

**Report on the Institutional Accreditation  
of the Emirates College for Advanced Education**



**Reference Number I-1829-1**

**12th Meeting of the ZEvA Commission on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2021**

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**Hanover, 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2021**

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

### **1. Decision of the ZEvA Commission (23<sup>rd</sup> 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.*

## **2. Final Vote of the Expert Panel**

### **2.1 General Aspects**

#### 2.1.1 General Recommendations:

##### Internationalization

The panel recommends:

- Formalizing existing and developing international co-operations through mutually signed Memorandums of Understanding.
- Intensifying marketing activities to attract more international students.
  - Scholarships for incoming students might be offered.
  - A certain share of places for study programmes might be reserved for international students. This percentage might be mentioned in the respective public documents.
- Increase international hires, especially for the position of full professors. National and international applicants should be considered equally in the application process.
- Extending staff mobility programmes for a longer duration.
- Establishing an International Office, promotion advice and practical support for students and staff interested in outgoing mobility and offering integrative services for incoming students.
- Issuing Diploma Supplements in line with the formal requirements of the European Higher Education Area

##### Teaching faculty

The panel recommends:

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

##### Teaching and assessment

The panel recommends:

- Introducing elements of sociology of education and sociology of knowledge, anthropology and philosophy to the curriculum if deemed appropriate.
- Including more oral examinations, since they monitor key competencies of teachers.

In conclusion, internationalization and a growth in student numbers are the next target areas of ECAE. The panel finds that ECAE meets a lot of central requirements of the Bologna area regarding quality assurance, the formulation of Intended Learning Outcomes, and transparency. The dynamic and effective development of ECAE will certainly continue in the years to come.

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

*2 Final Vote of the Expert Panel*

### 2.1.2 Recommendation to the ZEvA Commission:

The expert group recommends the institutional accreditation of the Emirates College for Advanced Education for the duration of six years without conditions.

## **II. Evaluation Report of the Expert Panel**

### **Introduction: Purpose, Design and Context of the Accreditation Procedure**

It is the purpose of the institutional accreditation procedure to assess the quality of the internal quality management implemented by the Emirates College for Advanced Education (ECAE), Abu Dhabi/United Arab Emirates, against international standards. A positive accreditation decision certifies that the ECAE has developed and implemented an encompassing system of quality goals, quality assurance procedures and continuous quality enhancement. It also takes into account the supporting infrastructure, personnel in teaching, leadership and administration as well as the overall academic context (research, internationalization, cooperative relationships etc.).

The assessment is based on the assessment framework laid out in the “ZEVA 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).

For the purpose of assessment, 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 selected study programmes, the self-report included an appendix 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, sample questionnaires as well as results of course evaluations. All documents were submitted in English.

For the purpose of the assessment, ZEVA assembled a panel of five external experts. 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 board, the Head of Institutional Research and Effectiveness, the library and campus facilities management, 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 for them to arrive at a well-grounded judgment. A further site visit in Abu Dhabi was therefore not considered necessary.

This report is based on the experts’ assessment of the self-report submitted by the university and on the outcomes of the virtual talks. It will serve as a basis for the ZEVA Commission to decide on the institutional accreditation of ECAE.

In the case of a positive accreditation decision, 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.



*II Evaluation Report of the Expert Panel*

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

The experts would like to thank all faculty, staff, students and graduates of ECAE for the open and constructive atmosphere during the digital talks.

## **1. 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 programmes in the field of school evaluation and assessment as well as special education. 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 accreditation of the mentioned programmes 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.



II Evaluation Report of the Expert Panel

1 Governance, Management and Profile of the University

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

Expert's Appraisal

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" on a Bachelor's level.

1.1.1 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 principles:

- **Respect** – *We are 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*
  - *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. Moreover, 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

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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

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central university level, including

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

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*

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*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.

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.

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. Overall, the financial resources seem to be very adequate, 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.

1.1.2 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

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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.

Several international co-operations were mentioned during the digital talks. For instance, faculty exchange with the Arizona State University (USA) and the Nanyang Technical University (Singapore) took place. Moreover, international external lecturers from the UK, Ireland and the US held classes in Abu Dhabi. 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. In addition to that, a co-operation with the Mohammed Bin Rashid Center for Special Education operated by The New England Center for Children (MRC/NECC) is in place.

As regards to 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 came to the UAE for job purposes and were already based in Abu Dhabi prior to their studies. During the interviews, some students also reported that they had gained preceding academic degrees in other countries, such as Australia.

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.

*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.

With regard to developing international contacts, the panel recommends formalizing the co-operations through mutually signed Memorandums of Understanding.

In order to attract more international students, the experts recommend intensifying existing marketing activities. Additionally, scholarships might be offered to incoming students which could contribute to ECAE's international visibility.

If a growing share of international students of the total student body is a strategic goal, the panel highly recommends revising the criteria for the selection of students. A certain share of places for study programmes might be reserved for international students. This percentage might be mentioned in the respective public documents.

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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.

Moreover, issuing a Diploma Supplement along with graduation certificates, might support internationalization efforts by facilitating international recognition of credits and degrees and is hence recommended.

### 1.1.3 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.

Students or employees with special needs are currently not enrolled or employed at ECAE.

#### 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.

With regards to 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



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from the respective department is assured. Teaching staff possessing experience with special needs students is available.

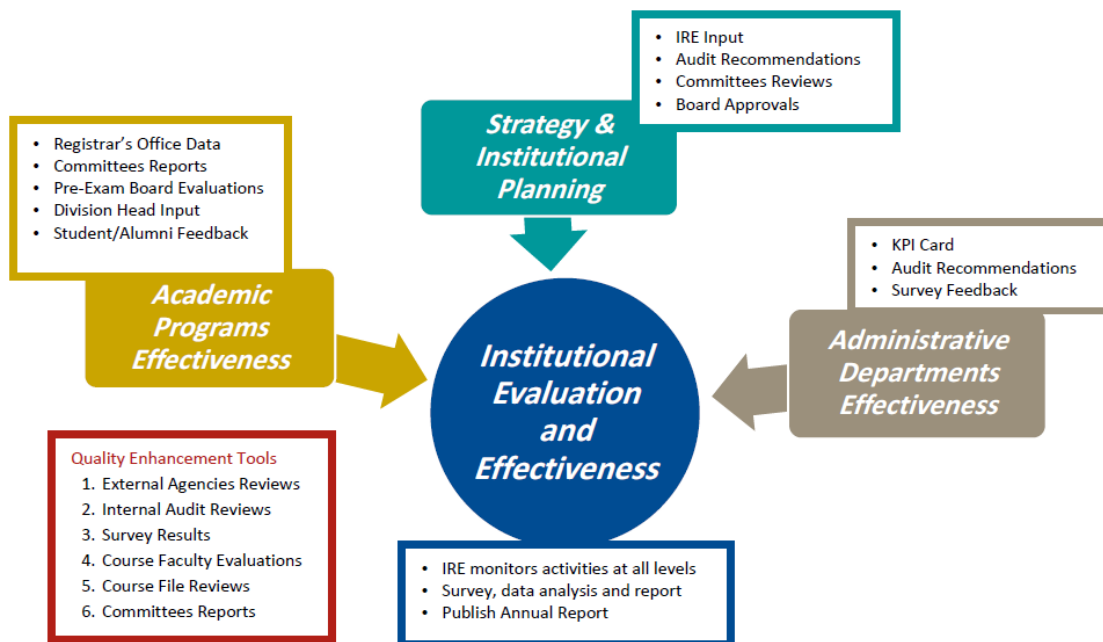


## 2. Assessment of the Internal Quality Assurance System

### 2.1 Internal Quality Assurance

The self-report and the digital talks provided a sound basis for the experts to assess the internal quality assurance system of the Emirates College for Advanced Education.

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 program, 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.

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*2 Assessment of the Internal Quality Assurance System*

- Internal Audit Office (IAO); all academic programs are assessed by the Office of Internal Audit to gauge the risks associated with programs operations, resources, policies and procedures. The assessment is performed semi-annually to ensure that the reported observations and risks are properly mitigated into the management's actions plans.
- 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 based on 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.

#### 2.1.1 Implementation of New Study Programmes

A formalized and transparent process for the implementation of new study programs is in place. A proposal for a new study programme has to be developed by teaching faculty members. The proposal should contain benchmarking with other national and international programmes in the area of study, enrolment projections, possible employment perspectives, funding possibilities and alignment of the study content with ECAE’s mission and vision as well as with national educational standards. The proposal is then submitted to the respective division head.

The proposal has to be approved by the division head, the Graduate Studies Sub-Committee, the Academic Programs and Curriculum Committee, the Vice Chancellor and finally to the Board of Trustees.

Given the approval of the mentioned stakeholders, a final programme proposal and self-report is prepared by the teaching faculty and IRE. Eventually, the documents are submitted to the Department of Knowledge and Education in Abu Dhabi and to the Commission for Academic Accreditation at the Ministry of Education in the United Arab Emirates.

#### 2.1.2 Evaluation of Administrative Effectiveness

In addition to the mechanisms of internal and external quality assurance on academic matters mentioned above, the effectiveness of all non-academic units of ECAE is monitored as well. Non-academic units include, for instance, the office of the Vice Chancellor, the Marketing and

Communications Unit, the Information Technology Department, the Human Resources and Facilities Unit, the Academic Support and the Continuing Education Centre.

Their efficiency is evaluated against Key Performance Indicators, which are designed in line with the college's vision and mission. The Strategy and Business Development Department is, in the first place, responsible for the monitoring of internal organizational processes. Internal Audits, assessing the implementation of Action Plans into the operations, resources and policies of all administrative units, are conducted semi-annually. Moreover, the compliance with national and international standards is evaluated.

The results delivered by the quality assurance tools, such as surveys amongst different stakeholders and actions plan are also taken into consideration. Moreover, all administrative units also undergo external evaluation by the Abu Dhabi Department of Knowledge and the national Commission for Academic Accreditation during re-licensure, accreditation, or renewal of accreditation cycles.

### 2.1.3 Individual performance

The performance of teaching and administrative staff is evaluated on an individual basis.

The achievement of the teaching faculty is assessed in the following areas:

- Teaching and educational activities,
- Research,
- Service to the college, profession and community.

The division heads are in charge of the assessment of the individual teachers' performance. Student evaluations and input from the programme and committee chairs serve as a foundation for the performance monitoring. The Deputy Vice Rector – Academic moderates this process across all faculties.

The performance of the administrative staff measured against

- Departmental operational goals,
- ECAE core competencies (as defined in the Strategic Plan),
- General job-specific competencies.

The administrative staff has to provide information about meeting the required goals and competencies as formulated in the strategic plan and action plans. They are evaluated by their department heads and the respective Deputy Vice Chancellor will act as a moderator. The heads of the administrative departments are evaluated by the Deputy Vice Chancellor – Support Services.

The self-report provided an overview on ECAE's offerings, statistics and developments in the currently implemented study programmes. At the expert's request, ECAE provided the panel with samples from nine educational programmes, covering the range of Post-Graduate Diploma programmes, Master programmes and PhD programmes. The samples were

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composed of weekly working materials, such as papers and power point presentations, of assessments and of course catalogues. These included information on the intended learning outcomes, course assessment, grading criteria, course schedule, out of class-assignments, reading requirements, as well as the alignment of the course content to the intended learning outcomes. Moreover, external review evaluation sheets of the respective courses were included in the documentation.

According to the documentation, each study programme has defined goals and intended learning outcomes.

Moreover, documents on the regular internal assessment of the achievement of the self-set standards were provided. The following mechanisms are in place:

- External programme accreditation through the national accrediting bodies.
- Evaluation of the students' feedback.
- External course assessment of individual courses, taking into consideration:
  - Quality of the course syllabus,
  - Coverage of the syllabus over the course,
  - Course structure and content,
  - Effectiveness of the assessment methods,
  - Satisfaction with the general educational experience.
- alumni survey, assessing the overall satisfaction of students with the educational experience.
- Employer survey, assessing the satisfaction of the employers with the skill set of graduates.
- Annual Evaluation of the students' retention or progression rates.

Generally, teachers and students expressed satisfaction with the teaching and assessment methods implemented at ECAE. Thanks to the high ratio of teachers to students, it appears that in-depth discussions in class are possible and thorough feedback on the students' performance is delivered. The general class size ranges approximately from three to twenty students. Elements of research-based learning is applied in all study programmes.

*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. Teachers regularly inquired about their 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 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.

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.

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

## 2.2 Study Programmes

In all programmes, the following elements have been implemented, modelled on some fundamental tools and principles applied throughout the European higher education area:

- A clear definition of the study programmes’ profile,
- A clear definition of the study programmes’ aims,
- An encompassing development of intended learning outcomes (ILOs) on the programme level,
- Referencing the Qualification Framework of the UAE to the European Qualification Framework,

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- A matrix-based matching of the study programmes' ILOs to the respective course learning outcome,
- Clear-cut and published regulations on the student life cycle, including
  - a student's handbook, providing information on students' admission and enrolment, transfer or academic achievements, students' assessment, the documentation of gained qualifications and the graduation diploma,
  - a graduate handbook,
  - a doctoral dissertation handbook,
  - a campus coordination manual,
  - a quality assurance manual.

A variety of quality insurance instruments is regularly applied, including course evaluation, general satisfaction surveys as well as graduate surveys. All programmes are continuously monitored and revised.

During the interviews, students expressed a high level of satisfaction with the teaching methods and confirmed that their feedback and suggestions were always taken seriously. The shift to e-learning due to the pandemic was described as well-organized and monitored by the responsible units of ECAE.

### Experts' Appraisal

The expert panel concludes that the formulated intended learning outcomes are coherent and in line with the intended qualification level. As laid out in the given documentation, there is a constructive alignment of the final degrees with the European Qualification Framework.

In order to widen the students' comprehension of the field of inclusive pedagogy and the role of pedagogues, the panel would like to suggest the introduction of elements of sociology of education, anthropology and philosophy to the curriculum if deemed appropriate.

The panel appreciates the detailed organization of the student-life cycle throughout and addresses all relevant stakeholders equally. The applied assessment methods are competency-oriented and a student-centred approach is taken when designing the study programmes. The formal approval of the blended learning concept will ensure the quality of teaching and learning at ECAE, even under unusual circumstances.

The variety of assessment methods enables the monitoring of different competencies such as writing skills, research skills and deduct potential outcomes and solutions. Oral and communicative skills are examined through presentations which are held individually or as a group. Nonetheless, the panel recommends including more oral examinations into the curriculum, especially since they monitor key competencies demanded from teachers.

## **2.3 Resources and Learning Environment**

### **2.3.1 Infrastructure**

As mentioned above, the panel was unable to visit the campus in Abu Dhabi due to travel

restrictions. 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 shared with the surrounding community such as schools.

### 2.3.2 Library

A central library is housed at the ECAE campus in Abu Dhabi. It is usually open from Sunday to Thursday from 8am-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 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.

On demand, students are provided with laptops or tablets. Moreover, software licenses such as Grammarly and SPSS are available to the students. 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. 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.

#### 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.

At the beginning of each academic year, students are put in touch with an academic advisor, who is part of the teaching body. 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.

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.

An alumni service gives ECAE graduates the opportunity to network with fellow alumni. During the interviews, former students mentioned that ECAE sends 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.

#### Experts' Appraisal

The experts are very impressed how the Emirates College for Advanced Education has developed its infrastructure within roughly only about thirteen years.

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 supportive services both in formal evaluation and during the online talks with the experts.

## 2.4 **Teaching Staff**

### 2.4.1 Recruitment

ECAE has described encompassing policies, transparent processes and adequate measures for recruitment, continuous assessment and development of academic teaching staff. The recruitment process is regulated by the 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, work conditions and termination, etc are aligned with HRA regulations. The estimated 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 policies, UAE-nationals and people with special needs are to be preferred in the recruitment process.

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.

#### 2.4.2 Staff development

Teaching Quality Assurance is conducted regularly. 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

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according to ECAEs' regulations as laid out in the respective policy. A financial reward can be granted as per the respective policies.

#### 2.4.3 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 hour): 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 are 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.

The research office offers at least once a year 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. 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, a project with the ministry of education is run to develop a wellness programme. Moreover, research in cooperation with Ethiad Airways is conducted in order to improve the technical instructions of the airline.

#### 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 identification with ECAE and the commitment of the national and international teaching staff was 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 to consider widening the staff mobility programmes for a longer duration, such as a research semester abroad, if internationalization



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is a key priority for the college.

### III. Appendix

#### 1. Statement of the University in Response to the Expert Report

## A. Factual Corrections

### 1. Governance, Management and Profile of the University

Page	Current	Replace with
8	with the specific aim educate	with the specific aim to educate
9	in Ajman, a city in the northern part of the UAE.	in Ajman, an Emirate in the northern part of the UAE.
10	These general strategic aims have been developed in a joint strategic process together with the Abu Dhabi Department of Knowledge and Education in order to be in line with the “Abu Dhabi Government Vision 2030”	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”
13	The provision and allocation of finances is governed by the Ministry of Education.	The provision and allocation of finances is governed by the General Secretariat of the Executive Council (GSEC) through the Department of Finance (DoF)
13	dedicates roughly 50% of working hours to research activities.	dedicates roughly 40% of working hours to research activities.
14	a co-operation with the New England Centre of Children is in place.	a co-operation with the Mohammed Bin Rashid Center for Special Education operated by The New England Center for Children (MRC/NECC)
14	since the majority of them are already working part-time.	since the majority of them are already working full-time.
15	These numbers reflect the local labor market, in which women tend to become teachers in inclusive institutions.	These numbers reflect the local labor market, in which women tend to become teachers in various education institutions including inclusive institutions.

### 2. Assessment of the Internal Quality Assurance System

Page	Current	Replace with
19	Moreover, all administrative units also undergo regular external evaluation by the Abu Dhabi Department of Knowledge and the national Commission for Academic Accreditation	Moreover, all administrative units also undergo external evaluation by the Abu Dhabi Department of Knowledge and the national Commission for Academic Accreditation during re-licensure, accreditation, or renewal of accreditation cycles.
19	The administrative staff has to provide	The administrative staff has to provide

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1 Statement of the University in Response to the Expert Report

	information about meeting the required goals and competencies as formulated in the strategic plan and action plans. The heads of the respective departments and the Deputy Vice Rector – Support Services evaluate the individual performances. This process is moderated by the Continuing Education Centre.	information about meeting the required goals and competencies as formulated in the strategic plan and action plans. They are evaluated by their department heads and the respective Deputy Vice Chancellor will act as a moderator. The heads of the administrative departments are evaluated by the Deputy Vice Chancellor – Support Services.
20	According to the documentation, each study programme has a defined vision, mission, aim and intended learning outcomes.	According to the documentation, each study programme has defined goals and intended learning outcomes.
25	Promotion is only granted upon application of the candidate according to ECAEs' regulations as laid out in the respective policy. In case of special merit, a financial reward can be granted by the vice chancellor.	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.
26	The workload is differentiated as follows: - 40% (16 hours): teaching, contact hours, academic hours - 50% (20 hours): research - 10% (4 hour): administrative tasks, community outreach	The workload is differentiated as follows: - 50% (20 hours): teaching, contact hours, academic hours - 40% (16 hours): research - 10% (4 hour): administrative tasks, community outreach

## 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

#### Internationalization

**Panel Recommendation 1:** *Formalizing existing and developing international co-operations through mutually signed Memorandums of Understanding.*

**ECAE Response:** As part of ECAE's internationalization plans we are developing collaborations with international universities in order to optimize the reach and impact of our research and to enhance our teaching activity in the field of education. We are in the process of formalizing our links with The Open University, England and with EduCluster (part of Jyväskylä University), Finland through mutually signed Memoranda of Understanding. The MoU with EduCluster has been signed by both parties. These two aforementioned HEIs, together with Glasgow University, Scotland and the National institute of Education, Singapore have collaborated as part of ECAE's proposal to the MoE laying out plans for a 5-year program of national pedagogic reform - the National Program for Promoting Metacognition in UAE. This exemplifies ECAE's strategy of building international expertise and relationships into our partnership collaboration with the Ministry of Education, UAE.

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1 Statement of the University in Response to the Expert Report

**Panel Recommendation 2:** *Intensifying marketing activities to attract more international students:*

- *Scholarships for incoming students might be offered.*
- *A certain share of places for study programmes might be reserved for international students. This percentage might be mentioned in the respective public documents.*

**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 PhD Fellowship and Scholarship schemes for international students.

**Panel Recommendation 3:** *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 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 4:** *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 5:** *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:

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

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

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- 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*

**Panel Recommendation 6:** *Issuing Diploma Supplements in line with the formal requirements of the European Higher Education Area*

**ECAE Response:** We plan to increase international recognition for credits and degrees awarded by ECAE. We shall explore possibilities such as issuing Diploma Supplements and advertise these in our public documents and media as and when applicable.

## **Teaching faculty**

**Panel Recommendation:**

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

**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.

## **Teaching and Assessment**

**Panel Recommendation 1:** *Introducing elements of sociology of education and sociology of knowledge, anthropology and philosophy to the curriculum if deemed appropriate.*

**ECAE Response:** ECAE keeps our programs under continuous review with regard to pedagogy, assessment and curriculum. We shall examine scope for building in more explicit opportunities for students to engage with matters related to the sociology of knowledge and the sociology and philosophy of education in our programs.

**Panel Recommendation 2:** *Including more oral examinations, since they monitor key competencies of teachers.*

**ECAE Response:** ECAE shall consider the inclusion of more oral examinations where the assessment of practical teaching and presentational skills and competences are reflected in a program's learning objectives.