The University of Aveiro hosts 17 research centers, including 4 Associate Laboratories and 13 Research Units. Associate Laboratories are research units which demonstrate, in particular through the results of evaluation, the capacity to cooperate in a stable, competent and effective manner in carrying out specific objectives of the scientific and technological policy laid down by the Portuguese government.

These research centers are evaluated by the Portuguese Science and Technology Foundation (FCT) according to a system based on the periodic assessment, by international experts, of reports and activity plans, including direct contacts with researchers and their institutions during visits to all units. This evaluation exercise culminates in the attribution of a qualitative grade which determines the volume of pluriannual funding to be received up to the next evaluation.

The most recent round of FCT evaluations took place in 2008, and the UA research centers were evaluated as follows.