

**Report on the Accreditation of Study Programmes
at Emirates College for Advanced Education
Reference Number I-1827-1**



12th Meeting of the ZEvA Commission on 23rd March 2021

Item 04.01.

Study Programme	Degree	Programme Duration	Type of Programme	Maximum annual intake ¹
Applied Behavior Analysis	Postgraduate Diploma (PGD)	One year	Part-time	20
Guidance and Counselling	Postgraduate Diploma (PGD)	One year	Part-time	20
Education	Postgraduate Diploma (PGD)	One year	Part-time	20
School Evaluation and Improvement	Postgraduate Diploma (PGD)	One year	Part-time	20
Special and Inclusive Education	Master of Education	Two years	Part-time	20
Education	Master of Education	Two years	Part-time	20
Educational Assessment	Master of Education	Two years	Part-time	20
Curriculum and Learning Design	Master of Education	Two years	Part-time	20
Applied Behavior Analysis	Master of Education	Two years	Part-time	20
Educational Neuroscience	Doctorate of Philosophy	Four years	Part-time	10
Special Education	Doctorate of Philosophy	Four years	Part-time	10
Measurement and Assessment	Doctorate of Philosophy	Four years	Part-time	04

Accreditation contract signed on: 2nd September 2020

Date of site visit: 18th-19th November 2020 (digital site-visit)

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¹ These figures are based on ECAE's current faculty resources.

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M.Sc. Psychology

Hanover, 23rd March 2021

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I Final Vote of the Expert Panel and Decision of the Accreditation Commission

1 Decision of the ZEvA Accreditation Commission (23rd March 2021)

I. Final Vote of the Expert Panel and Decision of the Accreditation Commission

1. Decision of the ZEvA Accreditation Commission (23rd March 2021)

The ZEvA Commission follows the experts' report and recommendations and takes note of the university's response.

The Commission concludes that the Emirates College of Advanced Education has established solid standards in teaching and learning which are continuously monitored by means of efficient quality assurance procedures.

The ZEvA Commission therefore decides to award institutional accreditation to the Emirates College of Advanced Education in Abu Dhabi without conditions.

The institutional accreditation is valid for a period of six years.

This decision is based on the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG), the Framework of Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area and the recommendations of the ECTS Users' Guide as referred to in the ZEvA Manual for the External Assessment of Study Programmes.

1 Final Vote of the Expert Panel and Decision of the Accreditation Commission

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2. Final Vote of the Expert Panel

2.1 General Aspects

2.1.1 General Recommendations:

Teaching Content

- Including elements of Design Thinking.

Internationalization

- Intensifying marketing activities to attract more international students.
 - o Offering scholarships for incoming students.
 - o Possibly reserving a certain share of places for study programmes for international students.
 - o Offering housing and a programme during the day for incoming students.
 - o Informing about possible cultural differences for interested persons on the website and implement an on-arrival-training for incoming students.
 - o Including depictions of appropriate dress codes for expats in the student handbook.
 - o Offering study trips or visits abroad for a duration of several weeks. These visits might for example take place at partner institutions abroad and while schools in the hosting country are opened. School visits might take place in pairs.
- Increasing international hires, especially for the position of full professors. National and international applicants should ideally be considered equal in the application process.
- Extending staff mobility programmes for a longer duration.
- Establishing an International Office, promoting advice and practical support for students and staff interested in outgoing mobility and offering integrative services for incoming students.

Equal Opportunities

- Employing more women as full professors.
- Granting equal amounts of time to all genders for parental leave.
- Including information on the possibility to provide students with special needs with equal learning opportunities and the availability of funds dedicated to this end on the website.
- Explaining the term “people of determination” on the website.
- Appointing an “Equal Opportunities Officer” who is in charge of meeting the needs of all members of ECAE and equip everyone with equal working conditions and learning opportunities. This position might also be communicated on the website.

Research

- Establishing a research journal of ECAE as a platform for faculty, students and alumni to publish research findings.

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Study programmes

- Strengthening the practical experience in the curricula, especially in the Post-Graduate Diploma and the Masters' programme in Education. Students who are unemployed shall complete mandatory internships.
- Communicating the possibility to participate the "critical support course" to students of all levels.

Infrastructure

In order to sharpen the profile of ECAE as unique and forward-thinking in the Middle Eastern Region, the panel recommends to

- o Establishing a "future learning lab" in the library at the visitors' disposal, for example with use of comfortable furniture and possibilities to use digital media for group work
- o Establishing a "virtual reality lab", equipped with state-of-the-art-technology to enhance research and learning opportunities
- o Establishing a "school of design thinking" (as for example in [California](#), [Malaysia](#) or [South Africa](#))
- Including podcasts into the open repository.
- Hiring additional IT-staff to enable them to develop new technologies like chatbots for recurring tasks.
- Introducing new tasks to the curriculum focusing on IT-competencies.

Quality Assurance

- Making the anonymized qualitative and quantitative results of course evaluations available to the participants of the respective classes.

Transparency and Public Information

- The current YouTube-channel might benefit from a more focused and structured appearance. Additionally, further social media-channels might be used to enhance the presence of ECAE, such as Facebook or Instagram.
- Indicating on the website that all study programmes are primarily directed at graduate students who hold working positions.
- Emphasizing the inclusive dimension of working and studying at ECAE. It might be useful to communicate on the website that equal opportunities can be made available anytime.
- Emphasizing the fluent and elaborate English skills of the teaching staff in the website.
- Advertising the success of the study programmes not exclusively in terms of employability of its' students, but also taking the job promotion within their current employment situation into account.

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2.2 Study Programmes

2.2.1 Recommendations:

- Including more elements of practical experience and their conscious reflection into the curriculum of the Master of Education, regardless of the employment status of students.
- Including elements of “Inclusive Education” into the doctoral programme “Special Education”.

2.2.2 Recommendation to the ZEvA Commission:

The expert group recommends the accreditation of the following study programmes offered at ECAE for the duration of six years without conditions:

- Applied Behavior Analysis (Postgraduate Diploma)
- Guidance and Counselling (Postgraduate Diploma)
- Education (Postgraduate Diploma)
- School Evaluation and Improvement (Postgraduate Diploma)
- Special and Inclusive Education (Master of Education)
- Education (Master of Education)
- Educational Assessment (Master of Education)
- Curriculum and Learning Design (Master of Education)
- Applied Behavior Analysis (Master of Education)
- Educational Neuroscience (Doctorate of Philosophy)
- Special Education (Doctorate of Philosophy)
- Measurement and Assessment (Doctorate of Philosophy)

II Evaluation Report of the Expert Panel

0 Introduction: Purpose, Design and Context of the Accreditation Procedure

II. Evaluation Report of the Expert Panel

Introduction: Purpose, Design and Context of the Accreditation Procedure

It is the purpose of the programme accreditation procedure to assess the quality of the above listed study programmes offered by the Emirates College for Advanced Education (ECAE), Abu Dhabi/United Arab Emirates, against international standards. The assessment is based on ZEvA's Assessment Framework as laid out in the "Institutional Accreditation Manual for Auditors and Higher Education Institutions". This assessment framework is in part based on the "European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ESG)" (ENQA 2015), the "Framework for Qualifications for the European Higher Education Area" (2005) and the "ECTS Users' Guide" (European Communities, 2015).

In line with the ESG, the assessment was organized as a peer review procedure, involving an expert panel composed of three university professors in the discipline, one professional from outside academia and one student.

For the purpose of assessing the internal quality management, the Emirates College for Advanced Education submitted a self-report. Apart from detailed descriptions of the university as a whole, the internal quality assurance system and descriptions of chosen study programmes, the self-report included a number of additional documents, as e.g. quality assurance policies, staff handbook, student handbook, course catalogues, detailed information about the library and IT facilities, CVs of teaching faculty and sample questionnaires as well as results of course evaluations. All documents were submitted in English.

Due to the travel restrictions imposed by the Corona pandemic, ZEvA and ECAE jointly decided to conduct a virtual site visit in October 2020. The site visit involved talks with the Vice Chancellor and members of the university leadership, the Head of Institutional Research and Effectiveness, the library and campus facilities management, the IT department as well as teaching faculty, students and graduates of the Emirates College for Advanced Education.

The expert panel came to the conclusion that the self-report and the digital talks provided sufficient information in order to take an accreditation decision. A site-visit in Abu Dhabi is not deemed necessary.

This report is based on the experts' assessment of the self-report submitted by the college and on their findings during the digital site-visit. It will serve as a basis for ZEvA's Commission to decide on the accreditation of the mentioned study programmes. In the case of a positive decision by the Commission, ZEvA will award its quality seal for a limited time period, after which the university can reapply for accreditation.

The report will be published on the ZEvA website upon finalization.

The experts would like to thank the Vice Chancellor and the university leadership, the Head of Institutional Research and Effectiveness, the library and campus facilities management, the IT department as well as teaching faculty, students and graduates of ECAE for the open and constructive atmosphere during the digital talks.

1. Summary of the Experts' Findings

The Emirates College for Advanced Education was founded only about a decade ago. Its development as an ambitious higher education institution so far has been remarkable. Equipped with a specific vision and mission, demanding strategic objectives have been set. The university leadership and staff are striving towards being one of the leading higher education institutions in the field of Education in the United Arab Emirates and the Middle East. The college provides research-informed opportunities for learning and professional development of educational professionals and change agents with an emphasis on bringing an enquiry rigour to practice and policy developments in the education sector. High quality research is to be delivered just as adequately as meeting the needs of the labour market.

All study programmes offered reflect these developments. Clear learning objectives and outcomes, a student-centred concept of teaching and assessment, a high level of academic education and the employability of graduates are integrated into the respective curricula. The experts assert that ECAE has taken great efforts to meet the requirements of incoming students, graduates and the labor market alike in designing the study programmes. The current curricular realization is convincing and plausibly aligned with the educational goals and learning outcomes.

The highly elaborate infrastructure, meeting the demands of students, is a further asset of the college.

As the colleges' leadership is well aware, the next strategic developments should be geared towards internationalization and higher enrolment numbers. The blended learning concept which was developed to meet the challenges of the Corona pandemic will be helpful to achieve these goals.

The very comprehensive quality assurance system supports the efficiency and the continuous improvement of the programmes and the institution as a whole without overburdening administrative processes.

All university members showed a very high level of commitment to their tasks and their institution and are supported by very good working and learning conditions.

The experts have gained the overall impression that ECAE is run and sustained by motivated and qualified teaching staff, active students and an open-minded leadership. The strategic alignment with the Ministry of Education constitutes a very valuable resource for further fruitful development.

2. Governance, Management and Profile of the University

The Emirates College for Advanced Education (ECAE) was founded in 2007 under the direction of the President of the United Arab Emirates (UAE). The college is fully owned and financed by the government of Abu Dhabi. Since 2020, it is located in the same building as the Ministry of Education.

ECAE was founded with the specific aim to educate Emiratis in pursuing careers in teaching and education related fields as a part of [Abu Dhabi Government Vision 2030](#) that targets economic growth through non-oil-based industry and services. The main target group of the college are teachers, who are already employed and who either seek to specialize on a certain topic or enhance their career trajectories. Alumni of the college qualify either for leading positions at schools, for employment with the Ministry of Education or research and teaching jobs in academia.

The college currently offers an array of graduate programs as listed below. As of today, it is offering one Bachelor's programme in Education, four Post-Graduate Diploma programmes, five Masters' programmes and three doctoral programmes. The numbers in brackets indicate the percentage of enrolled students in relation to the total student number in the academic year 2019/2020:

- Bachelor's Programme in Education (31%)
- Post-Graduate Diploma: (9%)
 - Applied Behaviour Analysis
 - Education
 - Guidance and Counselling
 - School Evaluation and Improvement
- Master's Programme: (46%)
 - Applied Behaviour Analysis
 - Curriculum and Learning Design
 - Education
 - Educational Assessment
 - Special and Inclusive Education
- Doctoral Programmes: (14%)
 - Educational Neuroscience
 - Measurement and Assessment
 - Special Education

ZEVA is conducting in a parallel procedure the institutional accreditation of the internal quality assurance mechanisms against European Standards.

Due to a change in the strategic setup of the college, the college started phasing out its Bachelor's programmes in 2015. The last cohort enrolled in the Bachelors' programme is to be graduated in the near future. The self-report states, that the mentioned Post-Graduate Diplomas is with regards to the qualification level comparable to the Bachelor's degree in the European Higher Education Area.

As a public institution, the ECAE is state-licensed and all programmes offered are authorized

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by the Abu Dhabi Department of Education and Knowledge and accredited by the national Commission for Accreditation.

The ECAE campus in Abu Dhabi houses various classrooms, multi-function rooms, science laboratories (physics, chemistry, biology and neurosciences), a computer laboratory, gym/sports hall, a cafeteria, a clinic for first aid, meeting rooms, prayer rooms and a library. A second campus is located in Ajman, an Emirate in the northern part of the UAE.

The language of communication on the campus is generally English, partly on account of a diverse teaching faculty and staff originating from the UAE, the UK, the US, Canada, Brazil, South Korea, Portugal, Ghana, Egypt, Jordan, Oman, India, Pakistan, the Philippines and other countries.

The Emirates College of Advanced Education is state-funded. Thus, education for citizens of the United Arab Emirates is available for free. Non-nationals have to provide tuition fees.

2.1.1 Organizational Structure and Mission of the University

Vision and Mission

In the self-report (p.10) and on the [website](#), the vision of the Emirates College of Advanced Education is described as follows:

“Leading educational transformation in and beyond the United Arab Emirates”.

The college’s mission states:

“Transforming education through specialized, research-informed academic and professional development programs in a collaborative, state-of-the-art learning environment.”

In addition to that, the ECAE has formulated a set of basic values as general guiding principals:

- **Respect** – *We care and consider with courtesy, appreciation and fairness*
- **Collaboration** – *We engage and support with synergy, innovation and shared goals*
- **Transparency** – *We communicate and act with openness, honesty and inclusiveness (while preserving confidentiality)*
- **Professionalism** – *We behave and impart with commitment, ethics and passion*
- **Integrity** – *We inspire and proclaim with honesty, accountability and ethics*

Strategic goals

In line with the above mentioned basic values, vision and mission, strategic priorities and goals are formulated:

- *Priority 1: People*
 - *Promote wellbeing*
 - *Optimize quantity, quality and diversity*
 - *Nurture personal, professional and career development*
- *Priority 2:*
 - *Enhance learning opportunities*
 - *Provide innovative and personalized learning opportunities*

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- *Provide competitive, accessible and inclusive lifelong learning opportunities*
- *Priority 3:*
 - *Mobilize knowledge internally and externally*
 - *Increase research impact*
 - *Obtain and utilize research funding effectively*
 - *Increase interdisciplinary research*
- *Priority 4:*
 - *Establish and sustain high quality learning programs*
 - *Deploy resources efficiently & effectively*
 - *Develop state-of-the-art infrastructural support*
- *Priority 5:*
 - *Become a high impact change agent*
 - *Practice community social responsibility*
 - *Enhance visibility*

These general strategic aims have been developed in a joint strategic process together with various stakeholders including the Abu Dhabi Department of Knowledge and Education in order to be in line with the "[Abu Dhabi Government Vision 2030](#)" that targets economic growth through non-oil-based industry and services. ECAE is filling a niche in the field of special education and educational neurosciences in higher education in the Middle East.

Ever since August 2016, ECAE has been in a process of strategic re-orientation, which is in line with the general governmental strategy in the field of higher education. This development is, for instance, reflected in the shift from undergraduate to postgraduate programmes. Since the college closely co-operates with the Ministry of Education, research-informed policies partly based on the analysis of the ECAE itself, feed into the strategic development of institution.

ECAE shall qualify graduates for employment for all school grades in the UAE and also bring forward experts in the field of data analysis and policy assessment or development. In summary, the college is to combine a specialized focus on the educational process while sustaining a connection to general national educational programmes.

The budget of the college was reduced by roughly 20% in 2015. During the digital talks, the Vice Chancellor reported that the college was not fundamentally affected by the reduction, since they only spent 75% of their overall allowance before. The student numbers dropped from app. 455 students in 2015 to about 120 in 2020.

ECAE is now focusing on postgraduate education and research. Graduates shall qualify for employment with the administrative units of the national education system such as the Department of Education and Knowledge in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi or the Ministry of Education or contribute as school leaders or school evaluators to the development of the educational system. The improvement of the educational system along international standards is to be achieved while preserving and transmitting local cultural values and supporting a respectful approach to other cultures.

As described in the self-report and the interviews, ECAE is in a continuing process of

implementing and developing policies and structural amendments. The implementation of the strategic goals is regularly reviewed by the quality assurance system.

The college and its institutional subdivisions have communicated its strategic and educational goals in a variety of documents for its stakeholders, as for example the Faculty Handbook, Staff Handbook and Student Handbook. The strategic goals are developed into more detailed and applicable rules, guidelines and regulations. These state that all employees "shall act and comply with high standards of conduct and ethics. Every employee has a personal and professional obligation to demonstrate honesty, integrity, impartiality, responsibility, cultural sensitivity, trustworthiness, and confidentiality." (cf. Code of Conduct and Workplace Ethics, 5.1.2.) Nepotism, harassment, academic and personal misconduct and any form of discrimination are sanctioned. Breaches of the code of conduct may lead to the termination of the employment contract with ECAE.

Governance structure

The college is strategically governed by a Board of Trustees, which is independently appointed by the Abu Dhabi Executive Council. It includes stakeholders from the primary, secondary, higher and vocational education sectors. The Board of Trustees is composed of representatives from the community, which the ECAE strives to be in service of. The Board is in charge of approving the overall governance policies of the college, developed by the Vice Chancellor and the Senior Management.

The college is led by the Board of Trustees in cooperation with the Vice Chancellor, the latter being in close touch with the Senior Management, comprising the Deputy Vice Chancellor for Support Services, the Head of Institutional Research and Effectiveness, the Head of Strategy and Business Development, the Deputy Vice Chancellor – Academic and the Deputy Vice Chancellor – Continuing Education Center.

The Vice Chancellor and the Senior Management are responsible for the academic and operative planning and implementation as well as financial management.

Members of faculty are, based on their respective subjects, part of one of the following divisions:

- Assessment and School Evaluation
- Curriculum and Instruction
- Counseling, Special Education and Neuroscience

The division heads supervise the work of the faculty and report to the Deputy Vice Chancellor – Academic on the overall performance and teaching and learning environment. The Deputy Vice Chancellor – Academic works closely together with the Head of Institutional Research and Effectiveness to ensure that study programmes are 'fit for purpose'.

In addition, the Emirates College of Advanced Education installed several committees at the central university level, including

- Grievance Committee
- Human Resources Committee
- Student Affairs Committee
- Academic Program and Curriculum Committee

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- Research and Grants Committee
- Institutional Review Board

Through the committees, faculty members, staff and students are involved in decision-making processes. The committee members are responsible for recommending policies and procedures as well as for overseeing general college operations. It was reported that students participate in the review of new study programmes.

The interplay of different levels of governance inside ECAE has been described of being mostly bottom-up. Especially academic aspects mostly develop on the level of Programme Chairs and Division Heads, then go to the Deputy Vice Chancellor – Academic and are discussed by the Senior Executive Management Team, composed of the Vice Chancellor, the Deputy Vice Chancellor – Academic, the Deputy Vice Chancellor – Support Services and the Head of Institutional Research and Effectiveness. The Board of Trustees appears to be non-interfering with academic objectives, but rather relevant in its advisory capacity.

Regarding the development of study programmes and curricula, it was mentioned that especially the teaching faculty vividly discusses the contents of the study programmes amongst each other, while being open to the expressed needs and suggestions by the students. International academic developments are considered highly important to keep programmes up to date.

The development of new programmes also takes societal and economic developments into account. This is reflected in the “Community Engagement Plan” of the college, striving to enhance the outreach to the community and ensuring that social responsibility is an integral part of the institutional culture.

Quality Assurance

At ECAE, a two-fold process of quality assurance is in place:

- Externally – through national and international accrediting bodies
- Internally – the Senior Executive Management Team, Internal Audit and the Board of Trustees monitor, evaluate and review operational and strategic activities according to QA standards

Internally, the unit for Institutional Research and Effectiveness (IRE), the Office of the Internal Audit (IA) and the Strategy and Business Development (SBD) department form the main Quality Assurance body. The currently implemented quality assurance framework is called “Institutional Self-Evaluation, Improvement and Effectiveness Model” (ISEIE). On page 15 of the self-report, the internal quality assurance model is described as follows:

“... the model aims to integrate results of various assessment and evaluation tools in planning, review and improvement cycle at ECAE. ... IRE, IA and SBD collaborate with academic and administrative units to assist in planning, reviewing and achieving objectives and ISEIE Model unifies and focuses these collaborative activities into Institutional Quality Assurance. ... Quality Assurance/Institutional Effectiveness process is a continuous process that takes place at various levels and across all units in the institution using multiple tools that provide data which aims at supporting any improvement that will lead to enhancing the operational plans and hence the proper implementation of the strategic plan.”

In the academic year 2019/20, 119 students have been enrolled at the Emirates College for Advanced Education.

In the same time period the staff comprised a total of 100 persons, of which 28 persons were employed as academic staff. Almost 90% of the teaching staff possess a doctoral degree.

2.1.2 Experts' Appraisal

The experts commend the Emirates College of Advanced Education on its impressive commitment to developing the institution, its academic level, its local outreach and its reputation in the international academic community, based on the formulated strategic goals.

The vision of the college – *“Leading educational transformation in and beyond the United Arab Emirates”* – seems to be taken seriously. It appears that the institution’s internal organization, the study programmes and research endeavours are well-aligned to the strategic goals.

In order to further sharpen the institutions’ profile, the panel recommends to include elements of Design Thinking. This might take place in the form of workshops, a school dedicated to the topic or a one-year-programme, which could enhance the reputation of the college as unique in the Middle Eastern region.

The leadership board and academic staff are highly engaged and supportive of the current strategy, which is developed in close cooperation with the Ministry of Education. A “quality culture”, broadly supported by and involving all university stakeholders (including students and possibly external advisors), is clearly established.

Concerning financially sensitive aspects, there seems to be a top-down approach in place. The provision and allocation of finances is governed by the General Secretariat of the Executive Council through the Department of Finance. For the experts’ panel, the financial basis has become sufficiently transparent. Financial resources seem to be overall satisfying, as indicated by a very well-established and well-maintained infrastructure (as displayed digitally) and high level of satisfaction of staff with the working conditions. The alignment of strategic measures and financial governance is stringent. The expenditures are regularly audited and checked by internal and external stakeholders.

2.1.3 Internationalization

Throughout the digital site visit and in ECAE’s self-report, internationalization appears as an eminent development objective. On the one hand, ECAE attempts to become more visible in the international academic community through research output. On the other hand, ECAE aims to attract more international students. The college strives for further international collaboration in the fields of exchange of staff and/or students, joint research activities and lectures, realization of seminars, conferences and academic meetings, exchange of academic materials and distance learning.

ECAE already employs a highly diverse teaching faculty and dedicates roughly 40% of working hours to research activities. It was mentioned that hiring high-quality faculty is one of the current goals of the university leadership. Accordingly, six new faculty members were hired in 2020. Due to the current pandemic, the hiring process is currently slowed down. The same applies to international marketing endeavours.

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Several international co-operations were mentioned during the digital talks. For instance, a collaboration with the University of St. Joseph in Macao in China is planned for 2021. Moreover, a research collaboration with a research center based in Thailand was stated as foreseen. A collaboration with the Millersville University in Pennsylvania, USA was also mentioned. The college attempts to become more visible through jointly published articles. Policy articles are written in collaboration with the UNESCO.

Students reported that the quantity of international input had generally improved since the beginning of the pandemic due to the increased amount of online lectures. Students also mentioned the opportunity to present research papers to incoming students from the UK and Ireland. It was reported, that four international conferences have been held during the past four years at ECAE.

As regards the student body, it was stated that ideally 4-5 exchange students would enrich the study experience at ECAE each semester. However, students from outside the UAE are enrolled at ECAE. They usually come from the Middle East and entered the UAE for job purposes. They were already based in Abu Dhabi prior to their studies.

It should be stressed that studying abroad seems to be of rather limited interest to the students themselves, since the majority of them are already working full-time.

The college has also taken considerable measures to align its programmes with international standards. This includes programme-related aspects like applying the US credit point system, documenting intended learning outcomes both at programme and course level, implementing of student-centred learning and applying external and internal measures of quality assurance, embedded in a transparently documented governance structure.

In addition to that, the participation of faculty and students at international conferences is encouraged and financially supported by the Research Office. Students stated that they highly valued this support and the possibility to present research findings to an international audience.

2.1.4 Experts' Appraisal

The expert panel highly appreciates the international dimension of the study programmes and research activities at ECAE and strongly encourages the college to further promote the internationalization of the institution.

In order to attract more international students, the experts recommended intensifying existing marketing activities. It would like to commend the college on the initiative to benchmark tuition fees against international standards and then adapt them accordingly. Additionally, scholarships might be offered to incoming students which could contribute to ECAE's international visibility. A certain share of places for study programmes might be reserved for international students. This percentage might be mentioned in the respective public documents.

International hires, especially for the position of full professors, should be increased.

The highly important contribution of the Research Office to the process of internationalization could be further enhanced by the establishment of an International Office, promoting advice and practical support for students and staff interested in outgoing mobility and offering integrative services for incoming students.

In order to enhance the outgoing rate of students, which are usually employed and have family obligations, the panel suggests to offer study trips or visits for a duration of several weeks. These visits might for example take place at partner institutions abroad and while schools in the hosting country are opened. School visits might take place in pairs. These experiences could be contextualized to the cultural frame of the UAE.

With regards to incoming students, the panel recommends to prepare for possible cultural differences for interested persons on the website. This might take place in the form of videos which could be produced by incoming and local students together. As already implemented for the teaching staff, the panel recommends an on-arrival-training for incoming students in order to provide insights into cultural and national habits. The staff handbook already includes a depiction of the appropriate dress code for expats. The panel recommends to include a similar depiction for Non-UAE-nationals into the student handbook for marketing purposes.

In addition to that, housing could be offered to incoming students. Since classes are usually taught in the late afternoon or evening, full-time students might be provided with a programme during the day such as language classes or research assistant positions.

2.1.5 Equal Opportunities

ECAE has laid down clear policies on equal opportunities regarding staff employment procedures, conduct of staff and students and disciplinary cases leading to expulsion. ECAE distinctively attempts to provide a non-discriminatory environment for all members of the college.

According to the self-report and the interviews, 90% of the student body is female. These numbers reflect the local labor market, in which women tend to become teachers in various education institutions including inclusive institutions. The college management explained that all efforts were taken to target male candidates with their marketing, but the enrollment numbers of men still remained rather low.

More than 50% of the teaching faculty are women. The three full professors at ECAE are men. Part-time employment is possible.

Individuals with special needs are currently not enrolled or employed at ECAE. During the interviews it was stated, that an applicant with special needs recently became part of the administrative department of ECAE.

Funding is dedicated to provide all students with equal learning opportunities and adapt the infrastructure accordingly. All students shall be enabled to follow the regular curriculum. With regards to special needs, staff of ECAE mentioned in the interviews, that wheelchairs are already in place to accommodate anyone with physical impairments. Other needs, such as visual or audio support, can be meet quickly and adequately.

In the past year, persons on the autism spectrum interned in the library which was described as a fruitful experience for all parties involved.

2.1.6 Experts' Appraisal

The expert panel generally has a positive impression of the efforts to implement equal opportunities at ECAE. It would especially like to commend the university on the high share of women

in the teaching body.

Considering gender equality, it would be desirable to increase the share of male students. But, since ECAE is enabling young professionals to boost their careers and eventually reach leading positions, the high share of female students is favourable.

With regards to the teaching body, the expert panel recommends employing more women as full professors. Moreover, from a European point of view, the panel would like to politely suggest that the time granted for paid parental leave after the birth of a child should ideally be equalized for all employees of ECAE, regardless of their gender.

As was mentioned during the interviews, the inclusion of students with special needs is a strategic aim of the college. The experts welcome this approach and encourage the college to pursue this endeavour. Policies in order to provide students with visual and hearing impairments with equal learning opportunities are already in place. Moreover, financial support from the respective department is assured. With regards to marketing, the panel recommends to include this information on the website, which might stimulate the application of candidates with special needs. In that line, the panel also recommends to explain the term “people of determination” on the website, which was coined in the UAE.

In order to adapt the organizational structure of ECAE closer to its vision and mission, the panel recommends to appoint an “Equal Opportunities Officer” who is in charge of meeting the needs of all members of ECAE and equip everyone with equal working conditions and learning opportunities. This position might also be communicated on the website to attract a wider range of applicants.

The experts applaud the collaboration with the Special Olympics, including the “young performers” workshop series, directed at children diagnosed on the autism spectrum and conducted during seven weeks in 2019. This series of community outreach activities was offered every year at ECAE from Fall 2015-Fall 2018, in collaboration with Goals UAE. In Fall 2019, we transitioned this program to collaborate with Special Olympics and look forward to resuming this initiative once it is safe to do so.

2.2 Teaching Faculty

2.2.1 Recruitment

ECAE has described encompassing policies, transparent processes and adequate measures for the recruitment, continuous assessment and development of academic teaching staff. The recruitment process is regulated by policy documents such as “Pre-Employment Requirements”, “Academic Recruitment”, “Staff Recruitment” and “Promotion and Rewards”. Equal opportunities are accounted for in the faculty handbook and the respective policies.

ECAE’s human resources policies and procedures are authorised and monitored by the Abu Dhabi Human Resources Authority (HRA). Therefore, all activities related to personnel recruitment, appointment, working conditions and termination are aligned with HRA regulations. The estimated budget for human resources planning of the college over the course of five years has to be granted by HRA.

Depending on the needs communicated by the divisional heads, vacancies are published on

national and international platforms in which requirements and job details are communicated. According to the colleges' recruitment policies, UAE nationals and people with special needs are to be preferred in the recruitment process.

According to national regulations, all government institutions are required to include people with special needs into their workforce. In line with that, ECAE has developed appropriate policies and tries to implement them as best as possible.

In the first phase of the hiring process, the references of eligible candidates are checked by the human resources department. Upon approval, an interview is conducted by a panel consisting of ECAE members. Depending on the outcomes, an employment offer is sent to the candidate. The offered contract depends amongst others on the level of qualification and experience of the candidate.

2.2.2 Staff Development

The teaching quality at ECAE is evaluated on a regular basis. An "orientation" programme for newly hired staff is offered, introducing new staff members to the organisational and academic structures of ECAE and, for expatriates, to cultural habits of the UAE.

In-house continuous professional development programmes are offered by the Continuing Educational Centre, covering for example teaching and assessment methods. Moreover, workshops to reflect upon research practices are offered by the research office. During the digital site visit, ECAE reported that a collaboration in the realm of professional development programmes in higher education is planned with the Khalifa University of Science and Technology which is also based in Abu Dhabi.

The teaching faculty reported that they were supported financially for professional development programmes and were encouraged to visit local or online course. It was stated that the needs for professional development are discussed each year between the division head and teaching staff on an individual basis. The results of course evaluations may facilitate the participation in adequate professional development courses. Bringing a visiting peer to the classroom who then hints at areas of improvement was described as one way of deducting which professional development programme might be suitable. The faculty described the working atmosphere as very open and supportive. Discussion of current practices were mentioned as a valuable mechanism for strategic improvement.

ECAE provides funding for the attendance of national or international conferences, given a paper is presented orally or as a poster.

The promotion of staff is defined on three levels: job promotion, functional promotion and financial promotion. In order to be promoted, staff members need to meet very specific requirements regarding the academic rank, employment time in current position and professional achievements. Promotion is only granted upon application of the candidate according to ECAEs' regulations as laid out in the respective policy. A financial reward can be granted as per the respective policies.

2.2.3 Teaching Staff and Workload

On a full-time employment basis, the teaching staff is required to work 40 hours per week from Sunday to Thursday. Friday and Saturday are off.

The workload is differentiated as follows:

- 50% (20 hours): teaching, contact hours, academic hours
- 40% (16 hours): research
- 10% (4 hours): administrative tasks, community outreach

The interviewed teaching faculty widely stated that teaching and research are compatible. Usually, two courses are assigned per semester per person. Division heads stated that they were only assigned one course due to their additional administrative workload. Generally, the academic advising was described as time-consuming but useful for the students' learning process.

At least once a year, the research office offers a call for internal grants and financial incentives for research carried out with external institutions. A conference funding allowance is granted on an annual basis. The Abu Dhabi Department of Education and Knowledge also awards funding for research. Annual surveys are conducted to inquire faculty members about research requirements.

The teaching staff expressed a high degree of satisfaction with their working conditions. According to the interviewees, the close connection with the Ministry of Education is highly appreciated. The insights into different spheres of administration and the collaboration for common strategic planning was mentioned as very valuable. Moreover, several research reviews and working papers were developed in collaboration with UNESCO covering a number of areas of educational policy and practice, including focus on inclusion, planning and curriculum development.

During the shift to e-learning in the spring of 2020, the teaching staff reportedly received a high level of support from the IT-Team through the provision of equipment and advice, even during evening classes.

2.2.4 Experts' Appraisal

The experts congratulate ECAE on the establishment of a variety of study programmes which are well-equipped with experienced and motivated staff members. The number of teaching staff and administrative staff is sufficient. The commitment of the national and international teaching staff and their strong identification with ECAE were obvious. The will and wish to further develop existing programmes and attain a higher community outreach were tangible. The highly elaborate quality assurance system acts in support of favorable working conditions and staff support. Recruitment and promotion processes are clearly defined and transparently communicated.

This high level of commitment of teaching staff may be explained by the working conditions, which were described by the teaching staff as very rewarding, leaving enough time for research endeavours. Moreover, research is incentivized by the college, and collaborations with external academic and non-academic parties are supported. Outgoing international mobility is

accounted for in the form of conference participation, incoming staff is met with an appropriate orientation programme.

The panel recommends extending the duration of the staff mobility programmes (for example by introducing the option of a research semester abroad), if internationalization is a key priority for the college.

2.3 Infrastructure, Resources and Student Support

2.3.1 Infrastructure

As mentioned above, the panel was unable to visit the campus in Abu Dhabi due to travel restrictions imposed by the Corona pandemic. Instead, the experts were provided with a video which gave an impression of the academic and non-academic facilities of ECAE, such as class rooms, labs, library, gender-separated sports facilities, cafeterias and leisure rooms. Additionally, an interview with the library management and campus facilities management was conducted. It became clear during the interviews that ECAE is located in the same building as the local Ministry of Education and that facilities are also shared with other educational institutions, such as local schools.

With regards to student housing, the colleges' management reported that ECAE did not own appropriate facilities but had contracts with partner universities in Abu Dhabi such as the Khalifa University and the Sorbonne University. Students of ECAE have stayed in student dorms of these partners and transportation to and from campus was organized.

2.3.2 Library, Online Resources, IT Services

A central library is housed at the ECAE campus in Abu Dhabi. It is usually open from Sunday to Thursday from 8am until 8pm. On demand, opening hours on Saturdays can be arranged. Before the beginning of each semester, the teaching faculty is contacted by the library in order to assure that the library stock is up-to-date and adequate to teaching content. The readings are offered either in print or digitally. In addition, the collection is supported with a document delivery service for journal articles that are not held within the institution. Two library professionals and two library assistants are employed in the facility.

In the library, books can be borrowed and computers are openly accessible. Moreover, printing services are available. Places for individual and group work are installed. The library management reported that 90% of student demands for books can be satisfied immediately. The library uses "Ebsco" to manage its' journal subscriptions.

The library management reported on the effects of the shift to e-learning due to Covid-19. Ever since March 2020, new purchases were mainly electronic resources, in order to ensure that students could access relevant sources online. Open access resources are provided by the publishers with whom ECAE collaborates. Students can access all electronic resources off-campus through the library website. If students asked for physical books during the pandemic, they were sent via post to them. The library website is organized with the help of the content management and information sharing system "LibGuides". If ECAE-members want to publish

their work in an open access-format, the publishing fee is covered by the research fund of the college.

It was mentioned that ECAE is currently working on an open repository, sharing information such as webinars or presentations with the public using [YouTube](#). Internally, lectures are recorded and shared with the students.

On demand, students are provided with laptops or tablets. Moreover, software licenses such as Grammarly and SPSS are available to the students. A capacity planning with regards to required licenses is conducted annually. There is a technical support service in place offering aid in installing programmes or other questions concerning IT.

A “learning support hub”, based in the library, provides consultation about grammar, citation styles or assistance in writing assignments. The service is accessible face-to-face or online. An introductory orientation session is offered to new students. Moreover, workshops on research strategies, referencing and other relevant topics are offered.

During the interviews, the library management outlined that a renovation of the library was planned in the near future.

2.3.3 Laboratories

ECAE has access to fully equipped STEM laboratories, which are administered by the Ministry of Education. They are used for the science track in the Master of Education. An educational neuroscience lab with state-of-the-art equipment such as an electroencephalography system is installed on campus, which is the only one of its' kind in the Middle East. Moreover, a portable near-infrared spectroscopy system and a neurofeedback system are installed, backed up with computers and software for data analysis. The laboratories are complemented by an information and communication technology lab, equipped with computers, interactive boards and educational software.

The management stated that ECAE was planning to open an additional laboratory in January 2021.

2.3.4 Student Support Services

ECAE offers a broad range of services to its student body. For example, a counseling service is offered regarding both academic or personal matters. During the interviews, the colleges' management displayed a high level of awareness that with the shift from undergraduate to graduate programmes, the needs of students differ and student support services need to be adapted accordingly. The students enrolled at ECAE tend to be first generation students.

At the beginning of each academic year, students are put in touch with an academic advisor, who is part of the teaching body but not teaching the student in running courses. Students may request to the Program Chair to change their assigned academic advisor, in case communication obstacles occur with their assigned advisor. Students reported that the academic advisors were very accessible and advised them regarding academic and non-academic questions such as time management. One academic advisor usually advises four to six students per semester.

A career service offers the opportunity to reflect on career changes or developments upon

graduation. On top of that, assistance with the preparation of CVs or job interviews is offered.

Students appreciated the possibility to work as students' assistants and participate in publications of professors. They are remunerated with a standardized payment per hour.

An alumni service gives ECAE graduates the opportunity to network with fellow alumni. During the interviews, former students mentioned that ECAE sent regular newsletters, updating them on new research findings and academic developments. Moreover, alumni may access the library and professional development programmes of the college.

The students' satisfaction with support services is monitored regularly and included in the above mentioned, annually published action plans.

2.3.5 Experts' Appraisal

The experts are very impressed by the way in which the Emirates College for Advanced Education has developed its infrastructure within the short period of about thirteen years.

With regards to internationalization, the panel commends ECAE on the idea to offer housing to incoming students or faculty.

In order to sharpen the profile of ECAE as a unique and progressive education institution in the Middle Eastern Region, the panel recommends

- establishing an open "future learning lab" in the library as a comfortable workspace which offers digital media for group working exercises,
- establishing a "virtual reality lab", equipped with state-of-the-art-technology to enhance research and learning opportunities,
- establishing a "school of design thinking" (as for example in [California](#), [Malaysia](#) or [South Africa](#))

Regarding the planned open repository of ECAE material through YouTube, the panel highly encourages the college to pursue the path of open access and publicly shared knowledge. Thus, it recommends including podcasts of lectures into the used formats.

The highly motivated IT team reported that due to Covid-19, they faced a substantial rise in workload. Students and faculty both reported that they were highly satisfied with the support offered by the IT-department, which was delivered at any time of the day. With regards to the increased workload of the IT team, the panel highly recommends to hire more IT staff. This could enable the IT department to develop chatbots for recurring requests and thus handle a growing number of students and staff.

The offered student support services are adequate and apt to meet the students needs. Especially students who have children reported that their needs were met in case they needed extra time to complete courses.

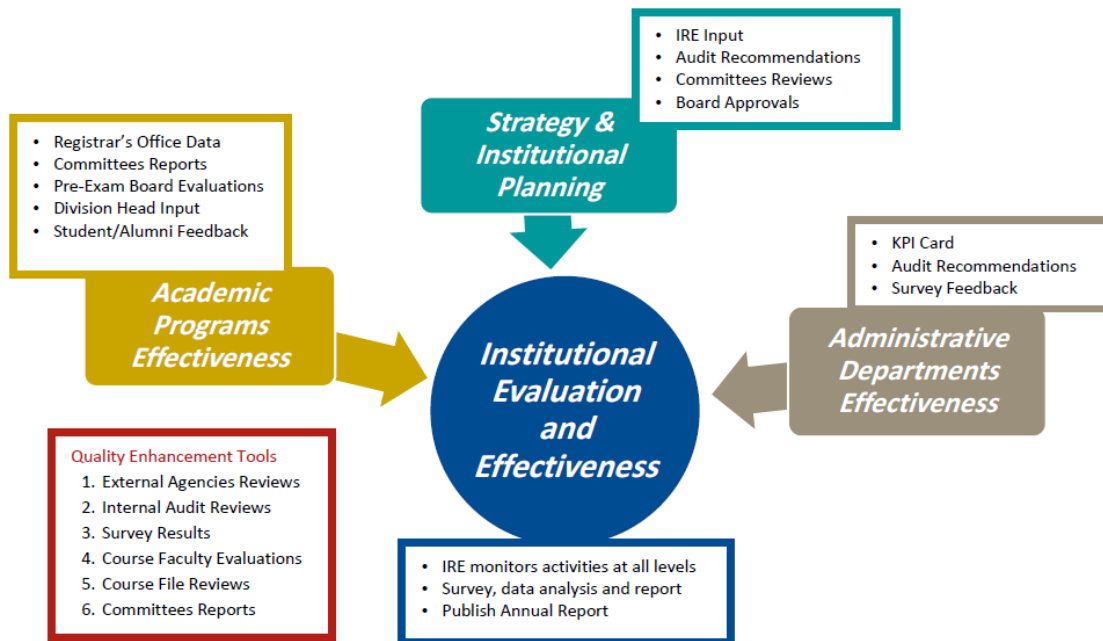
The closely coordinated strategic alignment of the college with the Ministry of Education surely contributes to the high quality of the infrastructure, resources, learning environment and student services at ECAE.

Students confirmed during the talks that both teachers and non-academic staff were very

responsive to all questions and that their requests were met with openness and flexibility. The students displayed a high level of identification and satisfaction with the teaching and support services, both in formal evaluation and during the online talks with the experts.

2.4 Quality Assurance

The self-report provided a general overview of the quality assurance framework implemented at ECAE. It is named Institutional Self-Evaluation, Improvement and Effectiveness Model (ISEIE):



The roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders of the College are transparently documented in several manuals, e.g. the Quality Assurance Manual and the Faculty and Staff Handbooks. Additionally, a Quality Assurance Policy is in place. Both the Quality Assurance Manual and Policy are in line with the official standards of the Commission for Academic Accreditation of the Ministry of Education.

The governing bodies on the programme, department and institutional level interact with a range of committees, administrative units and different stakeholders to regularly assess, revise and enhance the existing study programmes.

Quality assurance at ECAE is conducted by several quality assurance units, namely the following three core units:

- Institutional Research and Effectiveness Department (IRE); the Head of the Department reports evaluation findings to the Vice-Chancellor and oversees licensures and accreditation processes, quality assurance and institutional research activities.
- Internal Audit Office (IAO); all academic programs are assessed by the Office of Internal Audit to gauge the risks associated with programs operations, resources,

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policies and procedures. The assessment is performed as per the internal audit plan to ensure that the reported observations and risks are properly mitigated into the management's actions plans that are monitored on a semi-annual basis.

- Strategy and Business Development Department (SBD); develops and implements the strategic plan in all academic programmes and administrative departments and regularly assesses its achievement through monitoring the relevant Key Performance Indicators.

The applied key instruments of internal quality assurance at ECAE are:

- Satisfaction surveys (among faculty, staff and students): conducted annually and online, ECAE stakeholders evaluate the satisfaction with the working or learning conditions. The results are then sent to the Vice Chancellor, the Deputy Vice Chancellors, the Heads of the Academic Programs and Administrative Units. The anonymity of the data is guaranteed, personal data of the participants such as gender, course or semester are not collected.
- Alumni surveys; comprising questions about the professional trajectories of ECAE graduates.
- Employer surveys; comprising questions about the employers' satisfaction with the skills of ECAE graduates.
- Course and faculty evaluation; conducted after each semester, questions comprise the effectiveness and content of the course, the conduct of the teacher, the use of teaching methods and the students' assessment.
- Departmental satisfaction surveys.
- Internal Audits, conducted by the Internal Audit Office (see above).
- Online Feedback Management System; open platform for any concerns.
- Registrar's Function: data and information on student admission, enrolment, achievement, attainment, retention, etc. is collected in PowerCampus. This data is shared with relevant program coordinators, division heads and committees to assist in enrolment projection and allocation of program resources.
- Internal audit of academic divisions: all academic programs are assessed by the Internal Audit Office to gauge the risks associated with programs operations, resources, policies and procedures. Follow-up reviews on issued reports are performed semi-annually to monitor the implementation of actions plans on reported observations and to ensure that risks are properly mitigated. The results of these reviews are directly reported to the Board of Trustees in periodic meetings.

Moreover, it was mentioned that the different divisions, heads of administrative units and staff members regularly communicated best practices and areas of improvement to each other.

The program "esurveypro" is used for data collection and analysis. IRE regularly monitors the response rate and sends reminder emails to students, faculty and division heads to increase response rates and encourage students' participation. Then, IRE, in coordination with all academic programs and administrative units, develops two documents from the results of all quality assurance activities: Action Plans and the Annual Report.

Action Plans are based on survey data, evaluation results and external quality assurance input. From the data, areas of improvement and possible implementation measures are derived. Action Plans are formulated whenever necessary and include actions required for improvement, a timeline for completion, measurement tools to assess the impact of the modification, evidence for the achievement of the required outcome and any challenges faced. They are posted on the institutions intranet and IRE monitors and follows up on the status of implementation of the suggested actions. Action Plans and the follow-up reports are shared with each Head of Department, the Deputy Vice Chancellors and the Vice Chancellor.

Annual Reports are published electronically towards the end of each academic year. They summarize key challenges, achievements and future plans of all programs and departments and are based on the institutional self-evaluation data. They intend to serve as a digital record of the yearly achievements of the College while prompting academic programs, academic support departments and administrative units to plan for and achieve required improvements in the light of annual reviews.

2.4.1 Experts' Appraisal

The experts highly appreciate the differentiated and transparent system of internal quality management at ECAE. Based on a clear policy and the intention to continuously develop quality in teaching, learning, research and supporting services, ECAE has developed an encompassing and elaborate system with core processes and detailed methods for the evaluation and assessment of staff and students. The student life cycle is well-managed throughout. External assessment is part of the quality assurance concept of ECAE. External academic advisors as well as representatives from the regional or national labour market and societal stakeholders are involved in the overall development and decision making at the college. The college focuses primarily on the quality teaching and student learning when developing and monitoring study programmes.

The implemented quality processes are closed and the “Plan-Do-Check-Act”-approach is the foundation of all quality assurance mechanisms. As stated in the interviews, the members of the quality assurance department see themselves as actively contributing to the development of teaching and learning at ECAE and to the entire institution in general. Diplomacy and care for detail were described as key competencies in order to strengthen the “quality culture” of all members of ECAE. The panel commends the quality assurance unit at ECAE on its achievements. Adequate human and financial resources are allocated.

Students reported that they were both formally – through the students’ committee and written evaluations – and informally involved in quality assurance processes. Students can become members of the graduate studies committee, the student affairs committee or the strategic development committee through nomination and election by fellow students in the student council. Students are thus also involved in the review process of new study programmes. One of the interviewed students reported that it was an enriching experience to participate in these committees.

Teachers regularly inquired about the students’ wellbeing, especially during the “virtual semester” induced by the Corona pandemic. Moreover, students mentioned that ECAE strived to meet their needs, especially since all students were working part-time and some had children. For example, the opening hours of printing services on campus were extended, and a separate

room for mothers and children was established in response to the students' feedback.

The qualitative and quantitative results of students' evaluations are not directly made available to the students, but in an aggregated and revised form in the annual reports. The annual reports give an overview over the past developments and achievements of the different organizational units at ECAE. The panel politely recommends to make the anonymized qualitative and quantitative results directly available to the participants of the respective classes in order to increase transparency even more and foster the students' contributions to the continuous development of the study programmes.

The very good student-teacher ratio further supports this close-knit support web. Generally, the teaching body displayed a high level of satisfaction with the working conditions and atmosphere, which are also regularly evaluated.

The panel commends ECAE on its implemented evaluation mechanisms which are apt to evaluate the "fitness of purpose" of the respective study programmes and the quality of student learning at the college. A "quality culture" is clearly established at ECAE: students reported that their feedback was always very taken seriously and they always took the chance to express their opinions on the quality of teaching and learning. Moreover, they described their feedback as a "gift" which they gave to the college for further improvement.

The quality assurance mechanisms were adequately adapted after the shift to online teaching in the spring of 2020.

2.5 Transparency and Public Information

All key information on the college and its study programmes (intended learning outcomes, profile, contents, course syllabi, etc.) can be found in English on the ECAE website. Also, there is extensive additional information available concerning admission regulations, research, policy briefs, the academic staff or events at the college. Newsletters are also regularly published, informing about most recent developments on campus.

Moreover, the Alumni Office offers possibilities for former students of ECAE to network or participate in professional development workshops or receive career counseling. In addition to that, a brief presentation of the services of the Continuing Education Center is provided.

2.5.1 Experts' Appraisal

The experts commend ECAE on the high degree of transparency and easy accessibility of its website. For all interested candidates and enrolled students, maximum transparency regarding course requirements and assessment procedures is also warranted through documents such as the student handbook or graduate catalogue. The high degree of transparency and accessibility will surely increase as soon as the new website is launched, as announced in the virtual interviews.

The panel commends ECAE on the high level of local outreach achieved through measures like days of open doors or open library workshops. Some students mentioned that they had enrolled at ECAE after attending open workshops.

The university's open educational resources are already very remarkable and will most likely benefit additionally from the open repository that is currently being developed (compare

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chapter 2.4.2.). The YouTube-channel might benefit from a more focused and structured appearance. Additionally, further social media channels such as Facebook or Instagram might be used to enhance the outreach of ECAE.

Especially with regard to international students, it should be clearly indicated on the website that all study programmes are primarily directed at graduate students who hold working positions.

In order to support marketing strategies, the panel recommends emphasizing the inclusive dimension of working and studying at ECAE. It might be useful to communicate on the website that equal opportunities are provided for throughout. Students reported that one of their reasons to join ECAE had been the fluent and elaborate academic English skills of the teaching faculty. This might be more strongly emphasized the marketing as well.

Finally, the panel recommends to advertise the success of the study programmes not exclusively in terms of employability of its' students, but also taking the job promotion within their current employment situation into account.

3. Assessment of the Study Programme/s

3.1 Common Features and Strategic Dimension of the Programmes

3.1.1 Entry Requirements, Student Admission and Selection

The admission to undergraduate and graduate studies at the Emirates College for Advanced Education is regulated by policies. The admission guidelines implemented follow the official national standards as prescribed by the national Commission for Academic Accreditation. They are published on the website (including relevant deadlines) and in internal documents such as the graduate catalogue. The admission decision is taken collectively by an admission panel.

All applicants, regardless of their nationality or gender, are treated equally. For admission, all candidates have to provide proof of their English skills through a standardized test recognized by the Ministry of Education, such as TOEFL, EmSAT or IELTS. The required level of proficiency depends on the level of the programme applied for. For undergraduate studies, applicants have to provide a high school certificate which certifies 12 years of schooling. Employed students also have to deliver general information about their job status. Since the Bachelor programmes are fading out at ECAE, the following chapter focuses on all graduate programmes offered at the college.

For admission to Post Graduate Diploma programmes, applicants should hold a Bachelor's degree in the relevant fields, a sufficient GPA-level and English skills certified through a standardized test as described above.

The admission requirements to Master's programmes take the qualifications of the preceding Bachelor's degree into account. Applicants apply through an online application system. A letter of motivation, CV and transcript of records need to be submitted in English. The academic achievements are just as important as the level of personal motivation of the applicant. Hence, interviews are conducted in most programmes if all formal requirements are fulfilled. The interviews follow internal formalized guidelines, which were made available to the expert panel during the digital site-visit. For the Master programme "Educational Assessment", job experience of three years in the relevant field is demanded.

In order to be accepted to a doctoral programme, applicants must hold a Master's degree in the relevant field, a sufficient GPA-level, certified English skills and must prove a strong background in research or knowledge of the field. Candidates also have to take part in a standardized interview.

According to the provided documentation, people with special needs are encouraged to apply for all programmes. Policies for the recognition of credit points gained at other institutions are in place. Up to 50% of credits of undergraduate programmes and 25% of graduate programmes can be recognized, given proper documentation about the skills and achievements of applicants is provided.

The admission deadlines are published on the university website. The admission process is highly selective and the admission rate in the academic year 2019/2020 lay at 27%. Especially the Doctoral programme in Educational Neurosciences was highlighted as extremely selective,

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having received 58 applications in the past academic year but only admitting four students to the programme.

During the interviews, it was mentioned that ECAE is currently introducing a bridging programme for incoming students to improve their English skills and prepare them for a successful participation in the study programmes. It is currently designed as a six-months module.

3.1.2 Post Graduate Diploma

Post Graduate Diplomas generally target teachers or persons employed in the educational sector who seek career development.

The Post Graduate Diploma is a one-year modular programme of 24 credits (48 ECTS) that is aligned with Level 8 of the QF Emirates. It consists of 18 credits (36 ECTS) course completion and an individual research project of 6 credits (12 ECTS). Students are required to complete the Post Graduate Diploma programmes within three years upon enrolment. In case health issues or other problems occur, the completion period may be extended.

3.1.3 Master of Education

The Master of Education is a 36 credit (72 ECTS), two-year modular programme that is aligned with Level 9 of the QF Emirates. All Master's programmes consist of 36 credits (72 ECTS).

The Master of Education consists of:

- 18 credits (36 ECTS) for the core courses
- 9 credits (18 ECTS) for three electives in one of the defined tracks
- 9 credits (18 ECTS) for the final research project and oral defense

or

- 9 credits (18 ECTS) for an internship project and report.

Other Master's programmes consist of:

- 27 credits (54 ECTS) for the core courses
- 9 credits (18 ECTS) for the final research project/thesis and oral defense.

The Master's programmes target persons employed in the relevant fields who wish to develop their skills through research-based learning.

Students are required to complete the Master's programmes within four years upon enrolment. In case health issues or other problems occur, the completion period may be extended.

3.1.4 Doctor of Philosophy in Education

The Doctor of Philosophy in Education is a 60 credit (120 ECTS) programme which comprises four years and is aligned with Level 10 of the QF Emirates. The programme consists of:

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a. core courses

I. Ph.D. in Education (Educational Neuroscience)

- 12 credits in the required research courses
- 18 credits in the focus area

II. Ph.D. in Education (Measurement and Assessment or Special Education)

- 30 credits core courses

b. 6 credits in the research apprenticeship

c. 6 credits in the doctoral seminar

d. 18 credits awarded for the dissertation (including defence)

The Doctoral degrees, target persons employed in the relevant fields who want to develop their skills through designing and conducting research.

Students are required to complete the Doctoral programmes within seven years upon enrolment. In case health issues or other problems occur, the completion period may be extended.

3.1.5 Intended Learning Outcomes

The intended learning outcomes of all programmes have been aligned with the Qualifications Framework of the UAE. They are differentiated in the following way:

- (i) Knowledge
- (ii) Skills
- (iii) Competencies
 - a. autonomy and responsibility,
 - b. self-development,
 - c. role in context.

The course catalogue includes the intended learning outcomes, the specific skills and competencies to be achieved as well as the teaching content of the course. Moreover, all programmes are also aligned with the above mentioned "[Abu Dhabi Government Vision 2030](#)".

The majority of students are already active professionals and either aim at qualifying for a higher position at their current work place or seek to open new career prospects by means of a degree from ECAE as, for example, positions at the regional Ministry of Education or at Higher Education Institutions.

3.1.6 Teaching Methods and Student Assessment

As already mentioned above, most students of ECAE are employed in areas relevant to their studies. Students are taught to draw on practical skills both in the context of academic research and in non-academic professional environments. To this end, they are stimulated and encouraged to apply their theoretical knowledge in practice and to use their practical experiences to enhance their academic level.

Apart from practical and self-management skills, ECAE places value on the students' general capability of critical, analytical thought. Hence, besides traditional lectures, independent project work, group work, self-learning and reflection on case studies are of particular importance.

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The applied methods of student assessment are also diverse, ranging from regular written assignments, research essays and text and podcast analysis to projects and presentations and of course the final thesis. The applied assessment methods are competency-oriented and a student-centred approach is taken.

For each educational component, a detailed course syllabus is provided which describes the intended learning outcomes and contents of the course, the applied methods of teaching and assessment. A detailed reading list is included in each syllabus. All course syllabi were made available to the experts as part of the self-report.

The students reported that they received a detailed exam schedule at the beginning of each academic year in order to help them prepare well in advance.

Students who worked with computer programmes such as SPSS stated that they received all programmes licences for free from the college. Moreover, they stated that a critical reflection of studies is stimulated by teaching staff.

In the light of the pandemic, an e-learning system was quickly introduced at ECAE. The efficiency and availability of both students and teachers was evaluated and as a result, a different online platform was used. As was stated in the interviews, ECAE plans to continue with a blended learning concept once the circumstances allow for that. The panel encourages the college to pursue this promising path, which will surely benefit from the current blended learning proposal.

3.1.7 Research

Research is especially relevant in the Masters' and Doctoral programmes. To a smaller extent, research is also part of the PGD programmes.

ECAE has formulated an encompassing research strategy. The college shall "become an internationally recognized research-intensive institution". Building on the research strategy, research guidelines are formulated and put into practice. Policies on research governance, ethical clearance and "human subject research" are in place. Generally, the Deputy Vice Chancellor-Academic is in charge of all administrative research-related processes.

To implement the above-mentioned policies, ECAE has established a Research Office. Its responsibilities are to "develop, build, promote and sustain research capacity within the College by supporting faculty-led research, student research activity, engaging with strategic partners and offering bespoke research services to the broader educational field", as described in the self-report. To that end, a budget fund was installed to which faculty can apply. Applications are evaluated by the Research Grant Committee, following pre-defined criteria for selection. Furthermore, research activities of faculty are supported by workload release and administrative support. The publication rate of faculty is assessed through the platform "Google Scholar".

Research courses in qualitative and quantitative methods are mandatory for all students. The Research Office also offers a broad range of support mechanisms in order to foster student research activities:

- Supervision (one on one) for Master research projects for a full semester,
- Supervision for Ph.D. students (forthcoming) at the initial stage of their studies

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and after the comprehensive examination,

- Series of intensive research support workshops,
- Opportunities to work as research assistants and for co-authorship with faculty,
- Graduate students are encouraged to attend research seminars,
- Graduate students are encouraged to present at conferences (under faculty supervision),
- Faculty research seminars for graduate students across campuses (using virtual classrooms),
- Access to high-quality journals through the library site.

Faculty members expressed a high level of satisfaction with the opportunities to conduct research and especially highlighted that their workload could be temporarily reduced for the duration of intense research activities.

During the digital interviews, the Head of the Research Office reported that currently eight students were involved as research assistants in research projects, and were going to appear as co-authors in the respective publications. Funding for the participation of students at international conferences is provided.

Students stated that they highly valued the opportunity to present their findings in front of an international audience and confirmed that ECAE was highly supportive of their research endeavours. They also mentioned that they were free to choose their own topics of interest for research projects based on the course outline.

3.1.8 Workload

The workload was described as challenging but manageable. Students said that teachers were open to adapting individual curricula in case of health issues or other obstacles. For example, the number of assignments demanded per semester can be reduced.

Students reported that all staff members of ECAE were generally very supportive and assisted them in meeting the demands of studying, working and fulfilling family obligations.

3.1.9 Expert's Appraisal

It appears to the panel that the teaching and assessment methods were adapted adequately to the shift in e-learning. The panel encourages the college to continue with a blended learning concept in post-pandemic times in order to make the programmes more accessible to students who are based outside the cities of Abu Dhabi and Ajman. In this regard, the panel recommends placing a stronger focus on imparting relevant IT skills as, for example, designing an app.

With regards to the two-tier-system that is applied in the European Higher Education Area, it should be stated here that the "Post Graduate Diploma", which is offered in the United Arab Emirates and hence also at ECAE, should be considered a "professional qualification certificate" at Bachelor's level.

The experts recognize that the implementation of nationally unique study programmes from scratch has only been made possible by a committed university leadership and highly

motivated faculty members. The experts assert that the college has taken great efforts to set up an array of study programmes that are based on transparent strategic goals as well as detailed learning outcomes on program and course level.

It becomes clear from the descriptions that the programmes foster both the ability of research-based approaches to education and related administrative processes and a thorough preparation for the demands of the labour market.

The panel would like to commend ECAE on implementing two programmes in Applied Behavior Analysis, which are the first and only programmes in the UAE to offer the coursework requirements to qualify students to apply to become Board Certified Assistant Behavior Analysts® (BCaBA®) and Board Certified Behavior Analysts® (BCBA®) and thus target the specific cultural context. These Verified Course Sequences (VCSs) are internationally recognized and issued by the [Association for Behavior Analysis International](#), based in the US. The Behavior Analyst Certification Board states the level of training required to become a BCaBA and BCBA and requires additional supervised fieldwork to be completed as well as the successful completion of an exam to show a minimum level of competence to become board certified.

As part of the non-obligatory courses offered by ECAE, the panel would like to highlight the course “critical support course”, which is part of the general “Learning Support Programmes”. It was reported, that in the course students are presented with different leadership models, which are to be adapted to the local context. The panel considers this element key in developing the self-reflective and innovative skills of graduates and hence recommends communicating the possibility to participate in the course to students of all levels in obligatory classes.

As was mentioned during the on-site talks and in the documentation, graduates of ECAE’s programmes are to be able to lead and transform the current educational system in both schools and eventually higher education. Graduates of the Master’s and PhD-programmes qualify for the international job market in academia and research. Graduates of all programmes appear in fact to be in demand on the labour market.

In the realm of research, the panel commends ECAE on the organizational setup, stimulating the research activities of faculty and students alike. In order to foster the visibility of ECAE in this realm, it is suggested that a research journal edited and published by ECAE might contribute to the reputation of the college as research institution. A journal might provide a sound platform for faculty, students and also alumni to channel their research into the global research community.

In general, the panel would like to applaud the college for designing and implementing study programmes aligned with the standards and demands of the students, the labour market and academia.

3.2 Assessment of the Study Programmes

3.2.1 Post-Graduate Diploma Programmes

3.2.1.1 Postgraduate Diploma in Applied Behaviour Analysis

Intended Learning Outcomes

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3 Assessment of the Study Programme/s

The Postgraduate Diploma in Applied Behavior Analysis was introduced in fall 2019. The coursework completed for the PGD in Applied Behavior Analysis meets the coursework requirement to be eligible to sit for the Board-Certified Assistant Behavior Analyst® (BCaBA®) examinations.

Professional behaviour analysts which are described as urgently needed in the local landscape of school teachers.

According to the provided documentation, graduates shall be able to:

- *Demonstrate advanced specialized knowledge and critical understanding in the field of Applied Behavior Analysis and at the interface between fields (e.g. education, special education, business).*
- *Accrue a comprehensive knowledge of current research and innovations in Applied Behavior Analysis, and the impact of these developments on accepted theory and practice locally, regionally and internationally.*
- *Apply problem-solving skills to design and develop approaches, both individually and as part of a team, to manage and evaluate complex, challenging behavior at the individual, group or organizational level.*
- *Critically select and implement appropriate behavioral assessment and measurement instruments and interventions with intellectual independence.*
- *Use highly developed advanced communication skills to present, justify and/or critique complex behavioral matters.*
- *Conduct own teaching and learning in line with ethical and professional standards.*
- *Meet the “acceptable coursework” eligibility requirement of the Behavior Analyst Certification Board (BACB) to sit for the Board-Certified Assistant BehaviorAnalyst (BCaBA) examination.*

Concept and Structure

In the first and second semester of study, students are to cover the following courses:

Educational Units and Courses	Semester	Form of Examination	Workload (hours)		ECTS credits
			Contact Time	Self-Study Time	
		(oral, written, term paper etc.)			
Post Graduate Diploma in Applied Behavior Analysis (PGD: ABA)					
EDUABA1 - Autism Spectrum Disorder and Behavioral Intervention	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual written report • Group oral presentation 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
EDUABA2 - Philosophy, Concepts and Principles	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intervention analysis paper • 2 Quizzes 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
EDUABA3 - Behavior Assessment	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project • Written proposal • Final Exam (written) 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
EDUABA4 - Measurement, Research Design and Supervision	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open Book Exam • Data Analysis • Final Exam (written) 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
EDUABA5 - Behavior-Change Procedures	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 Quizzes • Project & Report 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
EDUABA6 - Ethics and Professionalism	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Position Paper (written) • Interview, Reflective Analysis and Presentation • Final Exam (written) 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
Thesis EDUABA10 - Applied Project	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual applied project • Individual Presentation 	90 Hours	180 Hours	12
Total			360 Hours	720 Hours	48

Reportedly, the programme includes a significant focus on theoretical applications in practical contexts.

Methods of Teaching and Students' Assessment

Teaching methods include presentations, analysis and application of learning and documentation related to the student's workplace environment. Through the in-class presentations, role-play and applied project, students are to display leadership and professional skills in improving their own professional practice.

Knowledge is assessed through a combination of examinations, essays, project work and presentations. Skills are assessed through the students' ability to critique, reflect and apply what they have learned. In particular, the presentations and the applied project demonstrate the reflection of acquired knowledge and skills.

The final graduation project consists of an "applied project", in which the students have to prove that they are apt to apply the acquired knowledge, skills and competencies in the practical field.

3.2.1.2 Postgraduate Diploma in Guidance and Counselling

Intended Learning Outcomes

The focus of the Postgraduate Diploma in Guidance and Counselling program is to prepare guidance and counselling professionals to work in schools across the UAE. The program introduces the principles and practices of guidance and counselling to ensure acquaintance and understanding of recognized support practices offered within an educational setting that address career counselling and assist students who face personal, social and academic challenges. Reportedly, there is an acute shortage of trained guidance and counselling professionals in the school environment of the UAE.

According to the provided documentation, graduates shall be able to:

- *Display knowledge and critical understanding of theoretical basis underlying guidance and counselling practice.*
- *Critically apply a range of relevant principles and theoretical knowledge in the implementation of strategies within guidance and counselling situations.*
- *Develop a personal frame of reference through evidence-based enquiry that can be applied within the workplace.*
- *Demonstrate ability to work collaboratively and independently as required within a range of guidance and counselling contexts.*
- *Apply ethical and professional standards within guidance and counselling*

Concept and Structure

Educational Units and Courses	Semester	Form of Examination	Workload (hours)		ECTS Credits*
			Contact Time	Self-Study Time	
Post Graduate Diploma in Guidance and Counselling (PGD: GC)		(oral, written, term paper etc.)			
EDUGC01 - Introduction to Counselling and Ethical Practice	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group Presentation • Essay • Individual Presentation 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
EDUGC02 - Theories of Guidance and Counselling	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Essay • Group Presentation 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
EDUGC03 - Principles and Practice of Guidance and Counselling	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 Role play – Counselling practice • Development of Counselling session • Group Presentation 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
EDUGC04 - Assessment and Appraisal in Guidance and Counselling	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review Report • Case Study • Final Exam (written) 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
EDUGC05 - Career Development and Counselling	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 Essays • Individual Presentation • Group Presentation 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
EDUGC06 - Individual and Group Counselling of Children	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual Presentation • Essay • Group Presentation 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
Thesis EDUGC07 -Case Study Research Project	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case Study • Individual Presentation (Oral) 	90 Hours	180 Hours	12
Total			360 Hours	720 Hours	48

Reportedly, the programme includes a significant focus on theoretical applications in practical contexts.

Methods of Teaching and Students' Assessment

The documentation states that the learning and teaching process includes discovery learning, role-play, critiquing of educational processes and practices, exploration and application of best practice models. Group work and individual study are both supported by the lecturer.

Through in-class presentations and a research project in schools, students are to develop leadership and professional skills and thus improve their own professional practice. The teaching staff emphasized that students are made aware of the different dimensions of diversity such as gender, ethnicity, socio-economic status of physical disabilities in the programme.

Knowledge is assessed through a combination of examinations, essays, project work and presentations. Skills are assessed through the students' ability to critique, reflect and apply what they have learned. In particular, the presentations and the applied project demonstrate the reflection of acquired knowledge and skills.

The final graduation project consists of an “applied project”, in which the students have to prove that they are apt to apply the acquired knowledge, skills and competencies in the practical field.

3.2.1.3 **Postgraduate Diploma in Education (PGDE)**

Intended Learning Outcomes

The Post Graduate Diploma in Education (PGDE) provides an alternative route into teaching for those whose first degree is not in education. Students who hold a Bachelor's degree in the relevant fields or who are already employed can obtain a Post Graduate teaching qualification through the general track or by specializing in Science or Mathematics tracks. The programme is designed to increase the skills and competence of classroom teachers to teach effectively and support student learning. Moreover, students are trained to become innovative classroom teachers who are able to realize learning outcomes through effective assessment strategies and engage in life-long learning and professional development.

The PGDE-programme was on-hold for a few years as instructed by the former leadership at ECAE who were awaiting finalization of the national teaching standards. Based on approval of CAA, the programme will again be offered starting Spring 2020-2021 with new specialization tracks.

According to the provided documentation, graduates shall be able to:

- *Demonstrate knowledge and skills of effective teaching and learning in classrooms.*
- *Solve problems while taking social and ethical issues into account.*
- *Plan, implement and assess creative approaches to teaching and learning to improve learning outcomes.*
- *Apply problem-solving skills and integrate knowledge from various sources to solve problems in classrooms.*
- *Evaluate, reflect and improve own professional practice to enhance effective teaching and learning.*
- *Implementing ethical standards in professional practice and stakeholder relations.*
- *Conduct own teaching and learning in line with standards of professionalism and excellence.*

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Educational Units and Courses	Semester	Form of Examination (oral, written, term paper, etc.)	Workload (hours)		ECTS Credits*
			Contact Time	Self-Study Time	
Post Graduate Diploma in Education (PGDE)					
EDUC01 - Classroom Management and Communication Skills	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Midterm Exam (written) • Group Research Paper • Individual Presentations 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
EDU6006 - ICT Integrated Learning and Teaching Course 2	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written Mid-term Exam • ICT Product Preparation • Final Exam (written) 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
EDUC03 - Critical Perspectives on Teaching and Learning	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group Paper with Presentation • Research Paper • Final Exam (written) 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
EDUC04 - (General) Curriculum Design and Assessment	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Essay • Case Study • Final Exam (written) 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
EDU6005 – (General) Effective Planning, Teaching and Assessment	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construct Lesson Plan • Construct Formative and Summative Assessment • Micro Teaching, Case study 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
EDUS1 – (Science track) Effective Planning and Teaching of Science	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Essay • Unit Plan and Self-evaluation 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
EDUS2 – (Science track) Experimental Work and Assessment in Science	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critical Essay • Assessment Tool and Accompanying Rationale 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
EDUM1 – (Math track) Planning, Problem Solving and Assessment in Mathematics	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lesson Plan and Microteaching • Assessment Portfolio 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
EDUM2 – (Math track) Teaching Key Concepts in Mathematics	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Math Activity Presentation • Critical Review of Article 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
Internship EDU6007 – Practicum	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lesson Plan and Teaching Performance • Reflective Journal • Practicum Portfolio 	150 Hours	300 Hours	20
Total			555 Hours	1,110 Hours	50

Methods of Teaching and Students' Assessment

Independent study and group work are core elements of teaching in the PGDE-programme. Case studies and best practice models are evaluated and discussed. Thus, the transfer from theory to practice shall be stimulated. In the internship, students are to develop their leadership and professional skills. Ideally, the self-development of students in their respective working environment is fostered.

With regards to students' assessment, the internship is highlighted as key in assessing the application of knowledge and skills performed by students. As indicated in the table above, students have to deliver a journal, portfolio and lesson plan, documenting their insights and work accomplished during the internship. Subject knowledge is evaluated through regular written examinations in class. Presentations and group work serve to assess the leadership skills and self-reflective practice.

3.2.1.4 Postgraduate Diploma in School Evaluation and Improvement

Intended Learning Outcomes

As per the current inspection practice of Department of Knowledge and Education in Abu Dhabi, all private and government schools are to be inspected once every two years. According to the self-report, there is currently no other programme at an undergraduate or graduate level which addresses school inspection and evaluation in the UAE. With the existing gap in the local availability of school inspectors/evaluators, the anticipated success rate of this program is expected to be high. The programme targets teachers and educators in leadership positions, in both private and public schools, who are interested in advancement or a change in their

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career path. It also targets educators in leadership positions in both private and public schools who are interested in joining the program to develop their knowledge and skills of school self-evaluation.

According to the provided documentation, graduates shall be able to:

- *Deconstruct and evaluate international, national, regional and institutional models of inspection and school regulatory systems within the context of school improvement*
- *Evaluate and benchmark UAE schools against international standards and practices of school inspection to create innovative school practices.*
- *Construct and evaluate indicators and descriptors that are aligned with the UAE inspection framework.*
- *Lead and evaluate the school inspection process, and its implementation using evidence-based analysis, systems and processes within the regional and global scope*
- *Communicate various outcomes of the inspection process supportively and meta-cognitively to diverse communities of stakeholders.*
- *Construct collaboratively the school improvement plan and evaluate its implementation in alignment with the elements of school performance standards and school evaluation framework.*
- *Transmit professional knowledge collaboratively through designing mentoring programs.*
- *Design professional development and enhance learning communities in order to build national capacities for educational innovations and school improvements.*
- *Critically implement the praxis of leadership and management models within the process of school transformation and improvement.*

Concept and Structure

Educational Units and Courses	Semester	Form of Examination	Workload (hours)		ECTS Credits*
			Contact Time	Self-Study Time	
		(oral, written, term paper, etc.)			
Post Graduate Diploma in School Evaluation and Improvement (PGD: SEI)					
EDUSEI1 -School Evaluation for Effectiveness and Innovation: Implications, Means and Processes	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research Paper • Individual Presentations • Final Exam (written) 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
EDUSEI2 - Processes and Systems for School-based Evidences and Documentation	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group Discussion & Presentation • Case Study • Final Exam (written) 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
EDUSEI3 - Inspection: Professional Skills, Attributes and Community Collaboration	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document Analysis • Critical Essay 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
EDUSEI4 - Challenges and Gaps: Need Analysis for School Improvement	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group Discussion (oral) • Written Paper& presentation • Final Exam (written) 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
EDUSEI5 - School Improvement Plan: Design, Implementation and Evaluation	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual Presentation • Group Project • Final Exam (written) 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
EDUSEI6 - Building Capacity: Design and Content	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual Research Paper • Group Project • Final Exam (written) 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
Thesis EDUSEI7 - Research Project/ Case Study	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case Study-interview-based or School-Practices-Document Analysis Project • Oral Individual Presentation 	90 Hours	180 Hours	12
Total			360 Hours	720 Hours	48

Methods of Teaching and Students' Assessment

Independent study and group work are core elements of teaching in the School Evaluation and Improvement-programme. Case studies and best practice models are evaluated and discussed. Thus, the transfer from theory to practice shall be stimulated. Through the analysis of case studies and the presentation of findings, students are to develop self-evaluation skills. The provided documentation states: "The learning and teaching methods applied are to develop the student's ability to manage and improve own professional practice, to plan and development professionally within a 'live' professional teaching context."

The students' knowledge is assessed through examinations, project work and presentations. Self-reflective skills and the ability to transfer theory into practice is evaluated in the research project which includes elements of practical research work. Students' ability to demonstrate leadership and communication skills are evaluated through teaching and group work.

3.2.1.5 Expert's Appraisal

The panel congratulates the college on the design of the Post Graduate Diplomas. The learning outcomes are adequately formulated and the curricula are composed so that the intended learning outcomes can be reached.

As indicated above, the panel concludes that the Post Graduate Diplomas are not directly comparable to a Bachelor's degree as awarded in the European Higher Education Area. If this is a strategic goal if the college, the element of individual research should be strengthened in the curricula. The current Post Graduate Diploma is rather to be considered a "professional qualification certificate" at a Bachelor's level.

Since the majority of students are already working in the relevant fields and the study programmes are designed as part-time programmes, the panel understands that practical elements and theoretical input have to be carefully balanced. From the provided documentation and the talks, the impression arose that the focus lies rather on theoretical knowledge and academic discussion in the curricula. Nonetheless, practical experience should be a compulsory part of the learning experience of all students.

The Post-Graduate Diploma in Education already includes obligatory practical phases, which is very valuable. Students who are employed are to complete a project which is related to their work, such as conducting interviews or evaluations. Thus, they are to connect theory and practice without an additional internship prescribed in the curriculum.

Students in the Post Graduate Diploma programme "Guidance and Counselling" expressed the wish to attend counselling sessions in schools.

With regards to the graduate profile and the intended learning outcomes, the panel recommends to include more elements of practical experience and their conscious reflection in class in this study programme for all students, regardless of their employment status. Students who are unemployed shall complete mandatory internships. The internship placement might be facilitated through the networks of employed students.

3.2.2 Master's programmes

3.2.2.1 Master of Education in Applied Behavior Analysis

Intended Learning Outcomes

The Master of Education in Applied Behavior Analysis was introduced in Fall 2019. The course-work completed for the Master of Education in Applied Behavior Analysis meets the course-work requirement to be eligible to sit for the Board-Certified Assistant Behavior Analyst® (BCaBA®) or the Board-Certified Behavior Analyst® (BCBA®) examinations, which are described as urgently needed in the local landscape of school teachers. The programme is designed to develop research-informed educators as expert behaviour analysts who are skilled at behaviour assessment and change.

According to the provided documentation, graduates shall be able to:

- *Demonstrate highly specialized knowledge and critical understanding in the field of Applied Behavior Analysis and at the interface between fields (e.g., education, special education, business).*
- *Accrue advanced knowledge of current research and innovations, and recent developments in Applied Behavior Analysis, and the impact of these developments on accepted theory and practice locally, regionally and internationally.*
- *Apply problem-solving skills to design, develop and analyse approaches, both individually and as part of a team, to manage and evaluate complex, challenging behavior at the individual, group or organizational level.*
- *Critically select and implement appropriate behavioral assessment and measurement instruments and interventions with intellectual independence.*
- *Use highly developed advanced communication skills to present, justify and/or critique complex behavioral matters.*
- *Conduct own teaching and learning in line with ethical and professional standards, leading to informed, fair and valid decisions related to behavior change.*
- *Plan, develop, execute, self-evaluate and present a research project with appropriately selected behavioral methodologies to produce socially significant effects in typically developing individuals and/or individuals with special educational needs.*
- *Meet the “acceptable coursework” eligibility requirement of the Behavior Analyst Certification Board (BACB) to sit for the Board-Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA) examination.*

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Concept and Structure

In the Master's programme, students are to cover the following courses:

Educational Units and Courses	Semester	Form of Examination (oral, written, term paper etc.)	Workload (hours)		ECTS credits
			Contact Time	Self-Study Time	
Master of Education in Applied Behavior Analysis (M.Ed.: ABA)					
EDUABA1 - Autism Spectrum Disorder and Behavioral Intervention	Yr1 – S1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual written report • Group oral presentation • Final Exam (written) 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
EDUABA2 - Philosophy, Concepts and Principles	Yr1 – S1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intervention analysis paper • 2 Quizzes 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
EDUABA3 - Behavior Assessment	Yr1 – S1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project • Written proposal • Final Exam (written) 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
EDUABA4 - Measurement, Research Design and Supervision	Yr1 – S2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open Book Exam • Data Analysis • Final Exam (written) 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
EDUABA5 - Behavior-Change Procedures	Yr1 – S2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 Quizzes • Project & Report 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
EDUABA6 - Ethics and Professionalism	Yr1 – S2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Position Paper (written) • Interview, Reflective Analysis and Presentation • Final Exam (written) 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
EDUABA7 - Advanced Concepts and Principles	Yr2 – S1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research Poster & Presentation (Group) • Research Paper (Individual) 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
EDUABA8 - Advanced Measurement and Research Design	Yr2 – S1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Position Paper (Individual) • Final Exam (written) 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
EDUABA9 - Applications of Behavior Analysis	Yr2 – S1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group Project & presentation • Research Synthesis (written) • Interview & Report 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
Thesis EDUABA11 - Research Thesis	Yr2 – S2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual Research Thesis • Individual Presentation and Defense (Oral) 	135 Hours	270 Hours	18
Total			540 Hours	1,080 Hours	72

The documentation provided states that the learning and teaching includes inquiry-based learning, in-depth discussion on weekly topics, student-centred individual and collaborative work and independent research facilitated by instructors. The learning and teaching include discovery learning, critiquing and evaluating behavioural processes and practices and extensive research-based work. Accordingly, there are opportunities for hands-on practice through in-class activities using technologies and software. The programme includes group research and presentations, independent research, analysis and application of learning and documentation related to workplace environment. Through the research thesis, students are to demonstrate their skills in informing and improving their own professional practice.

Methods of Teaching and Students' Assessment

The teaching methods include inquiry-based learning, active and in-depth discussion on weekly topics, student-centred individual and collaborative work and independent research facilitated by instructors. Reportedly, discovery learning, critiquing and evaluating behavioural processes as well as research-based work are used by teachers. Moreover, opportunities for “hands-on” experience in in-class activities are provided.

The teaching methods applied are to develop the student’s ability to manage their own professional practice, lead strategic planning and initiate professional development and mentoring within a ‘live’ professional context.

Knowledge is assessed through a combination of examinations, project work, independent research and presentations. Skills are assessed through the students' ability to critique, evaluate, reflect, synthesize and apply what they have learned. In particular, the research thesis project assesses the reflection of the acquired skills.

3.2.2.2 Master of Education in Special and Inclusive Education

Intended Learning Outcomes

The Master's degree in Special and Inclusive Education, introduced in fall 2019, shall provide teachers with the opportunity to learn and master the knowledge and skills to plan and implement specialized instruction that leads to the academic achievement of students with special needs. The programme is designed to prepare teachers to improve the lives and academic outcomes for students with special needs.

According to the provided documentation, graduates shall be able to:

- *Demonstrate understanding of advanced and specialized knowledge of research-validated practices for effective instruction of students with high incidence disabilities.*
- *Design educational programs for students with high incidence disabilities through effective collaboration and communication with general education teachers, special education teachers, parents and other professionals.*
- *Critically analyse and apply contemporary theories, pedagogies and frameworks that contribute to the growth of student's individualized educational experience.*
- *Critically apply specialized knowledge of relevant theories to plan suitable instruction to meet the needs of diverse learners.*
- *Create developmentally and culturally appropriate learning environments for diverse learners to promote their language acquisition, reading and math skills, and social collaborations.*
- *Develop and implement research plans and critically reflect on implications for educational and professional practice.*
- *Effectively evaluate and integrate emerging technologies in teaching, learning and assessment to meet the needs of diverse learners.*



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Concept and Structure

In the Master's programme, students are to cover the following courses:

Educational Units and Courses	Semester	Form of Examination (oral, written, term paper etc.)	Workload (hours)		ECTS credits
			Contact Time	Self-Study Time	
Master of Education in Special & Inclusive Education (M.Ed.: SIE)					
EDUSIE1 - Current Research and Trends: High Incidence Disabilities	Yr1 – S1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 Case Studies & presentations • 3 in-class quizzes 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
EDUSIE2 - Classroom Management for Inclusive Classrooms	Yr1 – S1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written Reflection on Self-efficacy • Data Collection and Report • Individual Paper/Presentation 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
EDUCLD2 - Introduction to Educational Research	Yr1 – S1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Article Critique • Preliminary Research Study 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
EDUSIE3 - Content Specific Assessments & Methods in Inclusive Settings	Yr1 – S2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English, Math, Science Lesson Plans and UDL (individual Written) • Written Literature Review+Oral Presentation • Final Exam (written) 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
EDUSIE4 - Planning Transitions for Students with Disabilities	Yr1 – S2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weekly Reflections • Interview and Needs Assessment • Research to Recommendations 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
EDUCLD5 - Emerging Technologies for Teaching and Learning	Yr1 – S2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analytical Report (written) • Create Mobile App, Report and Presentation 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
EDUSIE5 - Inclusive Pedagogy	Yr2 – S1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individualized Education Plan & adapted lesson plan • Paper <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Argumentative Paper 2. Presentation 3. Reflection 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
EDUCLD8 - Brain, Mind and Learning	Yr2 – S1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 Critical reflections (written) • Final Exam (written) 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
EDUCLD9 - Design-based Research Methods	Yr2 – S1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mid-term Exam (written) • Article Review (written) • Research project/presentation 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
Thesis EDUCR1 - Research Project	Yr2 – S2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual Research Project • Individual Presentation (Oral) 	135 Hours	270 Hours	18
Total			540 Hours	1,080 Hours	72

Methods of Teaching and Student Assessment

The teaching is described as student-centred in the documentation. Independent reading, in-depth discussions, individual and group work and research are used to facilitate the learning process through “discourse, discovery and differentiation”. The critique and evaluation of law, policies, educational strategies and research are emphasized. The program focuses on opportunities to convert theory into differentiated lessons for students in the classroom.

Students are given the opportunity to conduct in-school observation for specific assignments, interview school personnel and design a research project that may involve the implementation and data collection in the schools. Culturally appropriate interventions and the development of innovative solutions are thus stimulated.

Knowledge is assessed through in-class discussions, project work, the development of new models, independent research and presentations. Skills are assessed throughout the program. The students’ abilities to analyse professional practice and learning contexts and evaluate, synthesize and apply what they have learned are taken into consideration.

The final research project combines several skill sets and is evaluated through writing and presentation. The research project is a reflective practice of acquired skills. The students are assessed on their ability to develop a research question, conduct research and apply this work.

3.2.2.3 **Master of Education**

Intended Learning Outcomes

The Master of Education combines educational theory with the flexibility to specialize in areas of professional expertise and interest after completion of core course modules. The programme addresses the need for increased research in the field of education in the UAE. It shall enable students to be skilled and competent practitioners who demonstrate professional capabilities to meet the individual and collective needs of diverse learners. Moreover, the programme should support them understand educational theory and research informed practices by critically reflecting on their practice as educational practitioners and understand current challenges in education.

According to the provided documentation, graduates shall be able to:

- *Integrate knowledge to create solutions to authentic (real world and ill-defined problems) in a professional educational environment.*
- *Manage change using a diverse range of strategic interventions and resources in a complex educational environment where diverse social and ethical issues are addressed.*
- *Conduct, analyse and apply research results to inform educational policy and/or practice.*
- *Critically investigate, synthesize and present recent educational research from a range of sources in a specialist discipline area.*
- *Critically evaluate and reflect on own professional practice in order to improve educational outcomes for all stakeholders.*
- *Engage ethically and productively with diverse communities or cultures in an educational context.*
- *Manage a range of activities within an educational environment in line with professional standards.*

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Concept and Structure

Educational Units and Courses	Semester	Form of Examination	Workload (hours)		ECTS credits
			Contact Time	Self-Study Time	
Master of Education (M.Ed.)					
EDUC01- Classroom Management and Communication Skills	Yr1 – S1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual written report • Group oral presentation • Final Exam (written) 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
EDUC02 Educational Leadership for the Learning Community	Yr1 – S1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intervention analysis paper • 3 Quizzes 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
EDUC03 Critical Perspectives on Teaching and Learning	Yr1 – S1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project • Written proposal • Final Exam (written) 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
EDUC04 Curriculum Design and Assessment	Yr1 – S2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open Book Exam • Data Analysis • Final Exam (written) 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
EDUC05 Social and Cultural Perspectives on Education	Yr1 – S2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 Quizzes • Project & Report 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
EDUC06 Research Design and Methodology in Education	Yr1 – S2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Position Paper (written) • Interview, Reflective Analysis and Presentation • Final Exam (written) 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
Track Course 1	Yr2 – S1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research Poster (Group) • Research Paper (Individual) • Final Exam (written) 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
Track Course 2	Yr2 – S1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Position Paper (Individual) • Final Exam (written) 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
Track Course 3	Yr2 – S1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group Project & presentation • Research Synthesis (written) • Interview & Report 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
Thesis EDUCR1 Research Report and Presentation	Yr2 – S2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual Research Report • Individual Presentation and Defense (Oral) 	135 Hours	270 Hours	18
Total			540 Hours	1,080 Hours	72

Methods of Teaching and Students' Assessment

The teaching methods include inquiry-based learning, individual study and group work and independent research, supported by teaching faculty. “Discovery learning” and extensive research-based work are mentioned as a mean to foster the analytical and self-reflective skills of students. Group work and collaborations on presentations and posters are to sharpen the communicative skills of students.

Knowledge is assessed through written exams, project work and presentations. Through research projects the students' ability to critically evaluate, reflect and transfer theory to practice shall be evaluated. Through the research report, practical elements shall be included in the curriculum in the form of course work. Communication skills are assessed through group work.

3.2.2.4 Master of Education in Educational Assessment

Intended Learning Outcomes

The Master of Education in Educational Assessment focuses on developing students' knowledge in the field of educational measurement and assessment. The programme attempts to develop the problem-solving skills and analytical thinking required to begin research in the field of educational measurement and assessment. Students enrolled shall obtain skills required for careers in applied research, development and/or teaching. Given the growing accountability framework in public education throughout the world and the recent movement towards standards-based education, there is increased need for teacher competency in the area

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of student assessment and evaluation. There is also an increased emphasis on transparent classroom assessment practices. The programme targets teachers and educators in leadership positions, in both private and public schools, who are interested in advancement or a change in their career path as this degree gives them the opportunity to join the assessment teams that are working with local governing bodies.

According to the provided documentation, graduates shall be able to:

- *Demonstrate mastery of educational assessment, including prior, current, and emerging research and theories pertaining to educational assessment, as well as significant issues and topics in the field of educational assessment and the functions they service within pedagogy, broadly-construed.*
- *Design state-of-the-art assessment systems, grounded in cognitive theories and model-based methodologies that are aligned with the curricular or program goals.*
- *Critically evaluate the assessment practices in schools and other formal and informal educational settings.*
- *Demonstrate the ability to create and implement evidence-based, innovative authentic assessments as well as developmentally and culturally appropriate assessments by integrating emerging and cutting-edge technologies to improve assessment practices.*
- *Demonstrate the ability to solve unique educational assessment related problems through independent, cohesive research that is theoretically grounded and methodologically rigorous.*
- *Work effectively and collegially in the execution of educational assessment related research projects and associated analysis of empirical data to envision policy approaches to addressing pertinent problems in the realm of educational assessment.*

Concept and Structure

Educational Units and Courses	Semester	Form of Examination	Workload (hours)		ECTS credits
			Contact Time	Self-Study Time	
		(oral, written, term paper etc.)			
M Ed: Educational Assessment (M.Ed.: EA)					
EDUEA1 – Assessment Principles and Methods	Yr1 – S1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mid Semester Exam (written) • Analytical report • Final Exam (written) 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
EDUEA2 - Design of Assessment Systems	Yr1 – S1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Journal Article Review/ Presentation • Standardized Test Review/ Evaluation • Assessment Construction Project & Grading Policy 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
EDUEA3 - Assessment and Pedagogy	Yr1 – S1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interdisciplinary Thematic Unit plan • Case Study (written) 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
EDUEA4 - Qualitative Research Design and Analysis	Yr1 – S2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ethnographic Data Collection • Grounded Theory Analysis • Research Proposal and Presentation 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
EDUEA5 - Quantitative Research Design and Analysis	Yr1 – S2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multiple Regression Analysis • Multilevel Modelling • Research Proposal and Presentation 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
EDUEA6 - Contemporary Approaches to Educational Assessment	Yr1 – S2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special Education Assessment Plan • Design Assessment Tasks • Critique of Technology-based Assessments 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
EDUEA7 - Cognition and Assessment	Yr2 – S1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research Article Review • Develop Multiple-Choice Questions using Cognitive Models • Systematic Review and Oral Presentation 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
EDUEA8 - Assessment and Development of 21st Century Competencies	Yr2 – S1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analytical report (Individual) • Assessment design and presentation • Final Exam (written) 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
EDUEA9 – Large-Scale Assessments in Education	Yr2 – S1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 Data Analyses (PISA, TIMSS, PIRLS) • Critique of a research study 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
Thesis EDUEA10 – Master’s Capstone Project	Yr2 – S2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual Research Report (written) • Individual Presentation and Defense (Oral) 	135 Hours	270 Hours	18
Total			540 Hours	1,080 Hours	72

Methods of Teaching and Students' Assessment

The teaching methods include student-centred individual and group work. Independent research is supported by teaching staff. It is stated that “the program includes a significant focus on theoretical and conceptual applications of educational measurement and assessment tools and techniques in practical contexts.” Especially case studies and interviews conducted by students for the final research project shall sharpen the analytical and professional skills of students and enable them to transfer knowledge into practice.

The students' knowledge is assessed through written examinations, project work, presentations and individual research projects. The students' leadership and self-reflective skills are evaluated through a diversity of assessment methods, such as case studies, statistical data analysis and practical statistics computer lab sessions.

3.2.2.5 Master of Education in Curriculum and Learning Design

Intended Learning Outcomes

The Master of Education in Curriculum and Learning Design is designed to develop research-informed educators as curriculum experts. This shall be achieved through a curriculum consisting of courses focusing on recent developments in theories of teaching and learning. The programme also emphasizes the implementation of educational research in authentic contexts and offers flexible seminar topics aligned with current educational trends as well as best practice in pedagogy. It is described as unique in the region for its emphasis on these fields using a research-based approach. It aims to prepare teachers to design and evaluate educationally informed and contextually appropriate learning environments, teaching materials and effectively used digital technologies in diverse classrooms. Moreover, the program provides opportunities for teachers to critically evaluate and reflect on the educational neuroscience concepts and understand the neurological basis of learning which shall help them advance the professional practice for the improvement of teaching and learning in UAE schools.

According to the provided documentation, graduates shall be able to:

- *Demonstrate understanding of advanced and specialized knowledge of contemporary concepts and theories related to curriculum and learning design.*
- *Understand recent developments in the field of education and its implication to educational practice.*
- *Critically apply specialized knowledge of relevant theories of teaching and learning to create positive and effective learning environments.*
- *Design, implement and evaluate developmentally and culturally appropriate learning environments for learners of knowledge-based society.*
- *Effectively evaluate and integrate emerging technologies in teaching, learning and assessment.*
- *Analyse instructional practice, develop and implement research plans, critically reflect on implications for educational policy and practice.*
- *Lead and work individually and collaboratively to design learning resources to meet the needs of diverse learners.*
- *Plan learning and curriculum design improvements informed by educational research.*

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Educational Units and Courses	Semester	Form of Examination (oral, written, term paper etc.)	Workload (hours)		ECTS credits*
			Contact Time	Self-Study Time	
Master of Education in Curriculum & Learning Design (M.Ed.: CLD)					
EDUCLD1 - Curriculum Foundations: Principles and Issues	Yr1 – S1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case Study (Pair) • Final Exam (written) 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
EDUCLD2 - Introduction to Educational Research	Yr1 – S1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Article Review (written) • Preliminary Research Study 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
EDUCLD3 - Creating Positive Learning Environments	Yr1 – S1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classroom observation report • Classroom and behaviour management plan/presentation 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
EDUCLD4 Instructional Design, Resource Development and Evaluation	Yr1 – S2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case Study (written) • Essay and Presentation 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
EDUCLD5 - Emerging Technologies for Teaching and Learning	Yr1 – S2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analytical Report (written) • Create Mobile App, Report/ Presentation 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
EDUCLD6 - Cognitive and Social Cultural Foundations of Learning	Yr1 – S2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 Critical reflections (written) • Final Exam (written) 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
EDUCLD7 - Innovative Classroom Assessment for Learning	Yr2 – S1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analytical Report (written) • Assessment Design/presentation 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
EDUCLD8 - Brain, Mind and Learning	Yr2 – S1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 Critical reflections (written) • Final Synthesis Presentation 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
EDUCLD9 - Design-based Research Methods	Yr2 – S1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Article Review (written) • Research project/presentation 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
Thesis EDUCR1 - Research Project	Yr2 – S2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual Research Project (written) • Individual Presentation (Oral) 	135 Hours	270 Hours	18
Total			540 Hours	1,080 Hours	72

Methods of Teaching and Students' Assessment

The following learning and teaching methods are applied in the Master of Education in Curriculum and Learning Design: inquiry-based learning, weekly in-depth discussions of texts and case studies, individual research, extensive group work and presentations. Opportunities for hands-on practice are to be delivered through the final research project. Students are encouraged and empowered throughout the program to utilize reflective practice, self-evaluation and application of knowledge and skills in a professional practical context. The learning and teaching methods applied are to develop the student's ability to manage own professional practice, lead strategic planning and initiate professional development and mentoring within a 'live' professional context.

Knowledge is assessed through a combination of examination, project work, independent research and workplace assessment and presentations. Skills are assessed throughout, through the students' ability to critique, evaluate, reflect, synthesize and apply what they have learned. In particular, the research project is designed to be a reflective practice of acquired skills. The students are assessed on their ability to conduct research and apply this to a work context. They are also assessed on their leadership skills during group work.

3.2.2.6 Expert's Appraisal

The panel commends ECAE on the implementation of the above-mentioned Master's programmes. The curricula are designed so that the intended learning outcomes can be met by the students. The qualification level is comparable to the Master's programmes as implemented in the European Higher Education Area.

Just like in the Post Graduate Diploma programmes, the majority of students are already

working in the relevant fields and the study programmes are designed as part-time programmes. The panel understands that practical elements and theoretical input have to be carefully balanced. Teaching staff mentioned that tasks were often tailored to the employment situation of the students and thus their practical work was integrated into classes. In case students are not working, case studies are consciously reflected upon in class. An unemployed student reported that she was currently conducting field research in the context of a research project, which was her way of obtaining practical input.

Nonetheless, the panel recommends the stronger implementation of practical elements into the curricula. Students mentioned that they received practical input through excursions. With regards to the graduate profile, the panel highly recommends to introduce compulsory internships to the Master of Education. The internship placement might be facilitated through the networks of employed students. This especially applies to students who are unemployed or not working in the relevant area.

3.2.3 PhD programmes

3.2.3.1 Doctor of Philosophy in Education: Educational Neuroscience

Intended Learning Outcomes

The PhD in Educational Neuroscience is described as a pioneering programme: it is the first doctoral program in the UAE to offer training on cognitive neuroscience and education. Key issues in education are framed within the social science of education and the science of learning and behavior.

According to the provided documentation, graduates shall be able to:

- *Create new and significant knowledge in a specialized area based on research which advances the current theoretical and conceptual foundations of the professional field of work and reflects a critical analysis, evaluation and synthesis of new and existing ideas.*
- *Independently conceptualize, design, implement and adapt research processes using highly developed and creative expert skills and analyze and evaluate data.*
- *Demonstrate leadership skills in the development of new and creative approaches that extend or redefine existing knowledge and/or theories, including responding with substantial authority and autonomy to the development of new ideas and processes in challenging novel learning context accounting for overall governance of processes and systems.*
- *Demonstrate highly developed and expert communication skills to present, explain and/or critique highly complex and diverse matters to a wide range of audiences including university students, specialist academics, peer specialist/ experts and/or professional audiences.*
- *Manage highly complex and diverse ethical issues in a culturally sensitive manner with a focus on maintaining ethical and professional standards and leading to informed, fair and valid judgments.*
- *Reflect critically on personal and professional practice to lead contributions to professional knowledge, ethics and practice in unfamiliar and unpredictable contexts.*

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Concept and Structure

Educational Units and Courses	Semester	Form of Examination	Workload (hours)		ECTS credits
			Contact Time	Self-Study Time	
		(oral, written, term paper etc.)			
Doctor of Philosophy in Education: Educational Neuroscience (PhD: EN)					
DOCM720 - Qualitative Research Methods	Yr1 – S1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written Review • Written Reflections • Written Fieldnotes • Research Proposal and Oral Presentations 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
PHDC730 - Neuroscience: Brain Anatomy and Circuits	Yr1 – S1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 Discussions (written notes/oral presentation) • 2 Quizzes • Critical Review (written) 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
DOCM730 - Quantitative Research Methods	Yr1 – S2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 research design reports • Quantitative research proposal 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
PHDC710 - Educational Neuroscience	Yr1 – S2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Topic discussion- 3 items • Brain Anatomy, function, and atypicality Exam • Review paper • Review paper presentation 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
DOCM710 - Mixed methods Research	Yr2 – S1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data analysis report • Oral presentation • Critical Review (written) 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
DOCC770 - Teaching and Learning in the 21st Century	Yr2 – S1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written Reflections • Design study and colloquium • Final exam 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
PHDC740 - Neuroscience: Brain Systems, Behavior and Cognition 1	Yr2 – S1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 Discussions (written notes/oral presentation) • 2 Presentations 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
PHDM720 - Advanced Qualitative Research Methods***	Yr2 – S2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data Analysis Report • Oral presentation • Critical Review (written) 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
PHDM710 - Advanced Quantitative Research Methods***	Yr2 – S2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data Analysis Report • Oral presentation • Critical Review (written) 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
PHDC750 - Neuroscience: Brain Systems, Behavior and Cognition 2	Yr2 – S2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three (3) discussion points each class • Exam 1 • Exam 2 • Research Grant Proposal • Research Grant Proposal Presentation 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
PHDC760 – Research Apprenticeship	Yr3 – S1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research proposal and ethics submission • Schedule and Plan • Implementation of plan • Data analysis presentation and reflection on management of project • Research Article 	90 Hours	180 Hours	12
DOCC750 – Seminar 1	Yr3 – S1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Topic discussion • Article presentation • Presentation for diverse audience 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
DOCC760 – Seminar 2	Yr3 – S2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Topic discussion • Article presentation • Presentation for diverse audience 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
Thesis PHDD910 – Dissertation Research**	Yr3 – S2 & Yr4 – S1 & S2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual Research Thesis • Individual Presentation and Defense (Oral) 	270 Hours	810 Hours	36
Total			855 Hours	1,980 Hours	120

Methods of Teaching and Students' Assessment

Doctoral Students will attend classes and seminars in order to acquire the underpinning knowledge they require to complete the program. In addition, there is a significant amount of independent learning support through tutorials with their doctoral academic advisor.

At the beginning, students are introduced to a range of research methodologies, which shall support them in conducting their own research. In addition, students will be exposed to

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practical research work to familiarize them with the range of tools available to conduct, present and publish independent research.

The courses utilize practical application, particularly in the early research courses where students must experiment with data sets and various research tools such as SPSS and/or Nvivo. The independent research conducted for the dissertation along with the dissertation defence shall ensure that the candidate is worthy of the PhD-degree. During seminars students are expected to demonstrate leadership and management skills by leading class discussions and research teams.

Students are required to undertake a significant amount of research independently. Students conduct out of class research which is discussed in peer groups, facilitated by faculty. Critical self-reflection of the research process is stimulated. Through shadowing, practice and strategic association with experts in the field, students will embed their learning within the relevant professional context.

Examinations at the end of the courses assess the knowledge level of students. These include practical exercises, academic writings, presentations, self-reflections as well as final written examinations. Some courses also use in-class tests or quizzes to ensure that the candidates have the required knowledge to meet the learning outcomes.

The awarded credit points are clustered as follows:

- 12 credits (24 ECTS) in the degree-required research courses
- 18 credits (36 ECTS) in the disciplinary concentration courses
- 6 credits (12 ECTS) in the research apprenticeship
- 6 credits (12 ECTS) in the doctoral seminar
- 18 credits (36 ECTS) associated with the dissertation

The dissertation is assessed by a panel of experts in the relevant field of education. It assesses whether the candidate has added relevant input to the body of knowledge within the specific field of educational research.

3.2.3.2 Doctor of Philosophy in Education: Special Education

Intended Learning Outcomes

As stated in the self-report, there is a need for highly qualified experts in Special Education in the UAE, but the number of highly qualified Emirati Nationals with a PhD in Special Education is rather low. This PhD programme shall prepare graduates in special education through an emphasis on specialized training and research.

According to the provided documentation, graduates shall be able to:

- *Create new and significant knowledge in Special Education based on research which advances the current theoretical and conceptual foundations of the professional field of work and reflects a critical analysis, evaluation and synthesis of new and existing ideas.*
- *Independently conceptualize, design, implement and adapt research processes in Special Education using highly developed and creative expert skills and analyse and evaluate data.*
- *Demonstrate leadership skills in the development of new and creative approaches in Special Education that extend or redefine existing knowledge and/or theories, including responding with substantial authority and autonomy to the development of new ideas*

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and processes in challenging novel learning context accounting for overall governance of processes and systems.

- *Demonstrate highly developed and expert communication skills to present, explain and/or critique highly complex and diverse matters to a wide range of audiences including university students, specialist academics, peer specialist/ experts and/or professional audiences with regard to Special Education.*
- *Manage highly complex and diverse special education ethical issues in a culturally sensitive manner with a focus on maintaining ethical and professional standards and leading to informed, fair and valid judgments for policies, practice and individuals.*
- *Reflect critically on personal and professional practice that leads to contributions to professional knowledge, ethics and practice in unfamiliar and unpredictable contexts in Special Education.*

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Concept and Structure

Educational Units and Courses	Semester	Form of Examination	Workload (hours)		ECTS credits
			Contact Time	Self-Study Time	
		(oral, written, term paper etc.)			
Doctor of Philosophy in Education: Special Education (PhD: SE)					
PHDSE1 - Advanced Studies of Individuals with Exceptionalities	Yr1 – S1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 SPED “Research in Brief” Presentations • Annotated Bibliography & Presentation 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
DOCM720 - Qualitative Research Methods	Yr1 – S1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written Review • Written Reflections • Written Fieldnotes • Research Proposal & Oral Presentation 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
PHDSE2 - Educational Regulations for Special Education: Policies and Practices	Yr1 – S2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case Study • Literature Review • New School Regulations Plan and Presentation. • Final exam 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
PHDC710 - Educational Neuroscience: Typical and Atypical Function	Yr1 – S2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Topic discussion- 3 items • Brain Anatomy, function, and atypicality Exam • Review paper • Review paper presentation 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
DOCM730 - Quantitative Research Methods	Yr1 – S2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 research design reports • Quantitative research proposal 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
PHDSE3- Special and Inclusive Education: Theory, Curriculum, and Pedagogy	Yr2 – S1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design inclusion model with a rationale • Critical analysis of universal design of learning and applications to special needs • Trends and Issues Discussion & Presentation 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
PHDSE4 - Transition in Special Education: Theory, Design, and Collaboration	Yr2 – S1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case Study • Qualitative Research Interview Project • Transition Plan Model • Final Exam 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
PHDSE5 - Assessment, evaluation, and program planning in special education	Yr2 – S2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instrument Review and Critique • Research Paper and Reflection • Poster presentation • IEP project 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
PHDSE6 - Single Subject Research Design in Special Education	Yr2 – S2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Article Critiques • Single-Case Research Study and Presentation 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
PHDSE7 - Inquiry into Special Education	Yr2 – S2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literature Review and Presentation • Interview and Reflection Paper • Group Discussion Leader 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
PHDC760 – Research Apprenticeship	Yr3 – S1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research proposal and ethics submission • Schedule and Plan • Implementation of plan • Data analysis presentation and reflection on management of project • Research Article 	90 Hours	180 Hours	12
DOCC750 – Seminar 1	Yr3 – S1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Topic discussion • Article presentation • Presentation for diverse audience 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
DOCC760 – Seminar 2	Yr3 – S2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Topic discussion • Article presentation • Presentation for diverse audience 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
Thesis PHDD910 – Dissertation Research**	Yr3 – S2 & Yr4 – S1 & S2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual Research Thesis (written) • Individual Presentation and Defense (Oral) 	270 Hours	810 Hours	36
Total			855 Hours	1,980 Hours	120

Methods of Teaching and Students’ Assessment

In order to graduate from the doctoral programme in special education, students should complete 60-credits (120 ECTS) in total and pass the qualifying examinations and dissertation defence.

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Throughout the programme, the students' assessment takes place on various levels. Their subject knowledge is evaluated through examinations, research projects and presentations. During the research process, the ability to formulate appropriate research questions, apply suitable approaches to research design, plan and undertake rigorous data collection and analysis methods, processes and procedures, and present and critically reflect upon findings is evaluated. Independent research and self-management skills and the ability to transfer theory into practice are also taken into account in the overall grading process. Case studies and research projects serve as evaluation base.

The awarded credit points are clustered as follows:

- 30 credits (60 ECTS) in core courses
- 6 credits (12 ECTS) in the Research Apprenticeship
- 6 credits (12 ECTS) in the Doctoral Seminar
- 18 credits (36 ECTS) associated with the Dissertation

The dissertation is assessed by a panel of experts in the relevant field of education. It assesses whether the candidate has added relevant input to the body of knowledge within the specific field of educational research.

3.2.3.3 Doctor of Philosophy in Education: Measurement and Assessment

Intended Learning Outcomes

The Doctor of Philosophy in Education: Measurement and Assessment has been offered since autumn 2019/20. It is described as providing state-of-the-art training in highly advanced techniques and methods of educational measurement and assessment in order to push the frontiers of knowledge locally and globally. The programme is dedicated to advancing the science and practice of educational and psychological measurement.

According to the provided documentation, graduates shall be able to:

- *Demonstrate highly advanced knowledge of educational measurement and assessment and originality in the application of this knowledge, together with an in-depth practical understanding of how research and enquiry are used to create, interpret, and extend knowledge in the field of educational measurement and assessment.*
- *Demonstrate the ability to acquire cognitively intense skills in the areas of educational measurement and assessment to perform independent advanced research and innovate research methodologies and techniques to make progress in expanding the frontiers of educational measurement and assessment knowledge.*
- *Show commitment to life-long learning, collaborative inquiry, and mentoring through engagement in educational measurement and assessment related professional societies, conference participations, and publications.*
- *Demonstrate highly advanced written and oral communication skills and the ability to synthesize and analyze information from various educational measurement and assessment related sources.*
- *Demonstrate the ability to recognize and articulate moral and ethical challenges within the field of educational measurement and assessment and show professional leadership.*

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Educational Units and Courses	Semester	Form of Examination	Workload (hours)		ECTS credits
			Contact Time	Self-Study Time	
Doctor of Philosophy in Education: Measurement and Assessment		(oral, written, term paper etc.)			
DOCM730 - Quantitative Research Methods	Yr1 – S1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 research design reports • Quantitative research proposal 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
PHDMAC710 - Advanced Topics in Generalizability Theory	Yr1 – S1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generalizability Study • Decision Study • Design and Execute a G-Study 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
PHDMAC720 - Advanced Topics in Structural Equation Modelling	Yr1 – S2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fitting measurement models for ordered-categorical indicators • Latent curve modelling • Design & Conduct Study 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
PHDMAC730 - Advanced Topics in Multilevel Modelling	Yr1 – S2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two- and Three-level Hierarchical Linear Modelling • Hierarchical Generalized Linear Modelling • HLM Study 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
PHDMAC740 - Advanced Topics in Rasch Measurement Theory	Yr2 – S1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invariant measurement using Rasch measurement models • Multivariate and mixture distribution Rasch modelling • Rasch modelling for longitudinal data • Design and execute a research study 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
PHDMAC760 - Setting Standards on Educational Assessment	Yr2 – S1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critique of setting standards on the PISA assessment • Critique of setting standards on the TIMSS assessment • Design and execute a standard setting study 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
PHDMAC770 - Advanced Methods for Causal Inference from Data	Yr2 – S1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fitting a causal model for experimental data • Fitting a causal model for observational data 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design and execute a study 			
PHDMAC750 - Advanced Topics in Item Response Theory	Yr2 – S2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fitting a 2-parameter logistic IRT model • Linking Assignment • Polytomous item response theory modelling • Final Research Paper (written) 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
PHDMAC780 - Bayesian Psychometric Modelling	Yr2 – S2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canonical Bayesian Psychometric Modelling • Bayesian approaches to CFA • Design & conduct a Bayesian psychometric model study 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
PHDC760 – Research Apprenticeship	Yr3 – S1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research proposal and ethics submission • Schedule and Plan • Implementation of plan • Data analysis presentation and reflection on management of project • Research Article 	90 Hours	180 Hours	12
PHDMA810– Seminar 1	Yr3 – S1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Topic discussion • Article presentation • Presentation for diverse audience 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
PHDMA820– Seminar 2	Yr3 – S2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Topic discussion • Article presentation • Presentation for diverse audience 	45 Hours	90 Hours	6
Thesis PHDD910 – Dissertation Research**	Yr3 – S2 & Yr4 – S1 & S2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual Research Thesis • Individual Presentation and Defense (Oral) 	270 Hours	810 Hours	36
Total			855 Hours	1,980 Hours	120

Methods of Teaching and Students' Assessment

The learning and teaching includes student-centred work and independent study and group work facilitated by instructors. There shall be ample opportunities for hands-on experience in using a wide range of statistical software packages. Thus, advanced problem solving, analytical reasoning and critiquing of existing and emerging research in the area of educational measurement and assessment are to be fostered. Through the conduct of original independent

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research, students shall display leadership and professional skills and improve their own professional practice.

Knowledge is assessed through a combination of examinations, research projects and presentations. Skills are critically assessed throughout the course by evaluating students' ability to critique, review, reflect and apply what they have learned. Students' ability to demonstrate leadership and reflective practice work are evaluated through a diversity of assessment methods, such as case studies, independent, original research projects, statistical data analysis and practical statistics computer lab sessions.

The awarded credit points are clustered as follows:

- 30 credits (60 ECTS) in core courses
- 6 credits (12 ECTS) in the Research Apprenticeship
- 6 credits (12 ECTS) in the Doctoral Seminar
- 18 credits (36 ECTS) associated with the Dissertation

The dissertation is assessed by a panel of experts in the relevant field of education. It assesses whether the candidate has added relevant input to the body of knowledge within the specific field of educational research.

3.2.4 Expert's Appraisal

The panel commends ECAE on the implementation of high-quality doctoral degree programmes in the realm of special and inclusive education. Not only the stringent curricula, but also the very good student-teacher ratio, infrastructure and technical equipment and the student support services are likely to qualify graduates for a career in academia.

Due to their schedules, students are not only to gain the skill sets mentioned in the Intended Learning Outcomes, but also develop good self-management skills.

The panel recommends to include elements of "Inclusive Education" into the doctoral programme "Special Education".

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Response to ZEvA Report on ECAE Programme Accreditation

Feb 2021

A.Factual Corrections

1. Governance, Management and Profile of the University

Page	Current	Replace with
1	Date of site visit: 14th-15th October 2020 (digital site-visit)	Date of site visit: 18th-19th November 2020 (digital site-visit)
8	sample questionnaires for as well as results of	sample questionnaires as well as results of
9	The college attempts to educate change makers in the realm of education, with emphasize on special and inclusive education.	The college provides research-informed opportunities for learning and professional development of educational professionals and change agents with an emphasis on bringing an enquiry rigour to practice and policy developments in the education sector.
10	The college currently offers an array of graduate programmes in the field of school evaluation and assessment as well as special education. As of today, it is offering one Bachelor's pro-programme in Education, four Post-Graduate Diploma programmes, five Masters' programmes and three doctoral programmes	The college currently offers an array of graduate programs as listed below. As of today, it is offering one Bachelor's pro-programme in Education, four Post-Graduate Diploma programmes, five Masters' programmes and three doctoral programmes
16	Moreover, a joint leadership programme is developed with the Finish university of Jyväskylä.	Please delete
17	Students with special needs are currently not enrolled or employed at ECAE.	Individuals with special needs are currently not enrolled or employed at ECAE.
18	The experts applaud the collaboration with the Special Olympics, which led to the "young performers" workshop, directed at children which are diagnosed on the autism spectrum and con-ducted during seven weeks in 2019.	The experts applaud the collaboration with the Special Olympics, including the "young performers" workshop series, directed at children diagnosed on the autism spectrum and conducted during seven weeks in 2019." This series of community outreach activities was offered every year at ECAE from Fall 2015- Fall 2018, in collaboration with Goals UAE. In Fall 2019, we transitioned this program to collaborate with Special Olympics and look forward to resuming this initiative once it is safe to do so.
20	Moreover, research in cooperation	Moreover, several research reviews and working papers were developed in



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	with the Unesco in the realm of inclusion is currently conducted. A joint report is in the making.	collaboration with UNESCO covering a number of areas of educational policy and practice, including focus on inclusion, planning and curriculum development.
24	The assessment is performed semi-annually to ensure that the reported observations and risks are properly mitigated into the management's actions plans.	The assessment is performed as per the internal audit plan to ensure that the reported observations and risks are properly mitigated into the management's actions plans that are monitored on a semi-annual basis.

2. Assessment of the Study Programs

Page	Current	Replace with
30	The Post Graduate Diploma is a one-year modular programme of 24 credits (48 ECTS) that is aligned with Level 8 of the QF Emirates. It consists of 18 credits (36 ECTS) course completion and an individual research project of 6 credits (12 ECTS). If the research project is not conducted and thus only 18 credits (36 ECTS) are gained, the so called "Post Graduate Certificate" is awarded.	The Post Graduate Diploma is a one-year modular programme of 24 credits (48 ECTS) that is aligned with Level 8 of the QF Emirates. It consists of 18 credits (36 ECTS) course completion and an individual research project of 6 credits (12 ECTS).
30	All Master's programmes consist of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 18 credits (36 ECTS) for the core courses • 9 credits (18 ECTS) for three electives in one of the defined tracks • 9 credits (18 ECTS) for the final research project and thesis or <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9 credits (18 ECTS) for an internship project and report 	All Master's programmes consist of 36 credits (72 ECTS). The Master of Education consists of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 18 credits (36 ECTS) for the core courses • 9 credits (18 ECTS) for three electives in one of the defined tracks • 9 credits (18 ECTS) for the final research project and oral defense or <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9 credits (18 ECTS) for an internship project



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		<p>and report</p> <p>Other Master's programmes consist of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 27 credits (54 ECTS) for the core courses • 9 credits (18 ECTS) for the final research project/thesis and oral defense
34	As was mentioned during the on-site talks and in the documentation, graduates of ECAE's programmes are to be able to lead and transform the current educational system in both schools and eventually higher education, focusing on special and inclusive education	As was mentioned during the on-site talks and in the documentation, graduates of ECAE's programmes are to be able to lead and transform the current educational system in both schools and eventually higher education.
34	The panel would like to commend ECAE on implementing two programmes in Applied Behaviour Analysis, which are the first programmes in the Arabic world who qualify to become Board-Certified Assistant Behavior Analyst® (BCaBA®) and thus target the specific cultural context. This certification is internationally recognized and issued by the Behavior Analyst Certification Board, based in the US. The certification states the level of training and requires an exam to show a minimum level of competence to call oneself a board certified behavior analyst (BCBA).	The panel would like to commend ECAE on implementing two programmes in Applied Behavior Analysis, which are the first and only programmes in the UAE to offer the coursework requirements to qualify students to apply to become Board Certified Assistant Behavior Analysts® (BCaBA®) and Board Certified Behavior Analysts® (BCBA®) and thus target the specific cultural context. These Verified Course Sequences (VCSs) are internationally recognized and issued by the Association for Behavior Analysis International, based in the US. The Behavior Analyst Certification Board states the level of training required to become a BCaBA and BCBA and requires additional supervised fieldwork to be completed as well as the successful completion of an exam to show a minimum level of competence to become board certified.
34	<p><u>3.2.1.1 Postgraduate Diploma in Applied Behaviour Analysis</u></p> <p><u>Intended Learning Outcomes</u></p> <p>The Postgraduate Diploma in Applied Behavior Analysis was introduced in fall 2019. The coursework completed for the PGD in</p>	<p><u>3.2.1.1 Postgraduate Diploma in Applied Behaviour Analysis</u></p> <p><u>Intended Learning Outcomes</u></p> <p>The Postgraduate Diploma in Applied Behavior Analysis was introduced in fall 2019. The coursework completed for the PGD in</p>



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	<p>Applied Behavior Analysis meets the coursework re-quirement to be eligible to sit for the Board-Certified Assistant Behavior Analyst® (BCaBA®) or the Board-Certified Behavior Analyst® (BCBA®) examinations.</p>	<p>Applied Behavior Analysis meets the course-work re-quirement to be eligible to sit for the Board-Certified Assistant Behavior Analyst® (BCaBA®) examinations.</p>
36	<p><u>3.2.1.2 Postgraduate Diploma in Guidance and Counselling</u></p> <p><u>Intended Learning Outcomes</u></p> <p>The focus of the Postgraduate Diploma in Guidance and Counselling program is to prepare school evaluators/inspectors to work with the Department of Education and Knowledge in Abu Dhabi, Knowledge and Human Development Authority in Dubai and the Ministry of Education across the UAE.</p>	<p><u>3.2.1.2 Postgraduate Diploma in Guidance and Counselling</u></p> <p>Intended Learning Outcomes</p> <p>The focus of the Postgraduate Diploma in Guidance and Counselling program is to pre-prepare guidance and counselling professionals to work in schools across the UAE.</p> <p><i>(we apologize for this error on p.2 of Appendix 9.1)</i></p>
38	<p><u>3.2.1.3 Postgraduate Diploma in Education (PGDE)</u></p> <p><u>Intended Learning Outcomes</u></p> <p>The Post Graduate Diploma in Education (PGDE) provides an alternative route into teaching for those whose first degree is not in education. Students who hold a Bachelor’s degree in the relevant fields or who are already employed can obtain a Post Graduate teaching qualification through the general track or by specializing in STEM-tracks.</p>	<p><u>3.2.1.3 Postgraduate Diploma in Education (PGDE)</u></p> <p><u>Intended Learning Outcomes</u></p> <p>The Post Graduate Diploma in Education (PGDE) provides an alternative route into teaching for those whose first degree is not in education. Students who hold a Bachelor’s degree in the relevant fields or who are already employed can obtain a Post Graduate teaching qualification through the general track or by specializing in Science or Mathematics tracks.</p>
38	<p>The PGDE-programme was on-hold for few years as instructed by the CAA who wanted to standardize the structure and requirements for all institutions. Based on new guidelines and standards of CAA, the programme will again be offered starting Spring 2020-2021 with new approved specialization tracks.</p>	<p>The PGDE-programme was on-hold for a few years as instructed by the former leadership at ECAE who were awaiting finalization of the national teaching standards. Based on approval of CAA, the programme will again be offered starting Spring 2020-2021 with new specialization tracks.</p> <p><i>(we apologize for this error on p.2 of Appendix 9.1)</i></p>
45	<p>In the table:</p> <p>Master of Education in Special & Inclusive Education (M.Ed.: SEI)</p>	<p>In the table:</p> <p>Master of Education in Special & Inclusive Education (M.Ed.: SIE)</p>



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<p>53</p>	<p>The awarded credit points are clustered as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 24 ECTS in the degree-required research courses • 36 ECTS in the disciplinary concentration courses • 12 ECTS in the research apprenticeship • 12 ECTS in the doctoral seminar • 18 credits (36 ECTS) associated with the dissertation 	<p>The awarded credit points are clustered as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12 credits (24 ECTS) in the degree-required research courses • 18 credits (36 ECTS) in the disciplinary concentration courses • 6 credits (12 ECTS) in the research apprenticeship • 6 credits (12 ECTS) in the doctoral seminar • 18 credits (36 ECTS) associated with the dissertation
<p>56</p>	<p>Throughout the programme, the students' assessment takes place on various levels. Their subject knowledge is evaluated through examinations, research projects and presentations. During the research process, the ability to critically reflect upon findings, applying new approaches to research designs is evaluated. Independent research and self-management skills and the ability to transfer theory into practice are also taken into account in the overall grading process. Case studies and research projects serve as evaluation base.</p>	<p>Throughout the programme, the students' assessment takes place on various levels. Their subject knowledge is evaluated through examinations, research projects and presentations. During the research process, the ability to formulate appropriate research questions, apply suitable approaches to research design, plan and undertake rigorous data collection and analysis methods, processes and procedures, and present and critically reflect upon findings is evaluated. Independent research and self-management skills and the ability to transfer theory into practice are also taken into account in the overall grading process. Case studies and research projects serve as evaluation base.</p> <p>The awarded credit points are clustered as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30 credits (60 ECTS) in core courses • 6 credits (12 ECTS) in the Research Apprenticeship • 6 credits (12 ECTS) in the Doctoral Seminar • 18 credits (36 ECTS) associated with the Dissertation



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		<p>The dissertation is assessed by a panel of experts in the relevant field of education. It assesses whether the candidate has added relevant input to the body of knowledge within the specific field of educational research.</p> <p>Please add the above to ensure consistency with p.53</p>
58	<p>Knowledge is assessed through a combination of examinations, research projects and presentations. Skills are critically assessed throughout the course by evaluating students' ability to critique, review, reflect and apply what they have learned. Students' ability to demonstrate leadership and reflective practice work are evaluated through a diversity of assessment methods, such as case studies, independent, original research projects, statistical data analysis and practical statistics computer lab sessions.</p>	<p>Knowledge is assessed through a combination of examinations, research projects and presentations. Skills are critically assessed throughout the course by evaluating students' ability to critique, review, reflect and apply what they have learned. Students' ability to demonstrate leadership and reflective practice work are evaluated through a diversity of assessment methods, such as case studies, independent, original research projects, statistical data analysis and practical statistics computer lab sessions.</p> <p>The awarded credit points are clustered as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30 credits (60 ECTS) in core courses • 6 credits (12 ECTS) in the Research Apprenticeship • 6 credits (12 ECTS) in the Doctoral Seminar • 18 credits (36 ECTS) associated with the Dissertation <p>The dissertation is assessed by a panel of experts in the relevant field of education. It assesses whether the candidate has added relevant input to the body of knowledge within the specific field of educational research.</p> <p>Please add the above to ensure consistency with p.53</p>



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B. Response to Recommendations

ECAE would like to thank the Expert Panel for providing its valuable recommendations. ECAE's responses to the Expert Panel's recommendations are outlined below.

General Recommendations

Teaching Content

Panel Recommendation 1: Including elements of Design Thinking.

ECAE Response: As part of the ongoing development of ECAE's graduate programs and as part of our commitment to developing innovative approaches to educational practice we shall critically consider Design Thinking and its integration within our programs.

Internationalization

Panel Recommendation 1: Intensifying marketing activities to attract more international students:

- *Scholarships for incoming students might be offered.*
- *Possibly reserving a certain share of places for study programmes for international students.*
- *Offering housing and a programme during the day for incoming students.*
- *Informing about possible cultural differences for interested persons on the website and implement an on-arrival-training for incoming students.*
- *Including depictions of appropriate dress codes for expats in the student handbook.*
- *Offering study trips or visits abroad for a duration of several weeks. These visits might for example take place at partner institutions abroad and while schools in the hosting country are opened. School visits might take place in pairs.*

ECAE Response: ECAE also plans to increase the number of international students to our Graduate programs. We shall intensify marketing activities to international students, clarify reservation of places for international students in relevant public documents and advertising, and publicize our Graduate Tuition Fee Waiver policy for international students. ECAE shall ensure that international students are provided the required support before and upon joining the programmes. All required information will be published on the website, in handbooks and catalogs and during the orientation week. In addition, ECAE is planning to develop student exchange programs/visits with our partners post Covid-19 pandemic.

Panel Recommendation 2: Increase international hires, especially for the position of full professors. National and international applicants should be considered equally in the application process.

ECAE Response: ECAE's faculty body is international in its composition. We plan to continue

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recruiting from a global academic field in order to attract world class international educational researchers and teachers to ECAE. We also take the importance of building national capacity in the UAE in the academic field seriously; we therefore balance our focus on international recruitment with continuous search for Emirati academics who are leading or promising educational researchers and teachers.

Panel Recommendation 3: *Extending staff mobility programmes for a longer duration.*

ECAE Response: Our current international exchange programs are related to both teaching and research but they are short in duration. Nevertheless, these schemes offer important opportunities for the exchange of ideas and the fostering of international links and collaboration. We plan to extend the duration of these programs to a full semester in length, if financial resources allow, so as to enable deeper and more extensive collaborations between ECAE and international research and teaching institutions.

Panel Recommendation 4: *Establishing an International Office, promotion advice and practical support for students and staff interested in outgoing mobility and offering integrative services for incoming students.*

ECAE Response: In order to focus ECAE's coordination and expansion of our international collaborations, partnerships and schemes, we plan to establish an International office:

a. as a visible hub for ECAE to:

- i.* administer our various schemes and scholarships
- ii.* to support ongoing developments of our international partnerships

b. as a focal point of support for our international students to:

- i.* assist in their pre-arrival visa and approvals
- ii.* assist with housing and accommodation matters
- iii.* provide orientations to the UAE and Abu Dhabi on arrival
- iv.* be a center of advice, counselling and access to other ECAE, local and national services as required

Equal Opportunities

Panel Recommendation:

- *Employing more women as full professors.*
- *Granting equal amounts of time to all genders for parental leave.*

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- *Including information on the possibility to provide students with special needs with equal learning opportunities and the availability of funds dedicated to this end on the website.*
- *Explaining the term “people of determination” on the website.*
- *Appointing an “Equal Opportunities Officer” who is in charge of meeting the needs of all members of ECAE and equip everyone with equal working conditions and learning opportunities. This position might also be communicated on the website.*

ECAE Response: As part of ECAE’s commitment to gender equality we plan to focus on employing qualified and experienced women as full professors through our external recruitment and internal promotion processes. As for paternal leave, it is governed by the legal framework currently in force in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi, and ECAE does not have the authority to amend it. In addition, with launching the new website, ECAE shall ensure clarifying the term “People of Determination” and providing detailed information on the opportunities and all kinds of support that it offers to them. As for appointing “Equal Opportunities Officer”, the Head of Human Resources and the Deputy Vice Chancellor-Academic shall explore the possibility of assigning this role to existing employee/s.

Research

Panel Recommendation: *Establishing a research journal of ECAE as a platform for faculty, students and alumni to publish research findings*

ECAE Response: Establishing an in-house research journal will open up additional opportunities for increasing the visibility of ECAE’s educational research, enhancing scope for national and international research networking for faculty, students and alumni, introduce new research capacity-building opportunities related to journal management and editing, and further enhance the status of the College as a research institution.

Study Programmes

Panel Recommendation 1: *Strengthening the practical experience in the curricula, especially in the Post-Graduate Diploma and the Masters’ programme in Education. Students who are unemployed shall complete mandatory internships.*

ECAE Response: We plan to review and restructure our Post-Graduate Diploma and Masters programs to ensure there are (a) explicit bridging between educational theory and practice, (b) clearly structured opportunities for students to reflect on their professional experience and share their professional expertise, (c) professional placements in schools for students without experience or current employment to gain essential professional practical experience, and (d) a research orientation in our programs that supports students use research to inform practice especially in contexts of professional challenge.

Panel Recommendation 2: *Communicating the possibility to participate the “critical support course” to students of all levels.*

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ECAE Response: ECAE’s provision of critical learning support is under continuous review. Coordination between the Library and Learning Support Hub and Faculty is developing in the delivery of current modes of support and in the development of new provisions. ECAE is currently building on current learning support provision by designing learning support in Critical Thinking Skills, Study Skills and English for Academic Purposes for (a) applicants to any of our programs who fall below ECAE’s admissions requirements and (b) all students currently enrolled on ECAE programs at any stage of their studies.

Communication of these Learning Support opportunities will be regular and repeated and include the following: website, graduate catalogue, student handbook, program materials such as program booklets and assignment sheets, and direct communications with students from the Library and Learning Support Hub team, academic advisers and the academic support team.

Panel Recommendation 3:

- *Including more elements of practical experience and their conscious reflection into the curriculum of the Master of Education, regardless of the employment status of students.*
- *Including elements of “Inclusive Education” into the doctoral programme “Special Education”.*
- **ECAE Response:** As part of our continuous review of our programs we shall include more elements related to practical experience and reflection on that experience within our masters programs. We believe our graduate programs at Diploma and Masters levels provide rich contexts for building professional communities of practice based on individual and collective reflection on and sharing of practice and policy, and exchange among students of practice and policy know-how and expertise, including research-informed practice innovations developed through participation on ECAE programs.
- We shall also ensure that “Inclusive Education is an important element of the “Special Education” doctoral program.

Infrastructure

Panel Recommendation 1: *In order to sharpen the profile of ECAE as unique and forward-thinking in the Middle Eastern Region, the panel recommends to:*

- *Establishing a “future learning lab” in the library at the visitors’ disposal, for example with use of comfortable furniture and possibilities to use digital media for group work*

In order to sharpen the profile of ECAE as a unique and progressive education institution in the Middle Eastern Region, the panel recommends

- *establishing an open “future learning lab” in the library as a comfortable work-space which offers digital media for group working exercises,*
- *establishing a “virtual reality lab”, equipped with state-of-the-art-technology to enhance research and learning opportunities,*
- *establishing a “school of design thinking” (as for example in California, Malaysia or South Africa)*

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ECAE Response: ECAE has drawn up plans to establish a state-of-the-art all-age Learning and Innovation Space located in the library for researchers, policy makers, teachers, students and the community at large. The objectives of the Learning and Innovation Space are as follows:

- Construct a contemporary research and community library space and resource that meets the lifelong learning needs of current and future users and members.
- Create a learning space for members to collaborate and develop research and/or innovation projects.
- Establish a connectivity hub where members can gather to optimize potential for creativity, cultivation of imagination, communication, innovation and experimentation
- Provide access to a wide and diverse range of reading and information resources, encourage habits of good reading, and enhance library-based research skills.
- Develop a library and learning space that is open and easily accessible to the public and community and to professionals in the education policy, practice and research fields.
- Develop one-to-one and group study support for all groups of ECAE students in the Learning Support Hub

In addition, and as part of these plans, we shall consider establishing a “virtual reality lab” equipped with state-of-the-art technology to enhance research and learning opportunities. We shall also consider a “school of design thinking” as this relates to development of innovative educational practices.

Panel Recommendation 2: *Regarding the planned open repository of ECAE material through YouTube, the panel highly encourages the college to pursue the path of open access and publicly shared knowledge. Thus, it recommends including podcasts of lectures into the used formats.*

- *Including podcasts into the open repository.*
- *Hiring additional IT-staff to enable them to develop new technologies like chatbots for recurring tasks.*
- *Introducing new tasks to the curriculum focusing on IT-competencies.*

ECAE Response: ECAE is committed opening up public learning opportunities for the community and world at large by developing an open learning repository managed by the Library and Learning Support Hub and supported by faculty and IT teams. We plan to include recordings of lectures and workshops along with other resources developed by ECAE students and faculty within and beyond the formal structures of our Graduate programs. We also plan to consider current capacity within the IT Department for developing new technologies like chatbots for recurring tasks. Related to this, and as part of Education and Technology strands to our programs, we plan to introduce new tasks focused on IT-competences.

Quality Assurance

Panel Recommendation: Making the anonymized qualitative and quantitative results of course evaluations available to the participants of the respective classes.

ECAE Response: As part of further extending student participation and influence in decision-making at ECAE, we plan to develop procedures for making relevant sections of QA questionnaire responses available to students as a basis for their input and suggestions for further improving pedagogy and the learning environment at ECAE.

Transparency and Public Information

Panel Recommendation:

- *The current YouTube-channel might benefit from a more focused and structured appearance. Additionally, further social media-channels might be used to enhance the presence of ECAE, such as Facebook or Instagram.*
- *Indicating on the website that all study programmes are primarily directed at graduate students who hold working positions.*
- *Emphasizing the inclusive dimension of working and studying at ECAE. It might be useful to communicate on the website that equal opportunities can be made available anytime.*
- *Emphasizing the fluent and elaborate English skills of the teaching staff in the website.*
- *Advertising the success of the study programmes not exclusively in terms of employability of its' students, but also taking the job promotion within their current employment situation into account.*

ECAE Response: We shall review our online presence by ensuring our YouTube channel, Facebook and Instagram pages are more focused and structured to improve transparency and public information with regard to the College, our programs and our services.

We shall also review the website and establish clarity with reference to the following messages:

- all ECAE programs are primarily directed at graduate students who hold working positions;
- as part of our commitment to equal opportunities we optimise access and participation through scheduling programs not to coincide with work schedules wherever possible and by offering programs on a blended delivery model.
- All our programs are taught by faculty who possess fluent and sophisticated advanced English language skills appropriate to supporting learning at the graduate level.
- ECAE's programs boost students employment and promotion prospects.