

AGA KHAN UNIVERSITY
Guidelines, Policies and Procedures

Policy Name	University Awards of Distinction
Policy Number	016
Approved by	Board of Trustees
Date of Original Approval	November 24, 2011
Date of Revision	January 15, 2008; November 19, 2013; April 29, 2019. July 24, 2019, April 22, 2021; August 2022; August 2023; June 2024
Contact Office	Office of the Registrar

1. The University normally invites nominations for Awards of Distinction to be conferred at Convocation. The five categories of Awards are intended to honour and give public recognition to those who have made significant and sustained contributions to the University.
2. Nominees age and stage in the career is not a limiting factor to make a nomination. However, with the exception of the award "AKU Innovation Impact Award of Distinction", the Awards Committee considers these awards as capstone recognition covering the entire career of employment for the individual.
3. The Awards guidelines state that they are "unique and prestigious and given only to persons who are exceptionally qualified to receive them". Awards are not necessarily presented every year.
4. Nominations:
 - 4.1 A nominator may nominate only one nominee in a category.
 - 4.2 Each nomination shall consist of two letters of reference from faculty or staff detailing the reasons for the nomination for the relevant category of award, along with the curriculum vitae of the nominee and sufficient supportive information as evidence to enable evaluation.
 - 4.3 Members of the Board of Trustees may not nominate or serve as a referee.
5. The nominations, with completed nomination form, should be received in the Registrar's Office by the date specified in the memorandum which is circulated each year for the Awards. The University Awards Committee will evaluate the nominations for each Award category and will make its recommendations to the Academic and Student Affairs Committee of the Board of Trustees.
6. The summary of the Award categories is given below. Further information on these awards can be obtained from the Registrar's Office.

7. HONORARY DEGREE

- 7.1 Purpose: To associate with the University those persons whose achievements have been exemplary and outstanding in education or research or service and have had significant impact in developing countries.
- 7.2 To be recommended for an Honorary degree, the nominee should have made an outstanding contribution. The degree is a way of recognising unusual excellence. The contribution could be in the form of advancement of knowledge, creativity, or development, resulting in significant impact on society or the University or public services, or arts and culture.
- 7.3 Serving members of the faculty, staff and Trustees of the University are not eligible for this Award.
- 7.4 Honoris causa degrees:
- Doctor of Science (*honoris causa*)
 - Doctor of Letters (*honoris causa*)
 - Doctor of Humane Letters (*honoris causa*)
- 7.5 Honorary Degrees are approved by the Chancellor or His representative and are awarded only at Convocation ceremonies at which the Chancellor His Highness the Aga Khan or a representative from His Office is present.
- 7.6 Nominations:
- In addition to faculty and staff at the University, members of the Board of Trustees may nominate candidates for the Honorary degree.

8. AWARD OF DISTINCTION

- 8.1 Purpose: To recognise publicly and to honour outstanding persons who have contributed constructively and consistently to the development of the University.
- 8.2 Faculty and staff of the University as well as those who have served the University and played a special role for a significant period of time in the development of the University and its services may be nominated.

9. AWARD OF EXCELLENCE IN TEACHING

9.1 Criteria

Nominees must be full-time faculty members at the University who meet the following conditions:

Have at least five years of service to the University by the time of application.

Have an exemplary contribution to the area of teaching and learning through their teaching and teaching leadership.

Have engaged in scholarly teaching and the scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL), providing evidence of educational research and SoTL publications.

Have engaged in and applied learning from continuous professional educational development in their teaching practice: for example, within AKU's TEACH scheme {Teaching Enhancement Accredited Certification of the Higher Education Academy (HEA, UK)} or similar examples.

Have benchmarked their teaching practice internationally (e.g., fellowships).

Provide evidence of their mentorship of others on promoting teaching excellence either within the Institution or in the regions AKU serves.

9.2 Purpose: To recognize and reward exemplary teaching. The award requires the nominees to demonstrate significant contribution to teaching.

9.3 Nominations:

9.3.1 A nominator may nominate only one nominee.

9.3.2 A nomination shall consist of at least two letters of reference from faculty or staff detailing the reasons for the nomination, a copy of the nominee's curriculum vitae of the nominee and sufficient supportive information (e.g. a teaching dossier) to evidence the nomination including peer and student evaluations. Teacher assessments by students will be required.

9.3.3 Members of the Board of Trustees may not nominate or serve as a referee.

10 AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH

10.1 Purpose: To encourage individual research achievements – broadly defined to include the full spectrum of basic, applied, action, or clinical research; research in professional practice; research in pedagogy and so on – to contribute to the development of a strong research culture at AKU.

10.2 Recipients of this Award must be members of the faculty. Exceptionally it could be shared with a student who has worked closely with the faculty member and has made an equal contribution to the research. Part-time faculty members can be considered, provided the research in question has been carried out under AKU auspices. The criteria for this Award will be appended to the memorandum which is circulated each year for the Awards.

10.3 The nominations should be accompanied by a profile of the researcher, a full list of publications, bibliography, details of research projects completed and underway and any other material that addresses the criteria. There should also be a commentary that places the nominee's achievements in context.

10.4 Members of the Board of Trustees may not nominate or serve as a referee.

11 AKU INNOVATION IMPACT AWARD OF DISTINCTION

- 11.1 Purpose: This award is to recognise individuals within the University and University Hospital who contribute in significant ways to bring impactful change through innovation within the Institution.
- 11.2 The Awards committee will decide on a special theme from time to time around which this award will be organised.
- 11.3 Faculty and staff of the University who can provide evidence of initiatives that benchmark to recognise best practice, may be nominated, or may nominate themselves.
- 11.4 The change impacted may include for example, but not restricted to: all aspects of health and education systems as well as quality improvement processes, public policy; technology innovation, system changes; quality improvements and any other contribution that may be identified which may have impacted processes and practices within the University in general and the Academy in particular.
- 11.5 Nominations, including self-nominations, are invited for any activity that in the view of the nominator is consistent with the vision and mission of the Aga Khan University and meets with the standards of Impact, Relevance, Quality and Access.