



Executive Summary
Renewal of Licensure
Fatima College of Health Sciences
Abu Dhabi

September 22 – 25, 2014

An External Review Team (hereafter ERT) visited Fatima College of Health Sciences (FCHS) from 22 to 25 of September 2014 to evaluate the Application for Renewal of Licensure (hereafter the Self-Study). The exit interview was held on September 24, 2014. The last day of the review (25th of September) was allocated to visit the two campuses in Western Region and Ajman..

Founded in 2006, FCHS is a unit of the Institute of Applied Technology (IAT) and under the broader auspices of the Abu Dhabi Center for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (ACTVET). The College is an entity of the Abu Dhabi government. A number of administrative functions are managed through IAT including finance, IT, QA, and human resources. FCHS operates four campuses in Abu Dhabi, Al Ain, Western Region, and Ajman. A new campus in Morocco, outside UAE, was initiated to bridge female students from Higher Diploma to Baccalaureate.

FCHS received Initial Licensure through the Commission in 2009. At that time the degree offerings were limited to nursing programs offered in conjunction with Griffith University in Australia. Since Initial Licensure, FCHS has sought accreditation of additional programs in the health sciences, some of which are offered in partnership with Monash University in Australia. These programs include the Bachelor of Pharmacy, the Bachelor of Physiotherapy, the Bachelor of Medical Imaging, and the Bachelor of Emergency Health (Paramedics). FCHS continues its Bachelor of Nursing Program in partnership with Griffiths University, although it is phasing out that contract. Importantly, the offering in nursing includes a bridging program enabling individuals with an RN certificate and/or diploma to complete the BSN. The institution also offers Higher Diploma programs in Pharmacy, Physiotherapy, Radiography, and Emergency Health. As the name implies, Fatima College of Health Science does not offer any programs outside of health services.

The total number of students enrolled in FCHS was 712 at the date of the visit. In Fall 2013, 67% of the students were Emirati, with 5% from the GCC and another 27% designated as “other Arab”. The total number of full-time faculty members in the College during Fall 2014 is 63, of which 18 are with terminal degree holders.

It is clear that FCHS is making significant progress in its institutional journey as it has moved into new facilities in Abu Dhabi, is working out the role that it has within the IAT and ACTVET structures of Abu Dhabi, and is expanding its programs. The termination of the contract with

Griffiths University will mean that nursing degrees will be those of Fatima and not Griffiths. That will enable the College to better align their degrees with the needs of the UAE. On the whole, however, the documentation indicates that FCHS is still very much a work in progress, one that does not yet have the maturity expected of institutions applying for Re-Licensure.

The *Self-Study* is comprehensive only in the sense that nearly all sections of the *Standards* are addressed; it is disappointing with regard to the documentation provided, analysis is generally weak and robust self-assessment mostly absent. This is in large part a reflection of the weaknesses in institutional research and effectiveness at the FCHS. Moreover, several key areas including student services, research and community engagement are not fully developed.

Re-licensure is based on the degree to which an institution has fulfilled the promise of initial licensure and is now fully operational in light of the expectations of the *Standards*.

The main areas of concern are as follows:

- Relationship with CAA: Programs should not be launched prior to obtaining initial accreditation, and campuses should not be developed without proper prior approval and submission for substantive change.

- Quality and Planning: There is an absence of human capacity and institutional resources at FCHS level and an absence of implemented institutional system for quality at FCHS level, although a manual exists.
There is some evidence of quality activity – but this is largely driven by requirements of external partners. This has led to inhomogeneous approaches and requires a rationalization driven internally – not between external partners.
There is overreliance on external partners without sufficient attention to developing sustainable institutional capacity.
There is evidence of inter-campus coordination, including some evidence of good practice between Abu Dhabi and Al Ain, but it is not formalised.
There is a lack of a planning culture and evidence of planning. Some planning documents are prepared, but these are not sufficiently detailed or complete.
There is a very good relationship between FCHS and its external stakeholders. This needs to be formalised and integrated into quality and planning activities.
- Faculty: There is a concern that faculty qualifications do not meet the *Standards* – but insufficiently detailed data was provided.
There is a concern that faculty workloads do not meet the *Standards* – but, again, FCHS needs to provide a closely argued case that these meet the *Standards*.

- Governance: The Organizational Chart needs to be refined to show the relationship between FCHS and IAT.
The account of governance is not sufficiently detailed. A clear indication of the relationship between IAT and FCHS is required, and a clearer account of inter-campus governance arrangements is also needed.

- Research: Now that FCHS is moving towards postgraduate education more attention is required in the area of academic research. While some policy frameworks covering research exist, a comprehensive research strategy and resourcing for that is needed. This is something that future program accreditation ERT will expect to see.

The ERT makes its requirements and offers its suggestions in a spirit of constructive engagement, with the aim of ensuring that the *Standards for Licensure and Accreditation* are met, and to aid Fatima College of Health Sciences in its desired objective to be granted Re-Licensure.