

IN THE NAME OF ALLAH
Strategic Plan of Shazand Faculty of Nursing
Arak University of Medical Sciences
Three-Year Period (2025–2027)

Preface

Shazand Faculty of Nursing, as the first academic institution of medical sciences in Shazand County, officially commenced its activities in 2010 with the authorization of the Ministry of Health and Medical Education and in alignment with the 20-Year Vision of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Its primary objective is to train and educate the nursing workforce required by society. The Faculty admits students to the Bachelor of Science in Nursing program through the national university entrance examination. Since 2014, it has operated independently, and as of 2024, it has begun admitting international students to the PhD program in Nursing. It is hoped that the positions articulated in this strategic plan will facilitate the Faculty's pursuit of innovation, development, and professional excellence. The strategic plan of Shazand Faculty of Nursing is fully aligned with the educational programs and policies of the Vice-Chancellery for Education.

Vision

In line with the 20-Year Vision of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the overarching objectives of the Seventh National Development Plan, Shazand Faculty of Nursing is firmly committed to becoming one of the top three nursing faculties in the country in the domains of evidence-based education and applied research through continuous enhancement of its academic, educational, and research standards. Aiming to achieve the status of a Type-2 faculty, it will play a pivotal role in elevating the scientific and health status of the region by fostering inter-university collaborations and training specialized, committed, and highly qualified human resources.

Mission

Affiliated with Arak University of Medical Sciences, Shazand Faculty of Nursing is actively engaged in the fields of education, research, management, consultation, and specialized services in nursing. The Faculty is committed to effectively responding to the needs of its stakeholders—including students, faculty members, the health system, society, and national and international institutions—through a knowledge-based, community-oriented, and international approach. It strives to empower learners professionally, enhance the quality of nursing care, expand educational and research interactions, and fulfill its social accountability. To this end, the Faculty pursues the following core missions:

1. Delivering education to train scientifically and professionally competent nursing personnel.
2. Generating and advancing nursing knowledge through applied and fundamental research.
3. Providing scientific and specialized consultative services in health and nursing education.
4. Developing and enhancing responsive educational and research management.
5. Contributing to the improvement of clinical service quality through collaboration with healthcare centers.
6. Strengthening social accountability through community-oriented and need-based education.
7. Expanding scientific and research collaborations with national and international institutions.
8. Advancing the internationalization of nursing education and research.
9. Empowering learners professionally to improve clinical, research, and managerial skills.
10. Establishing and developing effective platforms for constructive interaction with educational, research, and clinical environments.

Values

As an integral component of Arak University of Medical Sciences, Shazand Faculty of Nursing adheres to Islamic values and ethical principles in fulfilling its mission in education, research, and social accountability. Relying on committed, expert, and innovative human resources, the Faculty prioritizes excellence and progress at national and international levels. The following core values serve as guiding principles:

1. Organizational commitment to spirituality in decision-making and policy formulation.
2. Adherence to professional ethical principles at all educational, research, clinical, and managerial levels.
3. Institutionalization of innovation and creativity in the design, implementation, and evaluation of programs.
4. Mandatory establishment and maintenance of mechanisms for lifelong learning among faculty, students, and staff.
5. Systematic integration of social accountability in policy-making, planning, and performance evaluation.

6. Implementation of tangible mechanisms to ensure equity in education, recruitment, promotion, resource allocation, and performance evaluation.

7. Guaranteeing the preservation of human dignity in educational, research, and clinical environments.

8. Execution of transparent financial, educational, and research processes with structured accountability to stakeholders.

9. Commitment to establishing participatory structures in decision-making and professional development of members.

10. Obligation to design and deliver responsive education aligned with the needs of society and the health system.

11. Commitment to meritocracy in recruitment, promotion, evaluation, and assignment of responsibilities.

Strengths

- Highly capable and youthful faculty members
- Active Educational and Research Councils
- Functional Education Development Office (EDO)
- Dedicated clinical skills center specialized for nursing
- Proactive and dedicated academic advisors
- Admission of international students at the doctoral level
- Recruitment and utilization of experienced and specialized clinical instructors
- Faculty members' familiarity with and application of artificial intelligence technologies
- Clear and well-defined educational processes
- Effective collaboration with other faculties and healthcare centers
- Specialized evaluation forms for clinical apprenticeship assessment
- Strong emphasis on professional ethics and commitment in clinical education

Weaknesses

- Shortage of experts in educational and research domains
- Lack of an independent physical building
- Absence of independent administrative and support staff
- Absence of a dedicated postgraduate studies unit
- Limited space and resources in the faculty library
- Insufficient administrative and educational spaces
- Infrastructure and building-related challenges
- Imbalance between the number of faculty members and students
- Lack of educational and welfare facilities at health bases
- Absence of transportation services for students
- Overlap with other disciplines in clinical training at healthcare centers
- Inadequate welfare facilities (e.g., cafeteria, buffet, locker rooms) for students
- Decline in research activities and scientific output due to heavy teaching and clinical training workloads
- Limited space and rooms in the clinical skills center
- Insufficient administrative systems and equipment for faculty members

Opportunities

- Proclamation of macro objectives by the Ministry of Health and Medical Education
- Availability of virtual education capacities
- Positive attitude of senior national and supra-organizational authorities toward the status of nursing
- Positive cooperation of the county governor, parliament representative, and local authorities with the faculty
- Access to educational and healthcare centers in Arak
- Collaboration with Arak Faculty of Nursing in education and research
- Cooperation of faculty members from other faculties in teaching and research
- Proximity to the provincial capital and its educational and healthcare centers

- Location adjacent to major provincial and national transportation routes
- University policy of admitting international students
- Proximity of the faculty building to the county health network

Threats

- Disproportion between authorized non-faculty staffing permits and the faculty's rapid growth
- Absence of a comprehensive, codified policy on faculty welfare at the Ministry level
- Reduced cooperation and motivation of non-faculty clinical instructors due to low remuneration
- Prevailing treatment-oriented rather than health-oriented approach in society
- Increased undergraduate nursing intake without adequate infrastructure
- Decline in the number of highly qualified non-faculty clinical instructors
- Decreased motivation among nursing students due to salary and benefit concerns
- Overlap with other disciplines in clinical training at healthcare facilities
- Insufficient clinical training centers
- Unprofessional and non-academic interactions by some students, physicians, and nurses from other disciplines with nursing students in clinical settings

Internal Factors Evaluation (IFE) Matrix – Weighted Scoring: Strengths-Weaknesses

No.	<i>Internal Factors (Strengths)</i>	<i>Score (1–4)</i>	<i>Weight</i>	<i>Final Score (Weight × Score)</i>
1	Presence of capable and young faculty members	4	0.10	0.40
2	Existence of an active Educational and Research Council	3	0.08	0.24
3	Active Education Development Office (EDO)	3	0.07	0.21
4	Possession of a specialized clinical skills center	4	0.08	0.32
5	Active and committed academic advisors	3	0.07	0.21

6	Recruitment of international students at the doctoral level	4	0.06	0.24
7	Utilization of experienced and specialized clinical instructors	3	0.07	0.21
8	Faculty members' familiarity with artificial intelligence	3	0.06	0.18
9	Clear and well-defined educational processes	4	0.06	0.24
10	Appropriate interaction with other faculties and medical centers	3	0.05	0.15
	Total Strengths		0.70	2.40

No.	<i>Internal Factors (Weaknesses)</i>	<i>Score (1–4)</i>	<i>Weight</i>	<i>Final Score (Weight × Score)</i>
1	Shortage of educational and research experts	2	0.08	0.16
2	Lack of an independent physical building for the faculty	4	0.09	0.36
3	Absence of independent service staff	3	0.06	0.18
4	Lack of a postgraduate studies unit	2	0.06	0.12
5	Limited space and resources in the library	1	0.07	0.07
6	Insufficient educational spaces within the faculty	4	0.08	0.32
7	Infrastructural problems of the faculty building	4	0.06	0.24
8	Disproportion between the number of faculty members and students	2	0.07	0.14
9	Absence of educational spaces in health centers	2	0.06	0.12
10	Lack of transportation services for students	4	0.05	0.20
	Total Weaknesses		0.70	1.91

External Factors Evaluation (EFE) Matrix – Weighted Scoring: Opportunities _ Threats

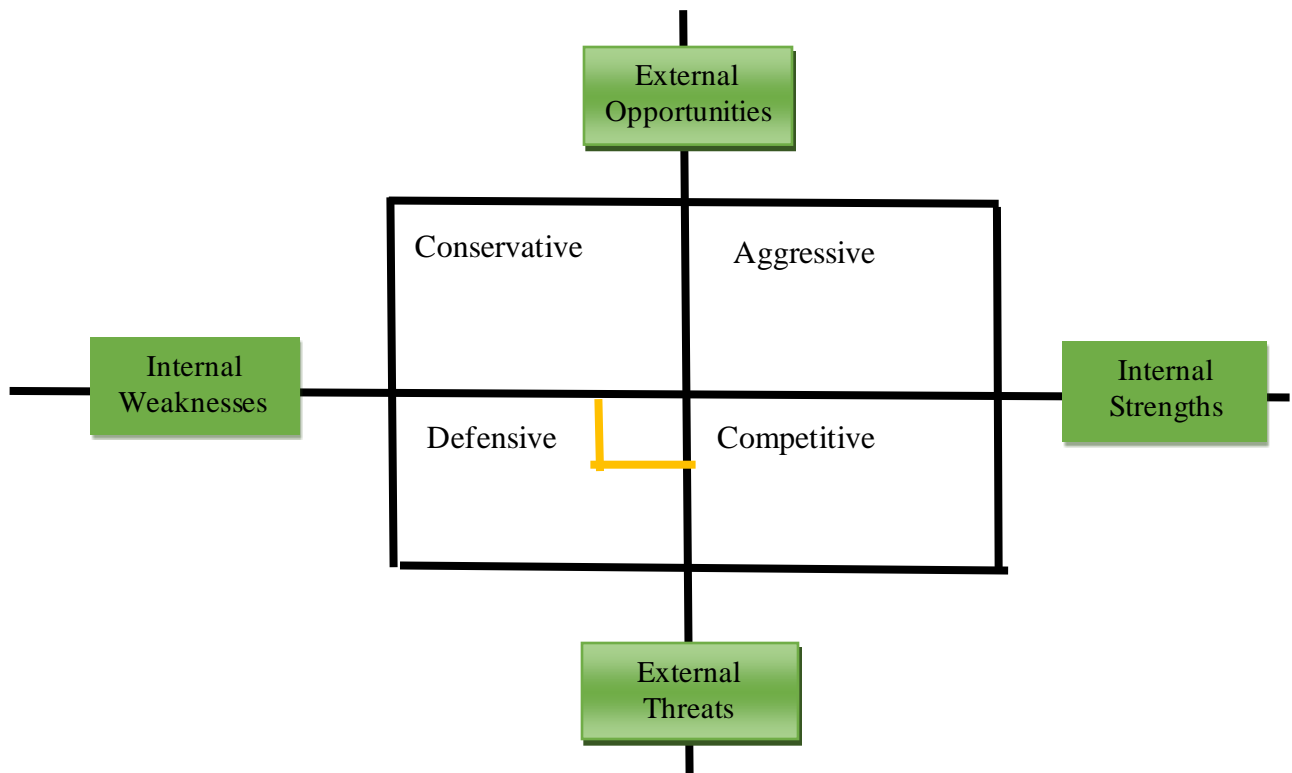
No.	<i>External Factors (Opportunities)</i>	<i>Score (1–4)</i>	<i>Weight</i>	<i>Final Score (Weight × Score)</i>
1	Announcement of macro goals by the Ministry of Health	3	0.10	0.30
2	Capacities of virtual and online education	4	0.08	0.32
3	Positive attitude of national authorities toward the nursing profession	3	0.07	0.21
4	Cooperation of the governor's office and parliament representatives	3	0.07	0.21

5	Possibility of using Arak city's medical centers	3	0.07	0.21
6	Collaboration with Arak Faculty of Nursing in education and research	4	0.07	0.28
7	Cooperation of faculty members from other faculties	3	0.06	0.18
8	Proximity to the provincial capital and medical centers	3	0.06	0.18
9	Policy of attracting international students	4	0.06	0.24
10	Adjacency to the county health network	3	0.06	0.18
	Total Opportunities		0.70	2.31

No.	<i>External Factors (Threats)</i>	<i>Score (1–4)</i>	<i>Weight</i>	<i>Final Score (Weight × Score)</i>
1	Inconsistency between human resource recruitment permits	2	0.08	0.16
2	Absence of a comprehensive welfare policy for faculty members	2	0.08	0.16
3	Decreased motivation of clinical instructors due to low teaching remuneration	2	0.07	0.14
4	Treatment-oriented rather than health-oriented approach in society	1	0.07	0.07
5	Increased student intake without adequate infrastructure provision	1	0.07	0.07
6	Reduction in clinical instructors with postgraduate degrees	2	0.07	0.14
7	Decreased student motivation due to legal and benefit-related issues	2	0.07	0.14
8	Shortage of educational and medical centers for clinical training	2	0.06	0.12
9	Inappropriate interaction of some physicians and nurses with nursing students	2	0.06	0.12
	Total Threats		0.63	1.12

Defensive and Conservative Strategic Objectives for the Faculty of Nursing

In a situation where the Faculty of Nursing is confronted with constraints such as the lack of an independent building, the absence of a dedicated hospital, and a moderate level of human resources, the ****defensive (WT)**** and ****conservative (WO)**** approaches can assist the faculty in utilizing opportunities to offset weaknesses and reduce external threats.



Macro Goals and Priorities

- Smartization of the health system and digital transformation
- Quantitative and qualitative development of the medical sciences education system
- Maximum utilization of elite capacities and social participation in the health sector

General Objectives (GO)

GO1: Improving the Quality of Education Despite Infrastructural Limitations

✓ Strategies:

- Establishing partnerships with public and private hospitals to provide suitable clinical environments.
- Expanding virtual education and clinical skill simulation programs to compensate for the absence of a dedicated teaching hospital.

- Employing innovative teaching methods (e.g., blended learning, problem-based learning) to enhance educational quality.
- Utilizing senior students as peer instructors (Teaching Peers) to strengthen practical learning.
- Leveraging experienced faculty members and inviting visiting professors to offset the shortage of physical facilities.

GO2: Increasing Financial Resources and Providing Physical Infrastructure

✓ Strategies:

- Attracting financial support from health philanthropists and educational institutions to fund building construction or procurement of educational equipment.
- Organizing specialized training courses and workshops for employed nurses to generate revenue.
- Collaborating with governmental organizations to obtain grants and equipment.

GO3: Increasing the Recruitment and Retention of Specialized Faculty Members

✓ Strategies:

- Inviting visiting professors and collaborating with other universities to address the shortage of teaching staff.
- Engaging retired professors and volunteer experts for teaching and academic consultation.
- Creating joint research opportunities to enhance faculty motivation.

GO4: Enhancing Scientific Standing and Attracting Top-Tier Students

✓ Strategies:

- Establishing a research committee in nursing and health sciences to produce credible scientific knowledge.
- Increasing the publication of scientific articles and conducting specialized workshops.
- Developing student and faculty exchange programs with reputable domestic and international universities.

- Strengthening interaction with the health industry to deliver applied research and resolve clinical challenges.
- Offering continuing education courses for hospital nurses.

GO5: Improving Students' Clinical and Professional Skills

☑ Strategies:

- Expanding skill-based workshops and communication training for students.
- Employing scenario-based and clinical simulation teaching methods to enhance practical competencies.
- Implementing structured skill assessment systems (OSCE) for more accurate evaluation of students' abilities.
- Launching supplementary training programs in collaboration with hospitals and medical centers.