Action Memorandum

WHAT IS THIS TEMPLATE FOR?

1. Requesting the President’s signature on a letter
2. Requesting the President’s signature on MOUs, agreements, or contracts
3. Requesting the President’s approval on any kind of recommendation, action, initiative or request

INSTRUCTIONAL NOTES

Please DO NOT copy this cover page, instructional notes, guidelines and examples between brackets like [this] in your actual memo.

Quality control is the responsibility of each AUC member whose name appears on the memo. The text should be free of errors of substance and form. Please run the content of your memo by Grammarly and refer to AUC’s editorial style guidelines.

Please fill in the action memo below, print it and have it signed by your area head before submitting it to the President.

DEADLINES

Deadline for letters: in a timely manner according to the urgency of the subject of the letter.

Deadline for signing MOUs, agreements or contracts: two weeks in advance of the signing ceremony or date of submission.
LETTERS DRAFTING GUIDELINES

- Avoid “On behalf of the American University” and “it gives me great pleasure”
- Avoid "I hope this finds you well"
- Don't refer VIPs to a lower level staff to be their point of contact. (In the letter, we should not ask the VIP to contact a senior position at AUC but ask the VIP to put AUC in touch with a point of contact from his/her side to coordinate with)
- Make it short and more executive; include a draft program and/or brochures about "Topic" in order to save needless verbiage.
- Make the letter less flowery, i.e. do not use of too many complicated words or phrases
- Avoid redundancy
- Don't mention information that the addressee already knows about him/herself or his/her business or his/her donation so that the letter doesn’t sound as if it is automatically generated
- Avoid anything that makes it automated
- Avoid needless verbiage
- Don't show off vocabulary
- Avoid " It is with great sadness that I write to you to express" instead please use "Please accept my deepest sympathies/heartfelt condolences"
- Remove (AUC) that is added after The American University in Cairo
- Remove all abbreviations between brackets unless it will show again in the letter in other paragraphs
- Remove "Donor" from the last paragraph "AUC lost one of its very dedicated and committed donors" a bit greedy!
- Use the possessive adjective e.g. "our campus"
- Avoid passive voice
- Condolence Letters Template: please drop the phrase: "There is little one can say..., but." and begin the last sentence with "Please", so that it reads: "Please know that you and your family are in our thoughts and prayers."
ACTION MEMORANDUM

TO : President

FROM : [Insert name and job title of direct reportee to a Cabinet Member]
................. [sign here after printing] .................

DATE : [Insert date of submitting the memo to the Cabinet member]

THROUGH : [Insert name and job title of the Cabinet Member]
................. [sign here after printing] .................

CC : [Insert name of relevant offices (Example: VP for Finance in case the recommendation is related to budget), etc…]

SUBJECT : [Example #1: President’s signature on a letter to XXX]
[Example #2: President’s approval on the budget of X project]

Recommendation/Action(s):

[Insert your recommendation or requested action from the President]

[Example #1: “That you sign the attached letter to XXX”]

[Example #2: That you approve allocating the budget of X amount to X project”]

Background:

[Should briefly describe why the President should approve the recommendation or action requested from him.]

Attachments:

[Attachments, such as graphs, tables, maps, separate articles, etc… may be useful to present further information beyond that summarized in a page or two in the memorandum. List and describe any attachments separately as drafter deems useful - Examples:]

• Tab 1 – [insert name of the document, e.g. Draft letter]
• Tab 2 – [in case the same letter was signed last year for the same purpose, it would be useful to attach the signed letter]

Decision Record:

Approve ___________ Disapprove ___________ Discuss ___________
Decision is needed not later than: [add a date]
[This field is to highlight the urgency of your request.]
[Date must be at least 5 working days after the submission date of this memo]

Coordinating Approvals:
☐ This memo is signed off by [<Name>, <Title>]
..................... [sign here after printing] ..................

[This section is mandatory in case:

1. The action/recommendation requested from the President has an implication on other areas, then the relevant Cabinet member(s) must sign off prior to submission to the President.

2. You are requesting the President’s signature on an agreement, MOU, contract or an authorization letter, then the General Counsel and Chief Compliance Officer must sign off prior to submission to the President.

3. You are requesting a travel authorization for a conference, then the Budget Officer in the department must sign off prior to submission to the President to confirm budget availability.]

Memo Drafter:
By: [Name] [Title] [Office] [Office phone extension and after-hours personal cellphone #]
Date: [Insert date of drafting]

In coordination with: [Name] [Office] [Office phone extension and after-hours personal cellphone #]. [Remove if not applicable].