

American International University-Bangladesh

Sustainable Development Goals Report



SDG 5: GENDER EQUALITY

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Maternity and Paternity Leave Policies for AIUB

Faculty and Staff

AIUB has established formal **maternity and paternity leave policies** to support its employees and promote women's continued participation in the workforce. Permanent female faculty and administrative staff are entitled to **paid maternity leave**, reflecting the university's commitment to the health and well-being of mothers and their careers. AIUB explicitly aims to help women return to work after childbirth, ensuring they can continue their academic or professional careers post-maternity. Likewise, **paternity leave** is provided to all permanent male academic and administrative employees as paid leave, so that fathers can devote time to their newborns and support their spouse during and after pregnancy. By welcoming fathers into parenthood with leave benefits, AIUB fosters an inclusive workplace that encourages shared caregiving responsibilities. These family-friendly leave policies demonstrate AIUB's effort to uphold work-life balance and retain talented staff, which in turn supports women's participation by easing the transition around childbirth for both mothers and fathers.

Maternity Leave policy

<https://www.aiub.edu/offices/hrd/employee-benefits/maternity-leave-policy>

AIUB values its gender-diverse workforce, working towards empowering, promoting, and retaining its talented and dedicated female employees. Understanding the obligations and responsibilities of motherhood, AIUB provides consistent support to all its female academic and administrative employees through its maternity leave. The university aims to ensure the health and well-being of both mother and child, during and after pregnancy, enabling them to continue their careers even after childbirth.

AIUB ensures fair and consistent treatment of all pregnant fulltime female employees and support them to return to work after the birth of a child in order to continue in their chosen career and allow the University to retain trained and competent staff. The maternity benefits are offered to permanent female employees of AIUB in the form of paid leave.

Employee Benefits & Policies

<https://www.aiub.edu/offices/hrd/employee-benefits>

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Paternity Leave policy

Parenting is not limited to motherhood, and AIUB recognizes the importance of the involvement and care of a father that is essential for the proper upbringing of a child. All male academic and administrative employees are provided the support of paternity leave so that they can give the time and attention to their child(ren) as well as the new mother during and after pregnancy. The provision fosters an inclusive and accommodating workplace that welcomes fathers into parenthood.

AIUB ensures that male employees can provide direct care to their spouse/ newborn babies. The paternity benefits are offered to permanent male employees of AIUB in the form of paid leave.

Contributory Provident Fund [CPF] and Gratuity

AIUB has standard CPF and Gratuity Policy for its employees. AIUB is providing CPF and Gratuity to its employees from 1st July, 2008 and 1st January, 2016 respectively.

and other benefits are provided based on needs and merit.

Support for Pregnant and Parenting Students

For students who are pregnant or parenting, AIUB offers several support measures, primarily focused on **childcare and health accommodations**. The university operates an on-campus **Childcare Facility** to assist female students (as well as faculty and staff) with young children. Infants from 6 months up to toddlers of 4 years old can be cared for at this facility during class or work hours, under the supervision of a dedicated Childcare Committee. This allows student-parents – especially mothers – to attend classes knowing their children are in safe care nearby. In addition, AIUB's campus Medical Center provides **special care for pregnant women and nursing mothers**, offering routine health services and emergency medical support as needed. This includes having nurses on duty and even an ambulance for emergencies, ensuring that pregnant students can access healthcare easily on campus.

When it comes to academic flexibility, while AIUB's public documents do not list a specific pregnancy attendance or extension policy, students can utilize the university's general leave and academic accommodations processes. For instance, a student can request a **Leave of Absence** for a definitive period by applying through the Registrar's Office and stating the reason (e.g. pregnancy or childbirth). This approved leave allows the student to temporarily pause studies and later resume without penalty, rather than having prolonged absences count against their enrollment. In practice, faculty and administrators are likely to make reasonable accommodations (such as makeup work or flexible deadlines) for pregnant or parenting students on a case-by-case basis, even if not outlined in a standalone policy. Combined with the childcare services, these measures indicate that AIUB acknowledges the needs of student-parents and strives to support their continuation in education.

Maternity Policy at AIUB that Supports Women Participation

AIUB values its gender-diverse workforce, working towards empowering, promoting, and retaining its talented and dedicated female employees. Understanding the obligations and responsibilities of motherhood, AIUB provides consistent support to all its female academic and administrative employees through its maternity leave. The university aims to ensure the health and well-being of both mother and child, during and after pregnancy, enabling them to continue their careers even after childbirth. AIUB ensures fair and consistent treatment of all pregnant fulltime female employees and support them to

return to work after the birth of a child in order to continue in their chosen career and allow the University to retain trained and competent staff. The maternity benefits are offered to permanent female employees of AIUB in the form of paid leave. AIUB upholds gender equity and inclusiveness through collaboration with WePOWER, working under its 4th pillar—Retention—to support women’s return to work after maternity or caregiving breaks. Each year, AIUB sets specific retention targets to help faculty, staff, and students resume their roles post-leave. Through maternity benefits, paid leave, and supportive policies, AIUB promotes well-being, empowerment, and career continuity for mothers while strengthening its gender-diverse workforce.

Celebration of the first ever “International Returning Mothers Day: Celebrating Women Rebuilding Careers” at AIUB



At the American International University-Bangladesh (AIUB), a deep commitment has long been shown to gender equity, inclusiveness, and women’s empowerment. Over the years, these values have been promoted through leadership opportunities, mentorship, counseling, and capacity-building initiatives, by which women have been enabled to thrive in academia and beyond. As part of this ongoing journey, September 10, 2025, was proudly celebrated at AIUB as the first International Returning Mothers Day: Celebrating Women Rebuilding Careers. The entire event was thoughtfully organized by AIUB-IQAC, AIUB Women Forum, and AIUB Social Welfare Club-SHOMOY in collaboration with WePOWER, embodying a collective vision to honor women rejoining the workforce after a career break, raise awareness of the challenges they face, and inspire a united call for support. Through this global initiative, women rejoining the workforce after a career break were honored and welcomed, and awareness of the challenges they face was raised while a collective call for support was made. The celebration was initiated with a spirited rally, after which the panel discussion on “Nurturing Comebacks: Mentorship for Mothers Returning to their Dreams” was held. The discussion was inaugurated with a symbolic cake-cutting ceremony, by which joy and renewal were shared.

A diverse group of panelists was invited, representing different perspectives, Prof. Dr. Carmen Z. Lamagna (Former Vice Chancellor and Honorable Member, Board of Trustees, AIUB), Prof. Dr. Md. Abdur Rahman (Pro-Vice Chancellor, AIUB), Ms. Susmita Ghosh (Associate Professor and Assessor, IQAC), Ms. Nazia Farhana (Assistant Professor and Additional Director, IQAC), Mr. Redwan Faiz (Associate Professor, EEE), Ms. Rizvina Sultana (Manager, Regional Implementation and Operations, Summit Communications Ltd.), and Ms. Mahjareen Gaffar (Counselor from wEvolve). Through their participation, rich experiences and inspiring insights were shared, and meaningful dialogue on mentorship, inclusivity, and supportive policies for returning mothers and fathers was generated. To enrich the program further, an engaging presentation titled “Why Women Live Longer than Men” was delivered by Dr. Muhammad Wasiful Alam (Head, MPH), through which the audience was captivated with both scientific perspectives and reflections on gender differences in life experiences. A large number of students, faculties and officials were present in the event. A meaningful platform for celebrating resilience, encouraging inclusiveness, and championing the dreams of returning mothers worldwide was thus created at AIUB.



Institutional Initiatives Promoting Women’s Participation

AIUB has adopted a range of **policies and initiatives to promote women’s participation** both as employees and as students, emphasizing gender equity, family support, and inclusive opportunity. The university enforces a strict non-discrimination policy in admissions and employment – decisions are based on individual merit and **no discrimination is allowed on the basis of gender** or marital status, among other attributes. In practice, this means AIUB maintains **gender equity in hiring, promotion, and pay**. University records show that female staff are promoted equitably and **receive equal pay** alongside their male counterparts at all levels. Women also hold numerous leadership roles at AIUB – notably, the Vice Chancellor of AIUB is a woman, and 5 out of 9 members of the Board of Trustees are female, alongside many women heading departments or serving as directors. This strong representation in governance and management reflects an institutional culture that empowers women and values their contributions.

To further support work-life balance and retain women in their careers, AIUB has partnered with organizations like **WePOWER** on initiatives for women's career continuity. As part of its retention strategy (WePOWER's 4th pillar), the university sets **annual retention targets** to help faculty, staff, and even students resume their roles after maternity or other caregiving breaks. Through measures such as the paid maternity/paternity leaves and a supportive return-to-work environment, AIUB actively works to prevent women from dropping out of academia or employment due to family obligations. For example, AIUB celebrated the **"International Returning Mothers Day"** on campus – an event honoring women who resume their careers after childbirth – to raise awareness and showcase the university's commitment to welcoming mothers back into the workforce. The university also runs the **AIUB Women Forum (AWF)**, which along with the Institutional Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC), organizes mentorship and networking programs for female students and staff. These efforts cultivate a supportive community and address challenges that women may face in balancing university life with personal responsibilities.

On the student front, AIUB has implemented special schemes to encourage women's enrollment and success in higher education. There are **scholarships and financial aid opportunities targeted at female students**. Notably, *The Dr. Anwarul Abedin Scholarship Grant for Female University Student* provides full (100%) tuition coverage to one high-achieving female student each semester. Established in 2013 by AIUB's founder, this scholarship's mission is to reduce the gender gap in higher education by empowering female students to complete undergraduate or graduate degrees. In addition, AIUB offers **separate accommodation (dormitory) facilities for female students** near campus, ensuring a safe and supervised living environment conducive to their studies. The university also provides on-campus part-time employment opportunities with special emphasis on female students, recognizing that parents may be more comfortable allowing daughters to work on campus; this helps female students gain work experience and financial support in a secure setting. Furthermore, women are actively encouraged to participate in extracurricular and leadership activities – AIUB reports significant female membership in student clubs and a presence of women in club executive committees, fostering leadership skills and visibility.

AIUB's commitment to women in traditionally underrepresented fields is evident as well. The university hosts an **IEEE AIUB Student Branch Women in Engineering (WIE) Affinity Group**, which aims to improve the participation of women in engineering and computing disciplines aiub.edu. The WIE group organizes events, workshops, and mentoring for female STEM students to build their skills and confidence aiub.edu. Alongside this, AIUB's "Women in Leadership (WIL)" programs and other outreach initiatives (such as entrepreneurship programs for young women) are designed to inspire and prepare women for leadership roles in academia, industry, and beyond.

In summary, American International University-Bangladesh has put in place a comprehensive framework to support women – from **family-friendly leave policies for employees** (maternity and paternity leave) to **academic and welfare support for students** (childcare, healthcare, scholarships), all underpinned by a strong stance on **gender equality** in opportunity. These policies and programs collectively demonstrate AIUB's institutional commitment to enhancing women's participation and success within the university community.