

MBZUAI ALUMNI ADVISORY BOARD

2026-2027

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Introduction

The purpose of the MBZUAI Alumni Advisory Board is to support the University in engaging with its students and graduates. Board members are alumni leaders and ambassadors, providing informed advice and feedback to MBZUAI, activating programs and events for alumni and students and promoting the University's interests within their networks in Abu Dhabi and internationally. The Board operates within the priorities of the University's Alumni Engagement Strategy 2023-2026.

Purpose

MAAB members serve five core functions:

1. **Advisors** – Provide informed alumni perspective to MBZUAI leadership and Alumni Relations on engagement strategy, programming, and community needs.
2. **Ambassadors** – Represent MBZUAI positively across professional, academic, and global networks, strengthening alumni brand visibility.
3. **Advocates** – Champion alumni interests and promote MBZUAI initiatives within regional and international communities.
4. **Engagement Leaders (Doers)** – Actively contribute to alumni programs and initiatives, modeling engagement rather than only advising on it.
5. **Philanthropy & Giving Back Champions** – Support and encourage non-monetary and institutional giving, including mentorship, partnerships, opportunities, and community contribution.

Mode of Operation

The Advisory Board meets formally **three times per year**, with additional task-based working groups formed as needed to support program delivery.

Board members are expected to:

- Actively participate in meetings and initiatives
- Serve as visible alumni engagement role models
- Contribute realistically based on agreed time commitments
- Support Alumni Relations programs throughout the academic year

Alumni Relations provides coordination, facilitation, and administrative support.

Membership Structure

- The Board will consist of 10 active alumni members

- Membership reflects diversity in graduation cohort, career path, research, industry, gender, nationality, and geography
- Members are selected based on:
 - Engagement history with MBZUAI
 - Commitment and availability
 - Ability to contribute value to alumni community
 - Influence and network reach

Eligibility

- MSc, and PhD, graduates
- MSc graduates currently enrolled in PhD programs are eligible

Nomination Process

- Alumni may self-nominate or be nominated by peers
- MBZUAI will review nominations to ensure alignment with Board criteria

Term Duration

The MAAB will operate on a hybrid term model:

- Core term: 1 year
- Renewable for a second year based on:
 - Mutual agreement
 - Engagement performance
 - Continuity needs

This approach balances alumni rotation, commitment flexibility, and leadership continuity.

Engagement Expectations

MAAB members are expected to:

- Actively participate in Alumni Relations initiatives
- Support alumni mentoring, panels, events, and programs
- Engage in at least one working group or activation initiative

- Act as alumni ambassadors and connectors

The Board is designed to model engagement, not only advise on it.

Recognition & Value Proposition

MAAB participation includes:

- Public recognition and visibility
- Priority access to alumni opportunities
- Strategic networking exposure
- Personal development opportunities
- Flexible engagement pathways aligned with individual interests

Communication

MAAB members serve as visible alumni representatives and will engage through official MBZUAI alumni channels, including digital platforms and alumni events, supported by Alumni Relations.

Annual Planning Cycle and Work Plan

The Board will partner with Alumni Relations to coordinate its initiatives, with an annual planning meeting scheduled at the beginning of each calendar year. The Board's programs and events will align with the vision, mission and priorities outlined in the Alumni Engagement Strategy 2023-2026.

In partnership with Alumni Relations, the Board will play a role in significant University events including: the Opportunities Fair (April), Commencement (June) and Orientation (August), along with various other activities throughout the academic calendar.

From 2026, the Board has responsibility for coordinating events including:

- The annual alumni dinner.
- Career panel and Alumni Advisory Board booth at the annual Opportunities Fair.
- Welcome reception and induction for graduating students in Commencement week.
- Welcome event for new students to MBZUAI at Orientation 2026.
- Student to alumni mentoring program.

APPENDICES -

BOARD POSITIONS -

The Board executive will plan, execute and ensure activation of events and activities, and encourage active participation from among the MBZUAI community of alumni, students and friends.

The executive comprises a President, Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary. These positions will be elected from within the Council among its executive.

President – the President is the chief officer of the MBZUAI Alumni Advisory Board and serves as its spokesperson. The President will preside at meetings of the Board and represent at other University events including Orientation and Commencement.

Vice President – the Vice President will preside at meetings of the Board and acts on behalf of the President.

Secretary – the Secretary will ensure that proper and complete records are maintained for all Board decisions and activities, and that proper records are maintained for the Alumni Relations office.

Treasurer – the Treasurer will work with the Alumni Relations office to develop an annual budget, and to manage reporting on expenditure, working to University guidelines.

Social Media Ambassador

The Social Media Ambassador supports MBZUAI alumni visibility and engagement by acting as a digital ambassador across social platforms. The role focuses on amplifying alumni initiatives, sharing success stories, promoting events, and encouraging online community participation in alignment with Alumni Relations and MarComms.

Board members – board members play an active role in activating events and programs through the academic year, and provide support to the President in representing the board at key University events including Orientation and Commencement. They may be invited by the President to lead or sit on sub-committees or taskforces that are established by the Board in the organization of events and programs.

GLOSSARY

Alumnus – an individual who completes a MSc, PhD or Executive Program.

Alumni – plural – multiple alumni.

Associate Alumni – the MBZUAI community of alumni who have completed a program of one month or less.

CASE – the Council for Advancement and Support of Education.

Volunteer Leader / Ambassador – an alumnus who contributes their time and expertise.

Philanthropy – contributions of time, expertise, support (e.g. internships, jobs, door opening) and funding.

Programs – encompassing events, communications and volunteer opportunities.

MBZUAI Alumni Network – the entire alumni community of MBZUAI.

MBZUAI Alumni Advisory Board – appointed alumni volunteers sitting on this advisory group.