



جامعة الأخوين
جامعة الأخوين
AL AKHAWAYN
UNIVERSITY

Vice President for Academic Affairs

Al Akhawayn University

Candidate Pack

Contents

01.	Executive Summary	2
02.	About Al Akhawayn University	3
03.	Living in Ifrane	5
04.	Role Description	6
05.	Person Specification	7
06.	Appointment Details and How to Apply	8

01. Executive Summary

Al Akhawayn University in Ifrane (AUI) is seeking an experienced and visionary new Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA). The successful candidate is expected to assume office on 1st August 2025.

Established nearly 30 years ago, AUI is an independent, public, not-for-profit, coeducational university in Ifrane, Morocco. It currently has over 4,000 students and its medium of instruction is English.

The Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPPA) is the University's Chief Academic Officer and reports directly to the University President. The VPAA is also an integral part of the President's Cabinet. AUI sees the entire student experience in a holistic manner and progress has been tied to close collaboration between the leadership of Academic Affairs and Student Life.

The successful candidate will combine personal scholarly credibility (a PhD is considered essential) with proven academic leadership skills. They will be an effective administrator who can articulate a compelling strategic vision for the development of the University's academic offering and profile.

AUI is being assisted in this appointment process by the international executive search firm Society. To apply please [click here](#). The deadline for receipt of applications is midday (Morocco time) on Friday, 24 January 2025



02. About Al Akhawayn University

AUI was founded by royal decree (a 'Dahir') in 1993 by King Hassan II of Morocco. It is as an independent public university established on the American liberal arts model. The institution opened its doors to students in January 1995, so is on the cusp of celebrating its 30th anniversary.

AUI was first accredited by the New England Commission of Higher Education (NECHE) in 2017 and was reaccredited for ten years in 2022. As the only English language institution of higher education in Morocco, and one of only three US-accredited universities on the African continent, AUI is a beacon for the liberal arts in the MENA region.

The University currently enrolls over 4,000 students and remains on-track with its strategic objective to enrol 5,000 students by 2026.

The majority of students are undergraduates, but AUI also offers several popular Master-level graduate programs.

Based on the principles of diversity and an international outlook, the university's mission is driven by values of human solidarity and tolerance. Al Akhawayn has modelled its administrative, pedagogical, and academic organization on the American university system, and English is the language of instruction.

For more information, visit www.aui.ma



University President Dr Amine Bensaid, and his predecessor Dr Driss Ouaouicha

02. About Al Akhawayn University Continued

AUI is currently in the final year of an historic five-year **Strategic Plan** that has more than doubled the size of the student body and faculty. In addition, the last of 19 new buildings on campus are now nearing completion.

The University is widely recognized as a leader in 21st Century liberal arts education. It has pioneering and very successful initiatives underway around employability and entrepreneurship, as well as around ensuring students gain lifelong value from their academic studies. It has also started strategic work on the impact of technology and the opportunities it offers for advancing liberal arts education.

AUI has four academic units:

- **School of Social Sciences, Arts and Humanities** (SSAH);
- **School of Science and Engineering** (SSE);
- **School of Business Administration** (SBA);
- **Language Center** (LC).

The three largest majors in the School of Science and Engineering are all ABET accredited. The main BBA program in the School of Business Administration is accredited by EFMD. The School of Business Administration is presently engaged in the process of earning AACSB accreditation. Finally, the Language Center was recently reaccredited for ten years by CEA.





03. Living in Ifrane

AUI is located in the idyllic resort town of Ifrane, known for its picturesque alpine-style architecture. The town sits at an altitude of 1,668 meters in the Middle Atlas Mountains of Morocco. It is approximately 48 kilometres from the famous imperial cities of Fez and Meknes.

Originally built in 1928 as a 'Garden City' during the colonial period, Ifrane has around 15,000 year-round residents, but also the capacity to house over 100,000 visitors who flock to it during winter to experience snow, and during summer to escape the city heat.

Ifrane offers wonderful hiking and a relaxed pace of life typical of beautiful resort towns. The University is situated at one end of town on the road to Fes, while the AUI-owned Annex, where most faculty live, the Al Akhawayn School in Ifrane (ASI) and the Al Akhawayn Conference Center are all situated at the other end of town, around four kilometres away from campus, on the main road to al-Hajib and Meknes.

Schooling

Al Akhawayn School in Ifrane (ASI), which the University operates, is an American-style pre-K-12 school with about 250 students. Its Director reports to the VPAA. ASI is currently in the process of accreditation with the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE). Its students have an

impressive record of gaining admission to some of the finest universities in North America, in Europe, and across the Mediterranean.

International Transport Connections

The closest major airport is Fès-Sais Airport (FEZ), only one hour's drive away. This provides direct international flights to and from several European cities, including Paris, London, and Madrid.

Language and Culture

French and Arabic are most widely spoken, however English is also commonly used. Largely due to the presence of the University, there is a diverse expat community, offering opportunities to meet people from around the world. Ifrane hosts various cultural and outdoor events, and its unique architecture makes it a pleasant place to explore. Nearby attractions include the Azrou cedar forests and the ski resort at Michlifen.

04. Role Description

The Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPPA) is the University's Chief Academic Officer and reports directly to the President. The VPAA is also an integral part of the President's Cabinet.

Key responsibilities will include:

Academic Leadership

- leading the development, implementation, and assessment of academic programs and policies, ensuring alignment with the University's mission and strategic goals;
- promoting innovation in teaching, learning, and research to maintain academic excellence and enhance the University's reputation.
- overseeing the development and accreditation of new academic initiatives and programs.

Faculty and Staff Development

- recruiting, retaining, and supporting a diverse and high-calibre faculty of academic staff;
- providing leadership in faculty development, tenure, promotion, and performance evaluation.

Collaboration with Student Life

- creating a seamless and integrated student experience that supports academic success, personal growth, and wellbeing;
- fostering initiatives that bridge academic and co-curricular programs, emphasising holistic student development.

Strategic Planning and Governance

- contributing to the overall strategic direction and governance of the University;
- providing recommendations on academic priorities and resource allocation.

Student Success and Retention

- developing and implementing strategies for continuous improvement of student retention, graduation rates, and post-graduation success.

External Engagement and Advocacy

- building partnerships with external stakeholders, including alumni, industry, and government, to advance the institution's goals;
- advocating for the University in academic forums and professional organisations, both domestically and internationally.



05. Person Specification

The successful candidate will combine personal scholarly credibility with proven academic leadership skills. They will be an effective administrator who can articulate a compelling strategic vision for the development of the University's academic offering and profile.

Candidates should be able to demonstrate evidence of the following skills, capabilities and experience:

- education to PhD level and a distinguished record of academic and administrative accomplishments.
- significant leadership experience in higher education, preferably at the level of Dean or higher;
- a deep commitment to academic excellence and student success;
- demonstrated ability to foster collaboration across diverse stakeholders, including faculty, staff, students, and external partners;
- a result-orientation, with a successful record of delivering against agreed objectives;
- the motivation to work as a close partner for with President in the context of a rapidly growing and developing institution;
- a strong understanding of trends and challenges in higher education, including holistic approaches to student development;
- an internationalist outlook and the ability to work effectively across cultural boundaries;
- exceptional communication, interpersonal, and organisational skills;
- the ability to inspire and motivate others.



06. Appointment Details and How to Apply

Al Akhawayn University is being assisted in this appointment process by the international executive search firm Society (www.society-search.com).

Applications should consist of:

1. a thoughtful covering letter (ideally no longer than two pages), addressing the criteria in the Person Specification;
2. an up-to-date curriculum vitae;
3. names and contact details of three referees (although referees will only be approached at the final stage of the process, and only with your express permission).

General advice on how to write a [strong CV](#) and [strong covering letter](#) can be found on our website.

To upload your documents via Society's website, [click here](#).

The deadline for receipt of applications is midday (Morocco time) on Friday, 24 January 2025

Shortlisted candidates will be invited to interview on during February and early March.

An appointment will be made subject to receipt of satisfactory references. The appointed candidate will be offered a salary commensurate with their experience and the seniority of the role.

We are committed to ensuring that anyone can access our application processes. This includes people with hearing, sight, mobility, and cognitive impairments. Should you require access to this document in an alternative format, wish to apply in a different format, or need any other reasonable adjustments made for you (including at interview), please contact us at inclusion@society-search.com. We also welcome suggestions or comments about any more general access improvements we should consider.





Society is a global executive search firm and a certified B Corporation. 10% of our profits go to charitable causes through The Society Foundation. With colleagues in the United Kingdom, the United States, and New Zealand, we solve senior hiring challenges for responsible businesses and purpose-driven organisations around the world.

We believe that the right candidate, placed in the right organisation at the right time, can initiate a chain reaction of transformative change that will help to deliver a more inclusive and sustainable future.

