study Plan:

1. A student may register for any course offered by the University outside his study plan.
2. However, the credit hours of courses that are not included in the student's study plan shall not be accredited to him/her and, consequently, shall not be counted in the student's semester or cumulative averages.

D. Registration and Study in another Branch:

With due regard to local accreditation requirements in the two branches:

1. A student registered in one AOU branch may study courses within his study plan in another branch upon the approval of the Rectors of the two concerned branches.
2. The required courses are registered and paid for in the host branch.

#### Article 10: Drop and Add

A. Without prejudice to the provisions of Article 8 hereof, the student may drop and add certain courses included in the Study Plan within the statutory Drop and Add period declared in the University Calendar.

B. In financial terms, drop and add procedures are dealt with according to the following table and in a manner that does not conflict with the financial plans approved by the Branch Rector:

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	withdrawal	% of student reimbursed fees	Symbol shown in the student's record
1	Before study commencement and during drop and add period	100%	It is not shown at all.
2	After drop and add period	70%	Withdrawn - W
3	After week 3	0% (No reimbursement)	Withdrawn - W

C. The student is considered deferred if he/she had withdrawn from all courses in a certain semester after getting the approval of the respective authority.

D. The student is not allowed to withdrawn after the last week of study

#### Article 11: Deferral of Study

A continuing student (non-freshmen) may defer his/her study within a period not exceeding two weeks after the commencement of the semester, provided that such deferral does not exceed Six consecutive or interrupted semesters. Such deferral shall not be included within the maximum study duration limit allowed for completion of graduation requirements.

#### Article 12: Discontinuation of Study

- A. A student is considered discontinued in a certain semester if he/she fails to register for any courses in that specific semester.
- B. This semester is counted within the allowed period of study.
- C. Students may submit a petition to the Branch Rector showing proof of the *force majeure* which prevented him/her from registering in the semester. If approved, he/she shall be deemed deferred for that semester.
- D. No student is allowed to discontinue his/her study for more than three consecutive or interrupted semesters.

#### Article 13: Withdrawal from the University

A.A student is considered to be withdrawn from the university when he/she personally fills an application of withdrawal from the University.

B. Fees refund policy will apply to the specific withdrawal semester according to the following tables:

1. Withdrawal from the University in the first or second academic semester:

Withdrawal Period	% of student reimbursed fees

1	Before study commencement	85% from the total fees of the registered study hours.
2	During the first week of the semester	50% from the total fees of the registered study hours.
3	After the first week of the semester	0% (No reimbursement)

2. Withdrawal from the University in the summer semester:

Withdrawal Period	% of student reimbursed fees
Before study commencement	85% from the total fees of the registered study hours.
During the first three days of the first week of the semester	50% from the total fees of the registered study hours.
From day 4(Four) of first week of the semester	0% (No reimbursement)

#### Article 14: Cancellation of Enrolment

- A.** A student enrolment is cancelled in the following cases:
1. Upon personally filing an application of withdrawal from the University.
  2. If he/she fails to register for any course during the first semester following enrolment at the University.
  3. Should he/she discontinue his/her studies for three consecutive semesters without any valid justification.
  4. If deferral periods exceeded six consecutive or interrupted semesters.
  5. If he/she is dismissed from the University.
- B.** A student with cancelled enrolment due to discontinued studies may apply for re-enrolment if his/her current study plan was identical to his/her previous one, the academic record is restored with his/her previous registration number.
- C.** If the two plans were not identical, he/she may apply again and the all completed courses are credited in accordance with the AOU course-equivalence Bylaws.

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## Article 15: Face-to-Face Tutorial Sessions

With due regard to local accreditation conditions required by each University Branch:

- a) The minimum face-to-face classroom meeting hours allocated for tutorials in each course during a single semester shall be 4 classroom hours against each credit hour allotted to the course, pursuant to arrangements made by the concerned Branch which suit its circumstances.  
1 credit hour = a minimum of 4 classroom hours in each semester
- b) Face-to-face tutorial classroom hours may be increased in the case of certain courses that have a special nature pursuant to a ratio to be determined by the competent Deanship or branch with a view to fulfil local accreditation requirements.
- c) Attending face-to-face tutorial sessions of the registered course is mandatory by students whose absence from such tutorials may not exceed 25% of the prescribed tutorials as stated in the approved University Calendar. A student whose absence exceeds this percentage fails the course.

## Article 16: Course Assessment

- a) Each course shall have a final mark out of (100) marks to be equally distributed between the Continuous Assessment and a Final Examination.
- b) The Continuous Assessment's (50) marks shall be allotted as follows:
  - A minimum of (20) marks shall be assigned for Tutor Marked Assignments (TMAs).
  - A maximum of (30) marks shall be allotted to Midterm Assessment.
- c) The concerned Deanship may exclude any course from the marks distribution stipulated in paragraphs (a) and (b) above following the approval of the Deanship Council and the Academic Committee.
- d) The minimum number of TMAs required for each course shall be at least one TMA per course per semester. The Deanship may determine the maximum number of TMAs.
- e) A maximum of two Assessments per course may be held during the semester.
- f) Each Deanship shall be responsible for the preparation of assignments, mid-term and final examinations of every course.
- g) Such assignments, Midterms and Final exams shall be unified in all AOU Branches, and endorsed by the concerned Dean.

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- h) A Deanship may hold more than one midterm assessment in a single semester.
- i) The Midterm Assessment (MTA) and the Final Examination are held at the same time and the same date in all Branches, according to special instructions issued by the University Council. Exceptions are allowed in special circumstances which dictate change.

**Article 17: Period of Storing MTA and Exam Booklets**

Students’ final examination and Midterms answer booklets shall be kept for specific period for references if deemed necessary at as follow at the branches to be available if there were need

- A. Mid –term exams: for one semesters
- B. Final exam: for two semesters

After these periods, they shall be destroyed.

**Article 18: Absence from Exams & Assessments**

**A. Midterm Assessments’ (MTA)**

1. A student who is absent from the MTA shall be credited (zero), unless he/she presents a compelling excuse within one week from the exam-date.
2. If the excuse is accepted, he/she may sit for a make-up exam in the same semester, at a time set by the Department of Admission, Registration, and Examination at HQ.

**B. Final Exam**

1. The student who is absent from the Final Examinations shall earn a (0-zero) mark unless he/she submits a force majeure excuse within one week from the Final Examinations convening date.
2. In case the excuse was accepted, letter (I) – symbol for Incomplete – shall be entered in the student’s academic record, and shall be permitted to re-sit for the examination on its first subsequent session.
3. In such case, course’s credit hours shall be excluded from the student’s semester and cumulative averages.
4. Should the student fail to submit the examination on its first subsequent session, the symbol (I) shall be replaced by letter (F) – Fail – in his/her academic record.

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#### Article 19: Examination & Assessment in a different Branch

- A. A student may sit for the Final Examinations in the courses in which he/she is registered at any other Branch pursuant to the approval of the Rectors of both concerned branches. The concerned Deanship must be informed if the same exam is not available at the host branch.
- B. The host branch must send the student's answer booklet to the original branch for marking.

#### Article 20: Grade Scale

A. The AOU Grade Scale shall be as follows:

<b>Letter Grade</b>	A	B+	B	C+	C	D	F
<b>Points</b>	4	3.5	3	2.5	2	1.5	0

B. Grade D is the minimum pass value for a student's successful completion of a course.

#### Article 21: Course Failure

A. A student shall fail the course in any of the following cases:

- 1) If a student's mark in Continuous Assessment was less than (30%) of the marks assigned to it. In this case, FC grade - (Failed in Continuous Assessment) - shall be entered in his/her record.
- 2) If a student was absent from the final exam without an acceptable excuse. In this case, FA grade - (Absent from Final Exam) - shall be entered in his/her record.
- 3) If the student's mark in the Final Examination was less than 40% of the overall mark. In this case, (FF) grade – (Failed in the Final Examinations) - shall be entered in his/her record.
- 4) If the student's final mark, being the total marks obtained in the Continuous Assessment and the Final Examinations was less than (50%); in this case, the letter (F) – symbol for Fail – shall be entered in his/her record.

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B. The credit hours of the course that a student fails for any of the reasons set in section A above, shall be counted in determining his/her semester and cumulative averages.

### Article 22: Results

The Central Examination Committee shall approve the final results pursuant to a recommendation submitted by the Faculty Examination Committee of the concerned Deanship.

### Article 23: Objections to Results and Modification Thereof

- a) A student may request that his/her final grade in any course be reviewed within the dates and procedures set by the University in its Bachelor Award and Examination and Evaluation Bylaws.
- b) The committees which look into students' appeals are:
  - 1. The Appeals Committee is the committee that considers student's first appeal.
  - 2. The Re-Appeals Committee is the committee that deals with the students re appeals (second appeal)
- c) Appeals periods, following the announcement of exam results, are set as follows:

PERIOD	TASK
1 <sup>st</sup> week	Appeals by students are declared open.
2 <sup>nd</sup> week	The Appeals Committee looks into students' appeals and makes recommendations.
3 <sup>rd</sup> week	Re-Appeals by students are declared open.
4 <sup>th</sup> week	The Re-Appeals Committee looks into students' cases and makes recommendations.
5 <sup>th</sup> week	Branch Rectors inform the Vice-President for Academic Affairs of all appeals and re-appeals to be submitted and approved by the CEC.

- d) Re-appeal cases are allowed only for cases of pervious appeals.
- e) The respective committees present their recommendations to the Branch Rector who submits it to the VPAA, the Chair of the Central Examination Committee for approval and endorsement.
- f) All students' results are deemed final and irrevocable one academic semester following their declaration, and changes are prohibited thereof.

## Article 24: Semester and Cumulative Averages

The number of points for each course shall be computed by multiplying the credit hours of the course a student studied during a semester by the total number of points of ratings he/she earned during the same semester, as shown in Article 20.

### A. The semester average

1. The semester average shall be computed pursuant to dividing student's total number of points earned during the semester by the total number of credit hours of courses studied during the same semester.
2. The semester GPA will be calculated with due regard to the provisions of section B of Article 10, sections B of article 18.

### B. The cumulative average

1. The cumulative average is computed by dividing the overall number of points a student had earned in all the courses that he/ she had studied according to his study plan since he joined the university by the overall number of these courses' credit hours.
2. Article 6, section and Article 10 , section b
3. Both semester and cumulative averages shall be rounded to the two nearest decimal digits.

## Article 25: Warning and Dismissal

- a) A warning shall be issued to a student whose cumulative average is under 2 points at the end of any semester, excluding summer semester.
- b) The student shall be dismissed from the University if he/she receives five warnings within five consecutive semesters excluding the summer semester.
- c) A student whose academic warnings exceeded the allowed number shall be referred to the special studies programme, while remaining under the warning system on the condition that he/she had successfully completed a minimum of 80 credit hours, provided that he/she had not exceeded the stipulated period for graduation.
- d) The student may apply for another university programme and another track of the programme that was dismissed from he/she may apply to the University to credit the courses that he had studied and passed earlier. In this case, all the courses shared by the two study plans should be credited to him provided that his cumulative average is

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not under 2 points after these courses are computed.

## Article 26: Repeating Courses

### A. Repeating provisions

1. Students may not retake any course in which they had obtained grade (B) or above.
2. No student is allowed to repeat a 5<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> level course derived from the Open University-UK in which he / she had obtained a C or a higher grade.

### B. Repeating an optional course:

1. Students who had failed to pass an optional course may repeat this course or any other course in order to fulfil the requirements of their study plan of their programme.
2. If they pass the course, the grade obtained in the repeated exam shall be counted in their semester average and cumulative average
3. However, if they fail to pass it, this shall not affect their cumulative average.

### C. Repeating a compulsory course:

1. A student who fails to pass a compulsory course must retake the same course in a subsequent semester. The student's grade resulting from such repeat course shall be entered into his/her record.
2. In case the student passes the course in the new grade will be counted in semester and cumulative average.
3. However, in case he/she fails therein, the number of course credit hours shall be excluded from his/her cumulative average.

### D. Repeating courses in order to raise the cumulative average to the required graduation minimum of 2.00 points

1. Contrary to Clause A in this Article and for raising a student's cumulative average to the required graduation limit, the student may retake any course in his /her Study Plan other than 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> level OU-UK courses.
2. Consonant with part 2 of Clause A of this Article, a student may retake any 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> level OU-UK courses provided that his grade ceiling is (C).
3. In both cases above, the new grade is entered onto his cumulative average whether it is higher or lower than the previous one and the number of points earned before is cancelled together with the course's credit hours.

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## Article 27: Equivalency of Courses

- a) A student may apply for equivalency of courses completed in another recognized higher education institution existing in the AOU Branch country where he / she is studying pursuant to the standards and procedures noted in the “Course Equivalency Bylaws at the Arab Open University”, and in accordance with the procedures approved by the University Council.
- b) The courses that are accepted as equivalent are entered onto his academic record together with their figures and credit hours together with the letter ‘T’ which means ‘equivalent’.
- c) The credit hours of equivalent courses shall not be counted in the student’s cumulative average.

## Article 28: Transfer

A. In accordance with the principles and procedures approved by the University Council, a student may apply for transfer between:

1. Tracks
2. Programmes
3. Branches

B. These transfers are governed by the principles and procedures stipulated by “The AOU Principles of “ Student Transfer Bylaws.”

C. A student who cannot meet the transfer conditions of the above bylaws may cancel his enrolment. He can then apply again for admission (to another track or programme) whereby the courses shared between the old and new study plans, and which he had passed, shall be credited to him together with their grades, on the condition that his / her cumulative average is not lower than 2 points after these courses are computed.

## Article 29: Graduation

a) The University awards shall be conferred pursuant to a University Council decision, following the recommendation of the competent Faculty Examinations Committee and the Central Examinations Committee.

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- b) The Bachelor degree is awarded to a student after he/ she had passed all the courses listed in the accredited study plan of his/her programme, provided that his GPA is not less than 2 out of 4 points.
- c) A student who has not completed the graduation requirements of the academic programme may be awarded a statement, provided that he/she meets the requirements stated by the relevant Deanship in this respect.

**Article30: Award Classification**

- A. The graduating student’s award grades shall be pursuant to the cumulative average of the graduation semester as follows:

Cumulative Average	Grade
3.67 – 4	Excellent
3 - 3.66	Very Good
2.33 - 2.99	Good
2 - 2.32	Pass

- B. Pursuit to local accreditation range of cumulative average may be change without breaching section b of Article 9 of this bylaw.

**Article 31: General Provisions**

- a) The present bylaws shall abrogate all previous bylaws regulating the requirements for the Bachelor Degree Award at the University.
- b) The Vice Presidents, Deans, Branch Rectors and Directors of Admissions, Registration and Examination, shall be responsible for implementing the provisions of the current bylaws.
- c) The University Council shall decide on all cases not covered by the provisions of the present bylaws.