

AIU RISE

STRATEGY 2026-2030

Elevating Futures, One Graduate at a Time

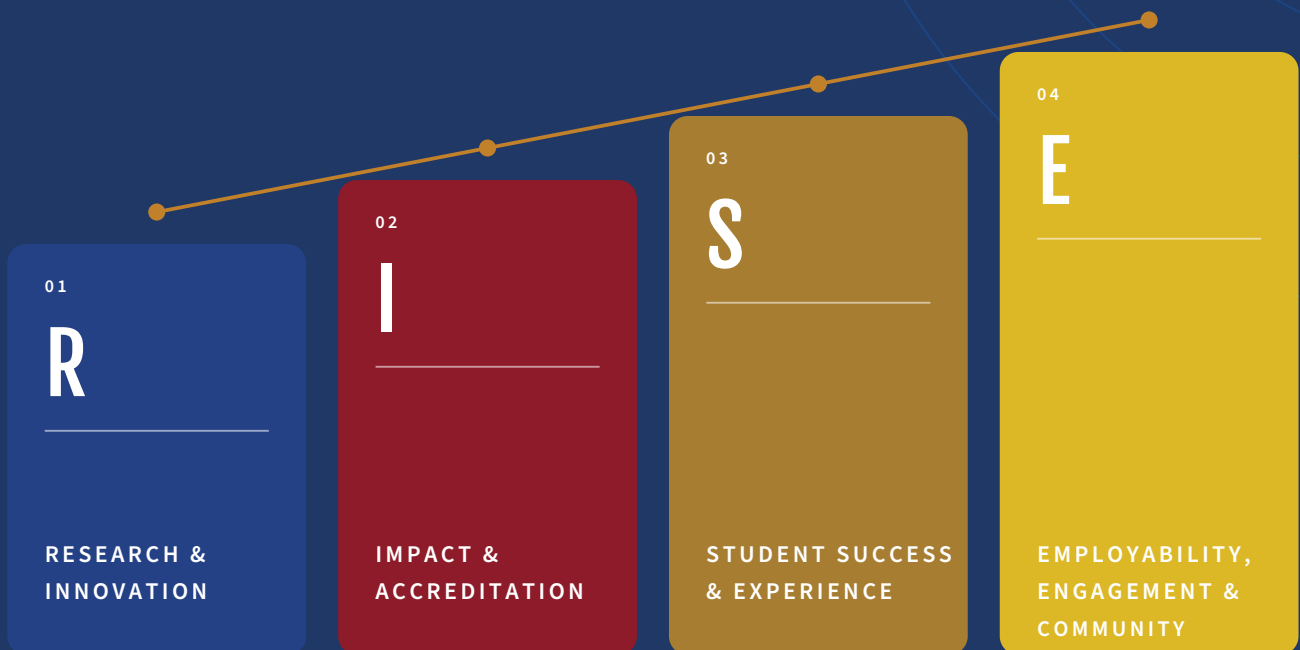


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Chair Board of Trustees Message

As Chair of the Board of Trustees, I am honored to present the AIU RISE Strategy 2026–2030.

This strategy reflects a defining moment in the evolution of American International University. Since its establishment, AIU has demonstrated a commitment to expanding educational opportunity and providing students with a transformative American-style educational experience in Kuwait. Today, we take the next step in that journey by establishing a clear vision for institutional excellence, accountability, innovation, and impact.

The Board of Trustees believes that universities must do more than educate students. They must prepare future leaders, contribute to the advancement of knowledge, support national development, and serve as trusted institutions within their communities. The AIU RISE Strategy was developed with these responsibilities in mind.

The strategy sets ambitious yet achievable goals focused on research and innovation, accreditation and institutional effectiveness, student success, and graduate employability. These priorities are closely aligned with Kuwait Vision 2035 and reflect our commitment to preparing graduates who can contribute meaningfully to the future of Kuwait and the broader region.

The Board fully supports AIU's pursuit of international standards of quality and continuous improvement. We recognize that excellence is not achieved through aspiration alone. It requires effective governance, evidence-based decision making, responsible stewardship of resources, and a willingness to evaluate our performance honestly and transparently.

Most importantly, this strategy places students at the center of every decision. Behind every objective, every initiative, and every performance measure is a commitment to helping our students achieve their aspirations and reach their full potential.

As a Board, we will monitor progress carefully, support institutional improvement, and ensure accountability for results. We are equally committed to celebrating achievements and learning from challenges as we advance toward our shared vision.

I extend my appreciation to the President, faculty, staff, students, alumni, and external stakeholders whose contributions helped shape this strategy. The future success of AIU will be built through our collective efforts and our shared belief in the transformative power of higher education.

Together, we look forward to advancing AIU's mission and elevating futures, one graduate at a time.

Prof. Fayza Al-Kharafi

Chair, Board of Trustees

American International University - Kuwait

President's Message

The AIU RISE Strategy is not a declaration of where we have been. It is a commitment to where we are going.

American International University enters this strategic period with genuine assets. We have 3,200 students choosing AIU in a competitive private market. We have five schools covering architecture, business, engineering, arts and sciences, and education. We have a Board willing to make the governance investments that most private universities in the region have deferred. And we have a campus community that is ready to build something worth building.

What the RISE Strategy does is give that readiness a direction, a sequence, and a set of honest commitments. Research and Innovation, because a university that produces no knowledge cannot call itself excellent. Impact and Accreditation, because WASC recognition is the single most credible signal we can send to students, employers, and the world that AIU's degrees mean something. Student Success and Experience, because our students are our mission, and their futures are the measure of our work. Employability, Engagement and Community, because AIU exists inside Kuwait, and Kuwait's development is our development.

Elevating Futures, One Graduate at a Time is not a marketing phrase. It is an operational commitment. Every objective in this plan, every KPI, every ownership assignment, every Board review, all of it traces back to a single student crossing a stage four years from now, more capable and more ready than they would have been anywhere else in Kuwait. That is the standard we are setting for ourselves.

We will report on this strategy honestly. When we hit targets, we will say so. When we miss them, we will say that too, explain why, and adjust. That honesty is not a weakness, it is a WASC requirement, and it is the kind of institution we intend to be.

Prof. Yousef Haik

President,
American International University - Kuwait

About American International University

American International University (AIU) is a private institution of higher education located in Kuwait and dedicated to providing a transformative American-style educational experience that prepares students for success in an increasingly interconnected world.

AIU serves more than 3,200 students across five schools: Architecture & Design, Business, Engineering & Computing, Arts & Sciences, and Education. Through a commitment to academic excellence, student success, innovation, and community engagement, AIU seeks to develop graduates who possess the knowledge, skills, ethical foundations, and leadership capabilities necessary to contribute meaningfully to Kuwait's future and the global community.

As Kuwait advances its Vision 2035 agenda and transitions toward a diversified knowledge-based economy, AIU is committed to supporting national development through workforce preparation, research, innovation, and strategic partnerships with industry, government, and civil society.

The AIU RISE Strategy 2026–2030 provides the framework through which the University will pursue these aspirations while strengthening quality, accountability, institutional effectiveness, and long-term sustainability.

Why AIU

AIU was established to expand opportunities for students seeking an American-style education in Kuwait. As Kuwait moves toward a knowledge-based economy, AIU seeks to prepare graduates who combine professional competence, ethical leadership, innovation, and global perspective.

The RISE Strategy represents AIU's commitment to becoming a university recognized not only for access and growth, but for quality, accountability, student success, and measurable impact.

Why This Strategy Matters

Higher education is undergoing profound transformation. Advances in technology, evolving workforce expectations, increasing demands for accountability, and growing international competition require universities to continuously adapt while remaining faithful to their mission.

The AIU RISE Strategy provides a clear roadmap for navigating these changes. It establishes institutional priorities, defines measurable outcomes, and aligns resources with the University's mission and long-term aspirations.

The strategy is designed to strengthen AIU's capacity to:

- Deliver a high-quality student-centered educational experience;
- Expand opportunities for research, innovation, and knowledge creation;
- Improve graduate employability and workforce readiness;
- Enhance institutional effectiveness and accountability;
- Strengthen engagement with industry, government, and community partners; and
- Position AIU for international recognition and accreditation.

Through the implementation of this strategy, AIU seeks to create lasting value for students, families, employers, alumni, and society.

Mission, Vision & Core Values

Mission & Vision

MISSION	To improve and enrich lives by engaging, empowering, and enhancing our students through a transformative American education experience. We focus on building a foundation of intellectual, creative, and growing research excellence, cultivating an environment that encourages innovation and leadership, and ensuring every student has the opportunity to excel and contribute meaningfully to Kuwait and make a global impact.
VISION	To be Kuwait's leading higher education institution and a recognized voice in GCC academia, redefining academic and advancing research excellence with a unique American experience that empowers, enriches, and engages students to become visionary leaders and innovators.
TAGLINE	Elevating Futures, One Graduate at a Time

The Four RISE Pillars

	Pillar	Strategic Focus
R	Research & Innovation	Build a structured research culture from near-zero to 100+ indexed publications annually. Launch AIU's first research centre. Establish grant infrastructure. Qualify for Arab Region rankings by 2028.
I	Impact & Accreditation	Pursue WSCUC institutional accreditation with the goal of achieving initial accreditation during the strategy period. Pursue program accreditations. Sustain PUC compliance. Demonstrate impact through measurable graduate and community outcomes.
S	Student Success & Experience	Grow enrollment from 3,200 to 5,000+. Launch 4 new programs aligned to Kuwait's labor market. Achieve 80%+ student satisfaction. Establish mental health services, student government, and a campus experience that drives retention.
E	Employability, Engagement & Community	Achieve 85%+ graduate employment within 6 months. Embed mandatory internships. Build industry advisory boards. Establish Continuing Education generating 15% of revenue. Sign 3+ government MoUs. Become Kuwait's workforce development partner.

Core Values

Integrity	We act honestly in all institutional decisions, governance, and communications - including when reporting on targets we have not yet met.
Academic Excellence	We hold high standards for teaching, scholarship, and student achievement across all five schools.
Accountability	We measure what matters, report honestly to our Board and community, and act on what the evidence shows.
Inclusion	We create conditions where every Kuwaiti student can succeed, regardless of background or academic preparation on entry.
Community	We serve Kuwait its students, its workforce, and the national development vision that shapes our students' futures.
Innovation	We embrace evidence-based change, challenge inherited assumptions, and continuously improve what we do.

Educational Objectives

Educational objectives define what AIU as an institution is committed to achieving for every student who completes a degree, regardless of school or program. They are broader than learning outcomes they describe the institutional purpose behind the learning, and they connect directly to AIU's mission, to Kuwait Vision 2035, and to the WASC requirement that educational goals be clearly stated and measurably achieved.

#	Educational Objective	What This Means for AIU Students	Kuwait Vision 2035 Connection
EO 1	Intellectual Competence	Graduates demonstrate mastery of their discipline, apply critical and analytical thinking across contexts, and can reason from evidence to sound conclusions.	Knowledge economy development. Vision 2035 requires Kuwaiti graduates who can lead knowledge-intensive sectors, not merely execute tasks.
EO 2	Professional Readiness	Graduates enter the workforce with the practical skills, ethical foundations, and professional behaviours their discipline requires. They contribute from day one.	Human capital pillar. Vision 2035 explicitly targets graduates who reduce Kuwait's dependence on expatriate professional labour in key sectors.
EO 3	Communication Effectiveness	Graduates communicate clearly, precisely, and persuasively in written, oral, and digital forms in professional contexts.	Regional and global competitiveness. Kuwait's ambition to become a regional commercial hub requires bilingual, professionally articulate graduates.
EO 4	Civic and Ethical Responsibility	Graduates understand their obligations to their community, Kuwait, and the broader world. They act with integrity, contribute to society, and lead with values.	Creative Human Capital. Vision 2035 calls for citizens who are active contributors to national development, not passive recipients of state services.
EO 5	Innovation and Adaptive Thinking	Graduates approach new challenges with creativity, apply digital and technological tools appropriately, and adapt to rapidly changing professional environments.	Economic diversification. Kuwait's non-oil sectors require Kuwaitis who can create, not just consume who start enterprises and drive institutional change.

Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

Each ILO was built by identifying the intersection of two sources: (1) a documented Kuwait Vision 2035 workforce need; and (2) a WASC Core Competency, the five competencies WSCUC requires all accredited institutions to demonstrate: written communication, oral communication, quantitative reasoning, information literacy, and critical thinking. The result is seven ILOs that are simultaneously grounded in American higher education standards, aligned with Kuwait's national development priorities, and directly assessable for WASC evidence purposes.

ILO	Title	Educational Objective	WASC Core Competency	Kuwait Vision 2035 Skill
1	Critical Thinking & Analytical Reasoning	EO 1	Critical Thinking	Critical thinking, problem-solving
2	Written and Oral Communication	EO 3	Written & Oral Communication	Communication, collaboration
3	Information and Digital Literacy	EO 5	Information Literacy	Digital literacy, technological adaptability
4	Quantitative and Scientific Reasoning	EO 1	Quantitative Reasoning	Problem-solving, analytical rigor
5	Ethical Reasoning and Civic Responsibility	EO 4		Civic responsibility, integrity, national identity
6	Professional Competence and Employability	EO 2		Career readiness, leadership, flexibility
7	Global and Cultural Awareness	EO 4, EO 5		Global competitiveness, creativity, diversity

Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs)

Program Learning Outcomes translate the seven Institutional Learning Outcomes into discipline-specific competencies for each school. Every PLO maps to at least one ILO, ensuring that program-level assessment contributes to institutional-level evidence of graduate achievement. This cascade from Educational Objectives to ILOs to PLOs is the assessment architecture WASC evaluators will examine during the self-study.

Strategic Planning Principles

The RISE Strategy is guided by five institutional planning principles:

Mission Alignment: All strategic initiatives must support AIU's mission, vision, and educational objectives.

Student-Centered Decision Making: The success, development, and well-being of students remain central to institutional planning and resource allocation.

Evidence-Based Improvement: Decisions are informed by data, assessment findings, institutional effectiveness measures, and stakeholder feedback.

Accountability and Transparency: Progress toward strategic objectives is monitored regularly and reported through established governance and reporting processes.

Sustainability and Stewardship: Institutional resources are managed responsibly to support long-term educational quality, organizational resilience, and financial sustainability.

Governance and Accountability

The successful implementation of the RISE Strategy requires collaboration among the Board of Trustees, University leadership, faculty, staff, students, alumni, and external stakeholders.

The Board of Trustees provides strategic oversight of the University's mission, strategic direction, financial sustainability, and institutional effectiveness. The Board receives annual reports regarding progress toward strategic objectives and monitors institutional performance through established governance processes.

The President is responsible for implementation of the strategy and for ensuring that strategic priorities are integrated into academic planning, budgeting, resource allocation, institutional effectiveness, and annual operating plans.

Faculty, staff, and administrative leaders contribute to implementation through participation in assessment activities, program review, strategic initiatives, and continuous improvement processes.

Strategic progress is reviewed annually and used to inform future planning, resource allocation, and institutional priorities.

Strategic Context

Kuwait Vision 2035 Alignment

The RISE Strategy is explicitly designed to advance Kuwait Vision 2035. Every pillar maps to a national priority:

Kuwait Vision 2035 Priority	RISE Strategy Response
Human capital development	Graduate employability focus; mandatory internships; Career Services Center
Knowledge economy & research	Research culture build; research centre; 100+ annual publications target
Economic diversification	New programs in AI technology and healthcare
International integration	WASC and program accreditation; international faculty recruitment
Workforce upskilling	Continuing Education division; government workforce MoUs

Commitment to Transparency and Accountability

AIU will publish an Annual Strategic Progress Report summarizing progress toward strategic objectives, key performance indicators, institutional effectiveness outcomes, student success measures, graduate outcomes, and major strategic initiatives.

Progress against the RISE Strategy will be reviewed annually by the Board of Trustees and communicated to the University community and external stakeholders.

Strategic Roadmap – Three Phases

The RISE Strategy is organized into three sequential phases. Each phase builds the conditions required for the next.

Phase	Period	Strategic Focus	Targeted Milestones	
Phase 1	Fall 2026-Spring 2027	Foundation & Compliance : governance reform, Faculty Council, IR office, governance policies, SLO framework, WASC engagement	WASC Eligibility evaluated Fall 2026-Spring 2027	R
Phase 2	2027–2028	Build & Differentiate: assessment cycles complete, research culture growing, new programs launched, Program accreditation, CE revenue scaling	WASC Candidacy granted end of 2028	I
Phase 3	2029–2030	Scale & Recognition: WASC and program accreditation complete, Arab Region entry, 5,000 students, CE revenue at 15%, graduate outcomes published	WASC Initial Accreditation 2029/30	S·E

PILLAR R Research & Innovation

Building a research culture from near-zero baseline to recognized regional standing. AIU recognizes that sustainable research excellence requires intentional investment in faculty support, infrastructure, incentives, and institutional systems. This strategy establishes those foundations and positions research as a core component of AIU's future growth. AIU recognizes that sustainable research excellence requires investment in faculty development, research infrastructure, incentives, and institutional support systems.

Objectives

R1. Establish a Functional Research Culture

Implement faculty research incentives (course release, publication bonuses, conference funding), a seed grant fund, and a promotion framework that rewards scholarship. Research Committee of Faculty Council monitors and reports publicly.

R2. Launch AIU's First Research Center

Establish a research centre anchored in sustainable design and built environment - aligned to AIU's Architecture strength and Kuwait's national priorities. Provides a visible anchor for external grants and industry partnerships. Operational by Fall 2026.

R3. Graduate Programs

Graduate programs are not simply an enrollment strategy. They are the primary mechanism by which a university builds a research culture. Graduate students conduct research alongside faculty, generate publications, attract externally funded grants, and create the intellectual environment that retains research-active faculty. Without graduate students, a university asking faculty to publish is asking them to do so in isolation, without research assistants, without doctoral candidates, and without the academic ecosystem that makes sustained scholarship possible.

AIU's target is to launch its first master's program by 2027. All approved master programs will need to be launched at the earliest possible time. Scheme for scholarships must be instituted to attract full-time research students.

Faculty teaching at graduate level must hold terminal degrees and demonstrate active research engagement. Workload policy must be revised to reduce teaching contact hours for faculty engaged in graduate supervision, consistent with WASC CFR 3.1. The introduction of any graduate program during AIU's WASC candidacy period constitutes a 'substantive change' under WASC policy and must be reported to and approved by the Commission before implementation. Hence having the programs commenced now is essential.

R4. Build External Grant Infrastructure

Develop administrative capacity to apply for, receive, and manage externally funded research. Requires a grants coordinator, research ethics framework (IRC), and indirect cost recovery policy.

R5. Qualify for Arab Region Rankings

Arab Region requires Scopus-indexed publications and international collaborations. Systematic data collection and Scopus submissions begin 2025. Minimum eligibility thresholds met by 2028. First listing targeted 2029–2030.

Key Performance Indicators

KPI / Measurable Indicator	2026 Baseline	2027 Target	2030 Target
Scopus/WoS-indexed publications (annually)	~0	30+	100+
% full-time faculty with active scholarly output	<10%	40%	75%
External research grants value (KWD annually)	Minimal	50,000+	200,000+
Active externally funded research grants	0–2 seed	5+	10+
Research centre - active projects	0	1 centre, 3 projects	2 centres, 8+ projects
AIU in Arab Region rankings	Not listed	Eligibility met 2028	Listed 2029–30

Ownership & Reporting

Objective	Primary Owner	Reporting Cycle	Reported To
Research output (publications, grants)	AVP Research / Faculty Council Research Committee	Quarterly	President & Board Academic Committee
Research centre performance	AVP Research	Semi-annually	President
Faculty scholarly activity compliance	VPAA / Deans	Annually (faculty review)	VPAA → President
Grant pipeline and awards	Research & Grants Office	Quarterly	President

Key Initiatives

Faculty Research Incentive Program

Course release (one course per semester for active researchers), publication incentive-priority travel funding. Policy adopted by Faculty Council and VPAA. Target: 20+ faculty enrolled by end of 2027.

Research Seed Grant Fund

Minimum KWD 50,000 annual competitive seed grant fund. Administered by Faculty Council Research Committee using blind peer review. Priority: projects aligned with Kuwait Vision 2035 with external co-funding potential. First cycle Fall 2026.

Research Center

Through competitive call for proposals a research center to be established, the goal is to build a recognizable framework for research with AIU. For example, AIU's School of Architecture & Design is a distinctive competitive advantage no Kuwait competitor replicates. The centre aligns academic strength with national priority (smart cities, sustainable infrastructure) and opens doors to Kuwait Ministry and private sector partnerships.

PILLAR I Impact & Accreditation

WASC accreditation is AIU's primary strategic differentiator. Achieving it by 2030 transforms AIU's competitive position, validates academic quality to international employers, and creates the governance and assessment infrastructure that makes every other pillar more credible.

Objectives

11. Achieve WASC Eligibility (Fall 2026)

Complete all eligibility requirements and submit the WASC eligibility application by Q4 2026. Requires: Board-approved mission/vision, Faculty Council established, IR office operational, governance policies adopted and publicly posted, WASC consultant engaged.

The Accreditation Liaison Officer - AIU's WASC Point Person

The Accreditation Liaison Officer (ALO) is the single most important operational role in AIU's WASC accreditation journey. The ALO is the named individual whom WASC communicates with, requests evidence from, and holds accountable for the accuracy and timeliness of all accreditation submissions. Every WASC accredited institution has one, and the quality of that person's work directly affects whether the accreditation process moves smoothly or stalls.

AIU shall formally designate an ALO by Fall 2026 and communicate that appointment to the WASC Staff Liaison. The ALO shall:

- Hold a senior academic administrative title (Director or above) with direct access to the President
- Dedicate a minimum of 50% of working time to WASC coordination during the eligibility and self-study phases
- Maintain the WASC Evidence Portfolio, the living document collection that will form the foundation of the self-study
- Respond to all WASC information requests within the timeframes specified by WSCUC policy
- Present a quarterly accreditation progress report to the President and an annual report to the Board Academic Committee
- Serve as the primary liaison between the WASC consultant, the accreditation team, and AIU leadership

12. Complete Self-Study and Achieve WASC Candidacy (2026–2027)

Build evidence portfolio across all four WASC standards including three years of assessment data, Faculty Council minutes, financial sustainability documentation, and program review records. Candidacy by end of 2027.

13. Achieve WASC Initial Accreditation (2028–2029)

Complete candidacy period with documented continuous improvement evidence. Host initial accreditation site visit. Achieve accreditation by 2029.

14. Achieve Program accreditation (2027–2030)

Program accreditation requires faculty qualification documentation, curriculum alignment, AOL (Assurance of Learning) system, and industry advisory board engagement. Candidacy application 2027. Accreditation target 2030.

15. Demonstrate Measurable Community and Graduate Impact

Impact is not only accreditation. Publish annual Graduate Outcomes Report, Community Service Report, and Research Impact Summary. These reports serve simultaneously as WASC evidence and institutional reputation builders.

Key Performance Indicators

KPI / Measurable Indicator	2026 Baseline	2027 Target	2030 Target
WASC milestone achieved	Eligibility Fall 2026/Spring2027	Candidacy end 2027	Accreditation 2029
Programs with complete PLO assessment cycle	0%	100%	100% maintained
Program Accreditation	Not started	Candidacy 2027	Accreditation 2030
PUC compliance: programs with zero outstanding gaps	100%	100%	100% maintained
Annual Graduate Outcomes Report published	No	Yes, Fall 2027	Yes, annually
Annual Institutional Effectiveness Report published	No	Yes, first 2026	Yes, annually

Ownership & Reporting

Objective	Primary Owner	Reporting Cycle	Reported To
WASC self-study process	President / Accreditation & IE Office	Quarterly (self-study phase)	Board Academic Committee
PLO/AOL assessment completion	VPAA / Assessment Coordinator	Each semester	VPAA → President
AACSB candidacy preparation	Dean of Business / VPAA	Quarterly	VPAA → President
Graduate Outcomes Report	Career Services / IR Office	Annually (published)	President → Board → Public
PUC compliance audit	Deans / Accreditation Office	Annually	President → Board

Key Initiatives

WASC Engagement

ILO will Lead eligibility application, trains self-study committee, guides through candidacy. Monthly progress meetings with President and Accreditation Office.

Assurance of Learning (AOL) System

The AOL system is the backbone of both WASC Standard 4. It documents PLO targets, assessment methods, data collection, analysis, and close-the-loop actions per program per cycle. Framework designed and approved by Faculty Council Spring 2027. All programs in first full AOL cycle by end of 2027. Close-the-loop documentation mandatory every cycle.

WASC Evidence Portfolio

Living institutional document built over 3+ years. All Board minutes, Faculty Council minutes, assessment reports, and financial statements systematically indexed from 2026. Annual evidence audit by Accreditation Office identifies gaps before the self-study review window.

PILLAR S Student Success & Experience

Student success is simultaneously AIU's mission and its most measurable outcome. This pillar combines enrollment strategy and student life, because attracting students and keeping them are two sides of the same institutional commitment. A student who leaves in Year 2 costs more than a scholarship student who graduates.

Sub-Pillar S1. Enrollment & Program Growth

S1.1. Expand Campus Capacity to 5,000+ Students

Campus expansion plan approved by Board Fall 2026. Options include additional instructional space, extended hours utilization, and hybrid program delivery to reduce physical space demand.

S1.2. Launch 3–4 New Programs by 2028

Labor market gap analysis conducted annually. Target programs: AI, data science, healthcare management, cybersecurity, entrepreneurship. Each requires Faculty Council approval, PUC approval, and full curriculum mapping before launch.

S1.3. Implement Strategic Enrollment Management

Move from reactive admissions to planned enrollment management: target demographics, scholarship strategy, early alert systems for at-risk students, and retention interventions.

Sub-Pillar S2. Student Life & Wellbeing

S2.1. Launch Mental Health and Counselling Program

Confidential service at no cost to students. Crisis referral protocol established. Awareness campaigns reduce stigma. Student wellness week each semester.

S2.2. Student Representatives Committee

Student Representatives Committee elections held Fall 2026. Charter defines advisory role to President (non-binding but formally acknowledged). Student Representatives Committee Chair presents annually to Faculty Council. Provides student input into WASC selfstudy evidence..

S2.3. Annual Student Satisfaction Survey

Administered every April. Results disaggregated by school, year, and demographics. Each VP submits written action plan within 60 days. Results published on AIU website, transparency required by WASC.

S2.4. Co-Curricular Program Review: Bringing the Same Standard to Student Life

A university that applies rigorous assessment to its academic programs but operates student services on intuition and goodwill is sending WASC a message: that student life is not taken seriously as part of the educational mission. WASC Standard 2 requires that co-curricular programs be aligned with academic goals and regularly assessed, using the same cycle of planning, implementation, assessment, and improvement that academic programs use.

AIU shall implement a formal Co-Curricular Program Review cycle beginning in the 2026-2027 academic year. Every student affairs programme and service, including counselling, career services, student government, clubs, orientation, and student support services, shall:

- Have a written programme plan with defined goals, target population, staffing, and resource requirements
- Map its goals explicitly to at least one AIU Student Learning Outcome (SLO)
- Conduct an annual review of programme effectiveness using quantitative data (participation rates, satisfaction scores) and qualitative feedback
- Submit an annual programme review report to the VP Enrollment & Student Affairs, who presents a consolidated Student Affairs Effectiveness Report to the President each October
- Be included as a section of the Annual Institutional Effectiveness Report presented to the Board.

Key Performance Indicators

KPI / Measurable Indicator	2026 Baseline	2027 Target	2030 Target
Total student enrollment	3,200	4,000+	5,000+
First-year retention rate	Baseline 2025	75%+	80%+
4-year graduation rate	Baseline 2025	50%+	55%+
New programs launched (PUC approved)	0	6	6+
Annual student satisfaction rate	Baseline 2025	70%+	80%+
Student Government in operation	No	Yes	Yes, 3 years records
Students using counselling/wellness services	Baseline TBD	10%+	15%+
Number of active student clubs	TBD	10+	20+

Ownership & Reporting

Objective	Primary Owner	Reporting Cycle	Reported To
Enrollment performance and new programs	VP Enrollment & Student Affairs / VPAA	Monthly (enrollment); Annually (programs)	President
Retention and graduation rates	Registrar / IR Office	Annually	President → Board Academic Committee
Student Government liaison	VP Enrollment & Student Affairs	Quarterly	President
Student satisfaction survey and action plans	IR Office / all VPs	Annually (published)	President → Board
Counselling service utilization	VP Enrollment & Student Affairs	Each semester	VPAA → President

Key Initiatives

Early Alert and Student Success System

Systematic early alert system identifying at-risk students by Week 5 of each semester. Triggered alerts route to academic advisors with defined response protocols. Operational Fall 2026. Annual retention data tracked against intervention rates.

Scholarship and Access Strategy

Needs-based and merit-based scholarship framework. Merit: top 5% of new entrants receive partial scholarship. Needs-based fund established 2026 using Continuing Education revenue allocation. Policy approved Fall 2026.

PILLAR E Employability, Engagement & Community

Employability is AIU's most powerful differentiator in Kuwait's private education market. Kuwaiti families choose universities based on what graduates achieve, not what institutions claim. This pillar combines industry partnerships, graduate outcomes, and community engagement, all of which depend on and reinforce the same external relationships.

Sub-Pillar E1. Employability & Industry Partnerships

E1.1. Embed Mandatory Internship in All Undergraduate Programs

Every undergraduate program requires a credited internship of minimum 240 hours as a graduation requirement. Placements tracked, employer-evaluated, and reported in Graduate Outcomes data.

E1.2. Establish Career Services as a Strategic Function

Career Services elevated from student support unit to strategic institutional function. Dedicated staff, industry partner network, public performance reporting. Fully staffed Fall 2026.

E1.3. Build School-Level Industry Advisory Boards

Each school establishes a formal Industry Advisory Board meeting twice annually. Boards provide curriculum input, internship placements, and graduate feedback. Recommendations formally reported to Faculty Council Curriculum Committee.

E1.4. AIU Employability Skills Certificate

Certificate embedded in all programs: communication, professional ethics, digital literacy, critical thinking, leadership. Awarded at graduation. Recognized by partner employers.

Sub-Pillar E2. Community Service & Continuing Education

E2.1. Launch Continuing Education Division (2026)

CE Director hired Fall 2026. First three certificate programs (project management, digital design, educational leadership) launched Fall 2026. Revenue positive by end of Year 1.

E2.2. Partner with Kuwait Government for Workforce Upskilling

First formal MoU with a Kuwait government entity or major employer signed by Fall 2026. Co-branded professional development program launched 2026. Target partners: Kuwait Ministry of Education, KIPCO, Kuwait Oil Company.

E2.3. Scale CE Revenue to 15% of Total Revenue by 2030

20+ active CE programs by 2030 serving 500–800 learners annually. Revenue model: short certificates (KWD 150–400), executive programs (KWD 800–2,000), corporate contracts (variable).

Key Performance Indicators

KPI / Measurable Indicator	2026 Baseline	2027 Target	2030 Target
Graduate employment within 6 months	Baseline 2026	75%+	85%+
Employer satisfaction with AIU graduates	No survey	70%+ satisfied	85%+ satisfied
% graduates completing credited internship	<30% est.	70%	100%
Signed corporate internship partners	Minimal	20+	50+
Industry Advisory Boards operational	0	3 schools	All 5 schools
CE program enrolments annually	0	200+	500–800
CE revenue as % of total revenue	0%	5%	15%+
MoUs with government/ employer partners	0	1	3+
AIU Employability Skills Certificates awarded	0	200+	500+

Ownership & Reporting

Objective	Primary Owner	Reporting Cycle	Reported To
Graduate outcomes and employer satisfaction	Career Services / IR Office	Annually (published)	President → Board → Public
Internship program (placement and tracking)	VP Enrollment & Student Affairs / Career Services	Each semester	VPAA → President
Industry Advisory Board activity	Deans (each school)	Semi-annually per board	VPAA → President → Board Academic
CE performance (enrolments and revenue)	CE Director / VP University Engagement	Quarterly	Board Finance Committee
Government and employer partnership development	VP University Engagement	Semi-annually	President → Board

Key Initiatives

Corporate Partner Program

Tiered engagement: Bronze (internship provider), Silver (Advisory Board + internship), Gold (co-funded research or sponsored curriculum). Partners receive AIU recruitment access and brand visibility. Launched Fall 2026. Partner summit hosted by AIU each spring.

Annual Kuwaiti Employer Satisfaction Survey

Annual survey of employers who hired AIU graduates in the past 3 years. Results published in Graduate Outcomes Report and feed directly into Faculty Council curriculum review. First survey 2026. Minimum 50% employer response rate target.

Community Service Program

Each school contributes one structured community service initiative per year. Architecture school designs for underserved communities. Education school provides literacy programs. Engineering school conducts STEM outreach in Kuwait schools. Annual Community Service Report published and submitted as WASC Standard 2 community engagement evidence.

AIU Alumni Advisory Council: Structure, Charter & WASC Role

AIU's alumni are the institution's most credible external voice. Every year, they enter Kuwait's workforce and represent the quality of an AIU education to every employer, colleague, and community member they encounter. Their structured engagement with the institution is therefore not a goodwill exercise, it is a strategic asset for enrollment, reputation, accreditation, and continuous improvement.

AIU shall establish a formal Alumni Advisory Council by the end of the 2026-2027 academic year. The Council will be a standing advisory body with the following structure and responsibilities:

Element	Specification
Composition	12–16 members: minimum 2 alumni representatives per school, plus 2 at-large members selected for professional prominence in Kuwait
Term	Two years, staggered; maximum two consecutive terms
Chair	Elected by Council members; attends Board Academic Committee annually
Meeting Frequency	Twice annually in-person; quarterly digital updates
WASC Role	Alumni Council provides formal written input to the WASC self-study on: educational quality, graduate preparedness, and value of AIU degree. Input is documented as Standard 4 stakeholder evidence
Advisory Board Role	Each school's Industry Advisory Board must include minimum one AIU alumnus
Graduate Outcomes Survey	Alumni receive annual survey on employment status, career progression, and assessment of AIU preparation quality. Results published in Annual Graduate Outcomes Report
CE Access	All Alumni Council members receive 50% discount on AIU Continuing Education programmes, formalising the lifelong learning relationship
Responsible Owner	VP University Engagement, Annual report to President and Board

The AIU Balanced Scorecard: Performance Management at Every Level

AIU adopts the Balanced Scorecard as its institutional performance management framework. The Balanced Scorecard is an internationally recognised tool, used by leading universities in the GCC and required explicitly by WSCUC in its accreditation evidence framework, that translates strategic objectives into measurable outcomes across four perspectives: academic quality, student success, operational effectiveness, and financial sustainability.

What makes the Balanced Scorecard different from a simple list of goals is its cascading structure: every institutional KPI in the RISE Strategy must be linked to a school-level target, which must in turn be linked to departmental targets and individual performance evaluations. This means that every faculty member, every administrator, and every support staff member can see how their daily work connects to AIU's strategic direction, and can be held accountable for their contribution to it.

Level	Scorecard Owner	Review Frequency	Reported To
Institutional	President / IR Office	Quarterly + Annual Board review	Board of Trustees
School/College	Dean + Faculty Council rep	Semi-annually	VPAA → President
Department	Department Chair	Each semester	Dean
Individual (Faculty)	Faculty member + Dean	Annually (promotion cycle)	Dean → VPAA
Individual (Staff)	Staff member + Supervisor	Annually	Relevant VP

Planning, assessment, and budget decisions are linked in a documented annual cycle. This integration is a WASC Standard 4 requirement.

Month	Activity	Description	WASC Evidence Output
April–May	Student Satisfaction Survey	Annual survey across all programs and schools	Survey results report, Standard 2
May–June	Annual Assessment Review	Faculty Council reviews PLO/AOL data; programs document close-the-loop actions	Assessment cycle completion reports, Standard 4
May	Budget Approval	President reviews; Board Finance Committee approves	Approved budget, Standard 3
October	KPI Performance Review	IR office compiles RISE KPI dashboard; President reviews all pillar performance	Annual KPI Dashboard, Standard 1
November	Board Academic Committee	President and Faculty Council Chair present annual RISE strategy progress	Annual Strategic Progress Report, Standards 1 & 4
November	Board Finance Committee	Director of Finance presents financial performance and 90-day reserve status	Annual Financial Report Standard 3
December	VP Action Planning	Each VP submits action plans for following year based on KPI gaps	VP action plans, Standard 4
January	Annual IE Report Published	IR office publishes comprehensive report covering all RISE pillars	Annual IE Report, all Standards
February	Budget Submission	All units submit their budgets	As per FIN-002

RISE Master KPI Dashboard

Annual Board review document. All 20 KPIs tracked by the IR office. Red/Amber/Green status assigned each November.

#	KPI	Pillar	2026 Baseline	2027 Target	2030 Target
1	Scopus/WoS publications annually	R	~0	30+	100+
2	% faculty with active scholarly output	R	<10%	40%	75%
3	External research grants value (KWD)	R	Minimal	50,000+	200,000+
4	Research centre active projects	R	0	3+	8+
5	WASC milestone	I	Eligibility Fall/26	Candidacy 2027	Accreditation 2029
6	Programs with complete PLO/AOL cycle	I	0%	100%	100% maintained
7	AACSB candidacy status	I	Not started	Candidacy 2027	Accreditation 2030
8	Graduate Outcomes Report published	I	No	Yes (2026)	Yes — annually
9	Total student enrollment	S	3,200	4,000+	5,000+
10	First-year retention rate	S	Baseline TBD	75%+	80%+
11	4-year graduation rate	S	Baseline TBD	50%+	55%+
12	New programs launched (PUC approved)	S	0	2	4+
13	Annual student satisfaction rate	S	Baseline TBD	70%+	80%+
14	Graduate employment within 6 months	E	Baseline TBD	75%+	85%+
15	Employer satisfaction with graduates	E	No survey	70%+ satisfied	85%+ satisfied
16	Signed corporate internship partners	E	Minimal	20+	50+
17	CE enrolments annually	E	0	200+	500–800
18	CE revenue as % of total revenue	E	0%	5%	15%+
19	Days cash on hand (financial sustainability)	Cross	TBD	60+ days	90+ days
20	% full-time faculty with terminal degrees	Cross	Audit Fall/26	90%+	95%+

Strategic Risk Register

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation	Owner
Financial sustainability below 90-day reserve, WASC Standard 3 hard threshold	High	Critical	Immediate CFO analysis; Board Finance Committee quarterly monitoring; CE revenue ramp prioritized; enrollment growth modeled at -10% sensitivity	Director of Finance
Faculty resistance reducing Faculty Council effectiveness	Medium	High	Charter has Board-level authority; President publicly champions Council; binding authority non-negotiable	President / VPAA
WASC self-study evidence depth insufficient, denial or deferral	Medium	Critical	Early start 2026; consultant guidance; annual evidence audit; Assessment Coordinator role protected in budget	Accreditation Office
Key faculty departure reducing program capacity or accreditation eligibility	Medium	High	Competitive retention packages; faculty development investment; succession planning for program coordinators	VPAA / HR
PUC regulatory change affecting program approvals	Low	High	Active PUC relationship; legal advisor monitoring; VP University Engagement ministry engagement	President / VP University Engagement
Enrollment decline reducing revenue base	Low	High	Retention programs activated; new programs in pipeline; CE revenue as partial buffer; -10% downside in financial model	VP Enrollment

AIU 2030: What Success Looks Like

By 2030, AIU aspires to be recognized as a leading institution of higher education in Kuwait and an emerging contributor to higher education excellence in the Gulf region.

Success will be reflected in measurable outcomes:

- Students graduate with the knowledge, skills, and confidence required to succeed in their professions and contribute to society.
- Faculty actively contribute to research, innovation, and scholarly engagement.
- Academic programs demonstrate quality, relevance, and continuous improvement.
- Employers recognize AIU graduates as well-prepared and workforce ready.
- Institutional decisions are informed by evidence, assessment, and accountability.
- The University is recognized for its commitment to educational quality, student success, and responsible stewardship of resources.

Most importantly, success will be measured one graduate at a time, through the achievements, contributions, and impact of AIU alumni across Kuwait and beyond.

Board Adoption & Signatures

The AIU RISE Strategy 2026–2030 is adopted by the Board of Trustees of the American International University, Kuwait as the official institutional strategy. Adoption obligates the institution to implement, monitor, and report on all objectives according to the Annual RISE Planning Cycle defined in this document.

Board Chair	Signature: _____	Date: _____
Board Vice Chair	Signature: _____	Date: _____
Academic Affairs Committee Chair	Signature: _____	Date: _____
President	Signature: _____	Date: _____
Faculty Council Chair	Signature: _____	Date: _____
Board Resolution Number	Resolution No. _____ / 2026	
Next Comprehensive Review	Annual KPI review: November each year · Full revision: 2028	



@aiu_kw