



Alumni Charter



The Alumni Relations Office (ARO)

The Alumni Relations Office is tasked with creating an Alumni Association and providing the overall direction for the Alumni Programme and its activities. The University of Seychelles is a new institution and its main focus is to build an affinity with its alumni and establish a database by which to communicate with members.

Why do we maintain a relationship with our Alumni?

It can be expected by the University that maintaining a relationship with these graduates will play a vital role in enhancing the University's public image.

- When informed and nurtured, Alumni can be ambassadors for the University, contributing to achieving marketing aims and increasing the University's public profile.
- Creating a forum for networking between Alumni and the University provides a platform where professional and academic interests can be discussed and opportunities for alumni may be generated. Providing this service will add value to the degree and will promote the University's commitment to the student lifecycle.
- Regular contact with graduates may encourage Alumni to contribute financially to the University through purchasing branded merchandise or gifting donations.

To ensure the success of the Alumni Association and achieve these benefits, the University must work towards achieving the following aims:

- **Organization and Representation**
- **Involvement and Commitment**
- **Education and Awareness**

Strategic Aims

Primary Goal and Mission Statement

The Alumni Relations Development Office will manage the University of Seychelles Alumni Association and are committed to ensuring that all members maintain productive and lifelong relationships with the University of Seychelles.

In addition, they will ensure that the interests of alumni are reflected in all areas of the University of Seychelles advancement.

To achieve this primary goal and mission, it is important to have clearly defined strategic aims and objectives. The University of Seychelles must make a strong start in its approach to Alumni Relations and establish a strong foundation on which to build. The strategic aims that are suggested are recommended to see the Alumni Programme advance over the next few years.

Organisation and Representation

Create an efficient and effective Alumni Association that supports members' needs while continually attracting new graduates and maintaining contact with all past alumni.

Objectives

- Create an alumni association and promote it widely to increase membership.
- Create an effective database to manage up-to-date graduate data and facilitate regular communication with Alumni members.
- Provide an effective social media presence (Facebook, LinkedIn) to allow alumni to stay informed about the association and learn more about alumni activities.
- Establish and manage a local Alumni chapter to facilitate ongoing alumni activities
- Research the creation of specialist alumni groups (subject / degree specific) to enable members to communicate with alumni who have similar professional interests.
- Provide timely and thorough responses to any alumni issues, ideas or concerns.
- Consider the creation of an alumni committee that allows some input to the University's decision making and strategic processes.

Involvement & Commitment

Ensure the establishment of a network of involved and committed Alumni who are prepared to assist in the University's advancement and promote the University amongst their peer group.

Objectives

- Survey the Alumni group and establish what services they want the Alumni Office to provide.
- Identify the characteristics of the Alumni association and develop a series of events and activities to benefit them.
- Hold Alumni events to provide graduates with the opportunity to engage with each other and University staff.
- Engage alumni in recruitment events and marketing opportunities for the University of Seychelles.
- Provide the opportunity for alumni to contribute to the University with donations or gifts.
- Develop merchandise lines and promote them to alumni
- Provide graduates access to further education information and career services

Education and Awareness

Increase awareness of the importance of establishing strong relations between the University and its alumni and increase the profile of alumni activities within the University.

Objectives

- Ensure regular communication with Alumni through newsletter, emails, social media and the alumni website
- Introduce the alumni association to current students to increase membership on graduation.
- Ensure staff awareness of alumni planning and encourage their participation in specific events.
- Ensure 'partner' teaching institutions' awareness of alumni planning and involve them in specific alumni events where appropriate.
- Incorporate alumni stories into University publications to promote alumni activities to University of Seychelles staff and the wider community.
- Promote the alumni association at key events (Graduation, Open day)
- Research an electronic method for alumni to network and communicate with each other outside of the events programme.

Alumni Relations Office Operational Plan

The operational plan outlines what tasks will need to be completed for the strategic aims of the Alumni Relations Office to be achieved. It also remains crucially important to learn as much about individual alumni members as possible to ensure that University of Seychelles continues to deliver appropriate services that will extend their interest and further develop their bond with the University.

Organisation and Representation

Create an alumni association and promote it widely to increase membership.

(a) Introduce opt in 'out' membership for all graduates. All graduates automatically become a member of the Alumni association. They will have to "opt out" if they no longer wish to remain in touch with University of Seychelles.

(b) Specify the scope of membership rights.

(c) Develop paper and web-based information form that ensures that all graduates know the benefits of becoming an alumni member.

Create an effective database to manage up-to-date graduate data and facilitate regular communication with Alumni members.

(a) Establish what information needs to be collected on the database.

(b) Develop an alumni database that supports the University of Seychelles database to ensure uploading of graduate data.

(c) Ensure reporting features of the database to allow for profiling of alumni members.

(d) Develop email and postal features to allow ease of contact with alumni members.

Provide an effective social media presence (Facebook, LinkedIn) to allow alumni to stay informed of the association and learn more about alumni activities.

(a) Develop a University of Seychelles Alumni Association social media presence for alumni to use.

(b) Nominate staff, alumni and current students to update data consistently.

Establish and manage a local Alumni chapter to facilitate ongoing alumni activities.

(a) Research what will be most effective.

(b) Develop framework for the alumni chapter, set parameters and boundaries.

(c) Select 'chapter' leaders and ensure they understand and are committed to achieving the goals of the alumni association. The suggested term of office is 2 years.

(d) Develop a template to assist in their establishment.

(e) Proactively monitor the work of the alumni chapter leader.

(f) Offer 'leader' active involvement with University of Seychelles (Graduation, Open Day, Induction).

(g) Form links with the current Student Association to ensure new students are aware of the lifecycle.

Research the creation of specialist alumni groups (subject / degree specific) to enable members to communicate with alumni who have similar professional interests.

- (a) Profile alumni members and decide if the establishment of specialist groups would be effective.
- (b) Research work of existing specialist groups and analyse whether this would add value to alumni members.
- (c) Establish a committee of 'expert' staff in the area of the specialist chapter to give advice and help decide what services and resources could be made available to members.

Provide timely and thorough responses to any alumni issues, ideas or concerns.

- (a) Develop a series of FAQ's for the benefit of alumni members and ensure quick response times. (b) Keep a record of common issues and report them on the web or in the newsletter if necessary.

Consider the creation of an alumni committee that allows some input to the University's decision making and strategic processes.

- (a) Consider the development of an Alumni committee that will discuss all issues relating to alumni strategy and plans.
- (b) Develop terms of reference for this board and select members (c) Appoint alumnus to represent the association on the board.

Involvement and Commitment

Survey the Alumni group and establish what services they want the Alumni Office to provide.

- (a) Develop a series of questions to ask alumni that will provide useful information about their expectations and what they want from the alumni association.
- (b) Create and send survey to all alumni members. Aim for 30% returned surveys.
- (c) Provide feedback on the survey to participants. Give them an indication of new services, activities established in response to survey feedback.

Identify the characteristics of the Alumni association and develop a series of events and activities to benefit them.

- (a) Analyse job profiles, age group, residence and careers of alumni members.
- (b) Research major companies for discounts- hotels, tourist attractions worldwide.

(c) Research viability of an alumni card so that we can easily identify members who are eligible for discount.

(d) Research library membership for members.

(e) Research the possibility of an email for life.

Hold Alumni events to provide graduates with the opportunity to engage with each other and University staff.

(a) Research and select event locations and invite alumni members.

(b) Hold Alumni events in conjunction with marketing activities and other University activities.

(c) Develop template for events that can be replicated each year. Possibly establishing a “fixture” yearly event (Annual Alumni Event, Alumni Association hosting a party for the new graduates, Student & Alumni day out).

Engage alumni in recruitment events and marketing opportunities for University of Seychelles.

(a) Select ‘committed’ alumni to hold seminars at recruitment fairs and be available to talk about their study experiences

(b) Profile successful Alumni in marketing publications.

(c) Recruit ‘alumni leaders’ to assist new students to University of Seychelles.

Provide the opportunity for alumni to contribute to the University with donations or gifts.

(a) Research other Universities’ contribution and donation information.

(b) Develop ways for Alumni to be able to donate or make a contribution to the University.

(c) Research possibility of developing an Annual fund and allowing for pecuniary and residuary legacies and bequests.

Develop merchandise lines and promote them to alumni

(a) Research what merchandise alumni would like to buy.

(b) Design and develop merchandise.

(c) Promote merchandise at Alumni events, through the website and at graduation ceremonies.

Provide graduates access to further education information and career services

- (a) Promote graduate courses at alumni events to promote lifelong learning (if offered by University of Seychelles).
- (b) Monitor numbers of alumni registering for further study through the database.
- (c) Research what courses that graduates would like available.
- (d) Promote new courses through the alumni email list.
- (e) Develop a 'first destination' survey that can be given to new graduates.
- (f) Develop online job posting register where Alumni can register jobs within their companies that other alumni can apply for.
- (g) Update alumni with recruitment information for large multinational companies.

Education and Awareness

Ensure regular communication with Alumni through newsletters, email, the alumni website & social media

(a) Keep an up-to-date alumni email list and send quarterly emails to registered members. Provide University news, further study information and event details. (b) Send email bulletins when necessary. (c) Expand the Alumni newsletter to a magazine. Publish the magazine biannually and send to all alumni members. Include University news items, alumni profiling, event reports etc. (d) Develop an effective web resource that promotes the alumni association. (e) Monitor 'visitor' numbers members to the alumni website and survey what information they are looking at. (f) Ensure the website is constantly updated with new information and events. (g) Set up various social media for the Alumni and to keep it constantly up to date

Introduce alumni education to current students to increase membership on graduation

(a) Promote the Alumni Association in student handbooks and in the student newsletter (b) Introduce the alumni association at the point of recruitment to show University of Seychelles commitment to lifelong learning and support (c) Promote the alumni association and its activities in prospectuses and other promotional material.

Ensure 'partner' teaching institutions awareness of alumni planning and involve them in specific alumni events where appropriate

(a) Work with the marketing staff to build a relationship with key people within the teaching institutions abroad and locally. (b) Provide presentations and briefings to staff so they are aware of the alumni message within the University of Seychelles (c) Provide promotional material on the alumni association for staff to display in their offices and hand out to current students and other stakeholders (d) Include staff in alumni events and activities where appropriate.

Incorporate alumni stories into University publications to promote alumni activities to the wider community

(a) Publish stories on successful alumni within all university publications to promote and increase awareness of the existence of the alumni association. (b) Provide information of the alumni association and its activities in staff newsletters to promote the activities of alumni to all staff (c) Participate in University briefings on alumni activities. (d) Provide an overview of the Alumni Office and its responsibilities for University of Seychelles staff.

Promote the alumni association at key events (Graduation, Open day)

(a) Ensure that successful alumni participate in key "high profile" celebration activities (b) Ensure that successful alumni participate in the graduation ceremony, open days and other events to highlight the student lifecycle.

Research an electronic method for alumni to network and communicate with each other outside of the events programme

(a) Research password protected sites on the website that can allow for alumni to sign in and talk to each other. (b) Research posting newsletters and other information on the site of use to alumni members.

How to Start / Create an Alumni Association

The purpose of an association is to foster a spirit of loyalty and to promote the general welfare of your organization. Alumni Associations exist to support the parent organization's goals, and to strengthen the ties between alumni, the community, and the parent organization.

What are the initial requirements to starting an Alumni Association?

The two initial requirements to start an alumni association are:

The interest of a reasonable nucleus of alumni and friends of the organization to participate in the association's activities.

Who Should Take on the Leadership Role of an Alumni Association?

In addition to being an alumni of the organization the leader of an alumni association should also have the following characteristics:

Ability to motivate and engage alumni.

When necessary, and if available, the Alumni Relations Office can help with the selection of a leader. (The leader could be one person, or a committee — size can vary by organization.)

Formal or Informal Alumni Association?

An association can be a formal organization with officers, a set of objectives, subscriptions, a newsletter, and perhaps — though not necessarily — a constitution. There is no standard constitution for associations. Many operate very effectively without one. In some countries, however, there are legal requirements to register a constitution, the form and content of which are decided by the association itself.

In areas where alumni concentrations are relatively small, an informal association nominally led by one or two individuals might gather socially from time to time. Whether or not the association is formally structured, the key to success is the ability of its leaders to motivate others to join in.

Besides associations (formal or informal), some people choose to serve simply as a Contact Point for alumni or prospective students who wish to learn more about the organization and to hear from someone's personal experience.

The enthusiasm and willingness of several individuals who are willing to take on the organizational initiative and sustain it is required.

Willingness to work with the University

Willingness to contribute time

Enthusiasm

Steps to Creating an Alumni Association

Step 1 – Form an Interest Group

Directly ask for their participation in starting the association

Step 2 – 1st Communication

Write a letter to the alumni who make up your interest group

Step 3 – Getting Organized

A meeting should be organized of interested alumni to agree upon the association's objectives and form a committee. A sample agenda might include:

Adjourn

Step 4 – Prepare By-Laws

Have a committee prepare by-laws for adoption at the next meeting. The adopted by-laws need to be sent to ARO for the chapter-alumni files.

Sample Outline of Alumni Association By-Laws:

A letter should be mailed (or a message sent) to all alumni, introducing them to the leader, requesting them to update their contact information, and inquiring if there are any interested volunteers for the committee.

Alumni should also be made aware of the role of the ARO and any opportunities they have to offer to "give back" by volunteering for various marketing activities.

Appointment of other committees and delegation of responsibilities (communications, recognition, events, recruiting, etc.)

Meet informally with alums to obtain names

Use the existing alumni organization

Obtain a geographic listing of members from the ARO

Make contact with alums. Either via telephone, personally or email meet with alums

Call to order

Introductions

Review general concepts and goals of the Alumni Association

Outline Alumni/Alumnae Association functions

Identify short and long term needs

Establish projected expenditures and dues structure

Solicit areas of interest and capabilities

Nomination and election of Alumni Association officers

Appointment of a committee to draw up the by-laws or organizational outline

Set date, time and location for follow-up meeting

Objectives

Membership

A. Communication (newsletters, mailings, directories, etc.)

B. Activities

C. Fund raising

D. Scholarships and fellowships

E. Assistance in Alumni coordinator programming