

Professional Development Policy

Persons Responsible for Developing Policy

- Academy Principal
- Head of Professional Development

Approving Authority

- Leadership Team
- Chief Executive Officer

Policy Review Cycle

- Annually, or as needed.

General Provisions:

1. Mechanism for Identifying Training Needs

- At the beginning of the academic year, the Academy Principal delivers a workshop to clarify job descriptions, introduce heads of departments and coordinators, and explain the Academy's performance evaluation policy to all staff during the induction week. The professional standards and job description for each employee are circulated according to each position.
- Existing employees complete the self-evaluation during the induction week, while new employees complete it during the first six weeks of joining the Academy, which contributes to identifying the developmental needs of each employee.
- Employees, together with heads of departments and coordinators, also identify their own training needs and set developmental goals for each teacher and administrator based on these needs and on the Academy's professional development priorities.
- Developmental goals for existing employees are identified based on their evaluation from the previous year.
- For new employees, training needs are identified and developmental goals are set after six weeks from the beginning of the academic year for the new employee, provided that follow-up by the coordinator/ head of department is conducted weekly for the purpose of helping to achieve the agreed goals, through follow-up, continuous class attendance, and the provision of feedback.
- In addition, the developmental and training needs within the Academy for all employees are identified based on:
 - Classroom observation reports

- Reports from the various surveys of all stakeholders
- Educational performance indicators (student achievement, behavior, interaction)
- Any periodic electronic professional surveys
- During each cycle of preparing training needs, the matter is discussed within the Leadership Team (SLT), and the professional development priorities that must be achieved for the academic staff, administrative staff, and the Academy leadership are identified, in a way that contributes to achieving the vision and directions of the Ministry of Education and Higher Education in Qatar, and what is necessary to achieve the institutional, educational, and professional objectives of Al Arqam Academy for Girls and its aspired learning outcomes.
- Coordination meetings are also held between coordinators, heads of departments, and heads of administrative units, as needed, to analyze and evaluate all professional development data, then chart directions and develop the preliminary list of training needs for each employee or group of employees according to academic or administrative specialization.
- Lists of training needs are sent to the heads of schools for preliminary approval.
- Copies of the lists of training needs are sent to the Head of Professional Development to provide her notes, comments, and any proposed amendments.
- The lists, together with the notes and proposals, are sent to the Principal of the Academy for final approval, after which the professional development plan is developed.

2. Mechanism and Procedures for Developing Individual and Group Professional Development Plans

- In light of the identified training needs schedules, the coordinator / head of department summarizes the data, proposes the appropriate developmental programs, and submits them in a preliminary plan to the head of school for comments and preliminary approval.
- The preliminary plans approved by the heads of the three schools and the heads of administrative departments are sent to the Head of Professional Development.
- The Head of Professional Development reviews the developmental plans received from the departments and ensures their suitability to the Academy's vision and objectives and their responsiveness to the identified needs and provides her notes and comments on them.
- She also adds developmental pathways which she considers achieving the Academy's priorities and objectives, in coordination with the Principal of the Academy, in a manner that ensures comprehensiveness and integration and takes into account the designated weightings of both priorities and objectives.

- The Head of Professional Development prepares the proposed overall Academy plan and then submits it to the Principal of the Academy.
- After review and approval by the Principal of the Academy, the plan is submitted for approval by the Leadership Team (SLT).
- The plan, and the relevant parts thereof, are circulated to the schools' heads and the heads of administrative departments for implementation accordingly.
- The Head of Professional Development follows up on the implementation of the Academy's professional development plan, provides the needs and arrangements required for the plan, ensures its effectiveness and efficiency, carries out evaluation procedures, and follows up on the implementation of the planned training workshops in cooperation with the heads of departments.

3. Elements of the Detailed Plans for Development Programs:

- Required training area
- Objectives to be achieved
- Performance indicators to measure the impact of the training program (the agreed outcomes)
- Training methodology and strategies
- Persons responsible for delivering the training
- Target training groups
- Training timeline (start and end date of the training program – distribution of training days if the training requires more than one day)
- Financial resources as needed
- Physical and logistical requirements needed for implementation (venue booking – light hospitality – office supplies)

4. Mechanism for Collecting Feedback from Employees on the Professional Training Programs Provided to Them and the Method of Benefiting from It in Improving and Developing Future Programs:

- Pre- and post-test (according to the nature of the need)
- Satisfaction and engagement survey for the target group
- Reflection survey for the trainer

- Training impact follow-up schedule for each employee (academic and administrative)
- Direct and indirect observation

5. Mechanism for Joining External Professional Development Programs Inside and Outside the State of Qatar

- The Head of Professional Development investigates and provides information about local and external training events and courses in a manner consistent with the Academy's vision and the developmental needs of its employees.
- She also nominates a number of these events according to need, priority, and importance, evaluates them with the Academy Principal, and determines the category nominated to undergo such development, its specifications, and a list of nominated names.
- The developmental events and the criteria of the categories nominated to attend them are approved with the Academy Principal, then submitted to the Schools' Heads / Leadership Team for final approval and identification of the nominated names.
- The nominated employees join the developmental events or programs, and their hours are considered part of the employee's working hours.
- The nominated employee, upon attendance, transfers knowledge and experience to the rest of the employees through the Academy's development days and programs.

Professional Development Policies of Al Arqam Academy

First: Policies for Identifying Training Needs:

- Involving all relevant parties and stakeholders in identifying training needs, including:
 - Teachers and administrators
 - Coordinators and academic deputy heads
 - Heads of departments and schools heads
 - Head of Professional Development
 - Principal of the Academy
 - Chief Executive Officer
- Observing, examining, and ensuring the availability of the competencies and capabilities approved by the Ministry of Education and Higher Education for the various jobs and positions in educational institutions, namely:
 - Leaders
 - Coordinators and supervisors
 - Teachers
 - Administrators
- Considering the Academy's objectives, directions, and educational, value-based, and professional priorities, and the competencies, capabilities, skills, and knowledge required to achieve these objectives, and including them in the training needs schedule.
- Balancing between identifying common general needs and identifying special needs for a specific category, group, or even at the individual level, in such a way that generalization is avoided and the expenditure of time, effort, and funds necessary for development is directed in the best possible way.
- Relying on data, information, and analyses according to scientific methodologies in identifying needs, and not being led by impressions or constrained by biases or preconceived mental images.
- Considering the career paths of the administrative and academic employees and linking the training needs thereto, so that the gaps between the current reality and what the next stage and transition require are filled.

- Approved job replacement and leadership succession plans by the Academy Administration must also be taken into account in order to identify the training needs related to them.
- Identification of needs must include all necessary aspects and not focus on only one aspect, including:
 - Knowledge
 - Skills
 - Beliefs
 - Attitudes
 - Behaviors
- The training needs schedule is reviewed and updated on a term basis, taking into account the needs that have been addressed and met on the one hand, and the needs that arise and are noticed through classroom and professional monitoring and follow-up by principals, academic supervisors, or coordinators on the other.
- All records and schedules of training needs and their updates are maintained in an appropriate digital form, in addition to the paper copy.
- Preliminary approval of the training needs schedules for each department or stage is granted by the head of department or the school head.
- Final approval of the training needs schedules is granted by the Principal of the Academy after hearing the observations of the Head of Professional Development, if any.

Second: Policies for Developing Individual and Group Professional Development Plans:

- No developmental training program is to be developed except on the basis of an approved need.
- Commitment must be made to the general budget allocated for professional development and approved by the Academy Administration.
- In the event of a need to exceed the allocated budget, direct approval must be obtained from the Principal of the Academy and the Chief Executive Officer.
- Organizers and providers of professional development programs are honored in a manner proportionate to the type and scale of their developmental contributions.
- Priority in preparing and delivering developmental programs is given to experts and competent personnel from within the Academy, in a way that strengthens the Academy's internal capacities, increases the relevance of training to its actual reality, reduces costs, and provides flexibility in training and its timing.

- In cases of first-time external hosting, a brief report must be submitted beforehand to the Principal of the Academy regarding the person nominated for hosting, his or her previous experience, areas of specialization, and academic or administrative distinction, for approval.
- In the case of external hosting, the Academy's culture and value orientations must be observed with regard to attire, thought, and the materials presented by the guest.
- Fairness must be observed in ensuring that all members of the Academy receive the required professional development regardless of their specialization, language, or level of experience.
- In the event of scholarships or nomination for participation in external courses, this shall be done through setting clear criteria for participation, and then nomination for participation shall take place on the basis of these criteria.
- In the event of scholarships or external participation, the sponsored or participating employee is committed to transferring the essence of what she has benefited from by preparing a report to be circulated to the concerned colleagues, presenting a training session or seminar to colleagues, or through other appropriate means.
- Professional development is not limited to one form, namely lectures or training courses, but extends to include:
 - Online workshops
 - Self-learning
 - Diplomas and integrated programs
 - Collaborative training
 - School learning communities
 - Classroom and school visits
 - Other forms of development
- The impact and returns of professional development programs must be measured at the individual level and at the general level, over the short and medium term, and in relation to the outcomes of the educational process as a whole, and effective methods and tools must be devised to do so.
- The administration of each department identifies the indicators for measuring training impact for the courses to which it is exposed within one week of implementing the training, and these are circulated to all relevant employee stakeholders. A copy is submitted to the Head of Professional Development to complete all items of the Academy's professional development plan.

- Measurement of training impact is followed up practically through the direct supervisor by identifying agreed performance indicators for each training attended by employees, such that these indicators are added to the evaluation form for the impact of self-attended training for each employee, are followed up periodically, and a copy of this report is submitted to the Head of Professional Development before the middle of the last month of the academic term.
- Attendance sheets must be completed for all participants in the developmental programs and retained by the relevant authorities responsible for the participants.
- A special evaluation form for each developmental program must also be completed by the participants, and a reflection and notes form must be completed by the trainer or expert after the end of each course.
- The Head of the Professional Development Department is provided with a copy of these sheets and evaluations for preservation, analysis, and comprehensive review in order to provide future recommendations and proposals that achieve the intended objectives.
- Training needs plans are reviewed and developed at a semi-term rate or whenever needed.
- The Head of Professional Development prepares the forms of the developmental programs, trainer evaluation, and all forms related to the PD department, secures their approval from the Academy Principal, circulates them to all departments, and ensures that the departments use the approved forms.