

2.3.4 - Does your university as a body provide healthy and affordable food choices for all on campus?

ASOIU prioritizes the health and well-being of its entire community—students, faculty, and staff—by ensuring access to nutritious, safe, and affordable food options on campus. In alignment with SDG 2 (Zero Hunger) and SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-being), the university has institutionalized sustainable food policies that balance quality, affordability, and accessibility.

1. University Food Services Overview

The university’s dining system includes main canteens, student cafés, and staff dining halls, located across campus buildings and student dormitories. These facilities operate under contracts supervised by the ASOIU Administration and are subject to regular audits by the Azerbaijan Food Safety Agency (AFSA) under the Memorandum of Cooperation signed in 2021 : <https://afsa.gov.az/az/xeberler/aqti-ile-adnsu-arasinda-emekdasliga-dair-anlasma-memorandumu-imzalanib1230>

Inspections include:

- Hygienic preparation of food
- Use of fresh and locally sourced ingredients
- Pricing control for student affordability
- Compliance with national food safety and labeling standards

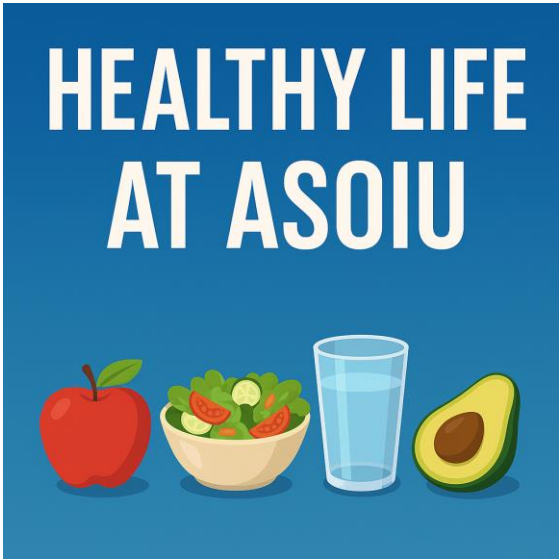


2. Commitment to Health and Sustainability

ASOIU’s Sustainability Action Framework (2023–2030) includes a specific operational target to promote healthy lifestyles and access to safe nutrition. The canteens actively promote a “Healthy Campus Initiative”, offering meals low in saturated fats, sugar, and salt, while emphasizing balanced portions and seasonal produce.

Key actions include:

- Introduction of balanced student menus designed by nutrition consultants
- Promotion of water and non-sugary drinks over carbonated beverages
- Waste minimization via reusable serving materials
- Vegetarian and meat-free days organized monthly to encourage dietary diversity



4. Menu Diversity and Inclusivity

The campus menu is designed to meet the dietary and cultural needs of a diverse academic community. Meals are categorized according to dietary type and price range to ensure all students can find healthy options within their budget.

Category	Description	Example Meals	Average Price (AZN)	Meal Time Availability
Healthy & Balanced	Meals designed for overall wellness with lean proteins, whole grains, and seasonal vegetables	Grilled chicken with bulgur, steamed broccoli, lentil soup, olive salad	4	Lunch & Dinner
Vegetarian	Vegetarian-friendly dishes with dairy and egg proteins, full of	Vegetable lasagna, mushroom pilaf, egg salad, yogurt	3	Lunch
Vegan	Fully plant-based meals prepared with legumes, nuts, and fresh vegetables for sustainable diets	Tofu stir-fry, lentil patties, quinoa salad, pumpkin soup	3.2	Lunch & Dinner
Traditional Azerbaijani	Authentic Azerbaijani recipes balancing traditional taste with health-conscious preparation	Plov with lean meat, dovğa, qutab with greens, dolma	4.5	Lunch & Dinner
Fast & Affordable	Affordable, quick-serve meals ideal for students with limited time and budget	Pasta with tomato sauce, cheese sandwich, vegetable wrap, tea & pastry combo	2.5	Breakfast & Lunch
Protein-Rich Meals	High-protein dishes suitable for athletes and physically active students	Grilled fish with brown rice, boiled eggs with beans, chicken steak & salad	4.5	Lunch & Dinner
Low-Calorie Options	Meals under 400 calories for those following calorie-controlled diets	Zucchini noodles, steamed vegetables, low-fat yogurt, mixed greens salad	3.5	Lunch
International Dishes	Global favorites providing cultural diversity and taste exploration	Chicken curry with basmati rice, sushi rolls, Mediterranean chickpea bowl	5	Lunch & Dinner
Seasonal & Local Specials	Dishes based on seasonal ingredients sourced from local producers	Baked eggplant with herbs, corn and bean salad, fresh vegetable soup	3.8	Lunch
Beverages & Juices	Healthy drinks, smoothies, and freshly squeezed juices with no added sugar	Natural pomegranate juice, herbal tea, ayran, fresh orange juice, smoothies	2	All Day
Desserts & Fruit Options	Low-sugar, fruit-based desserts and traditional Azerbaijani sweets	Fruit salad, baked apple with cinnamon, low-sugar pakhlava, yogurt parfait	2.5	Lunch & Dinner

5. Accessibility and Affordability

The university ensures equal food access through the following mechanisms:

- Discount cards for low-income or scholarship students
- Fixed student prices (not subject to commercial inflation)
- Availability of subsidized breakfast and lunch menus
- Free drinking water dispensers at every canteen

A campus-wide survey in 2024 showed that 86% of respondents rated food affordability and quality as “good” or “very good.”

6. Monitoring and Partnerships

To guarantee long-term compliance, ASOIU collaborates with:

- AFSA for inspection and certification
- Student Union for food quality feedback
- Local suppliers for sourcing organic produce

Regular joint audits help improve meal quality and safety standards.

7. Conclusion

ASOIU actively provides and maintains healthy, culturally diverse, and affordable food options for everyone on campus. This initiative supports the physical and mental well-being of students while reinforcing the university’s contribution to SDG 2, SDG 3, and SDG 12. Continuous collaboration with food safety authorities and inclusion of student feedback ensures sustainability and improvement in food services.