



Executive Summary

Renewal of Licensure Saint Joseph University

June 26 – 28, 2021

An External Review Team (hereafter ERT) visited Saint Joseph University in Dubai (SJUD) from 26 – 28th June and 3rd of July 2021 to evaluate its Self-Study (hereafter the *Self-Study*) for Renewal of Institutional Licensure. The exit interview was held on 3 July 2021.

Established in 2008 within the Dubai International Academic City, SJUD was the first international branch of USJ. SJUD was created when the Dubai Executive Council signed an agreement with USJ Beirut to offer a new bachelor's program in Law designed by the Faculty of Law and Political Sciences of Beirut to six batches of Emirati students selected by the government of Dubai through the KHDA. SJUD is located on a single campus.

In September 2014, the collaboration with the Dubai government came to an end and the University Council in Beirut decided to continue the Dubai entity on its own, aiming to offer more academic programs. A Master of Translation and an LLM in Business Law programs were introduced from 2016 onwards. There are currently about 100 students studying in these programs, albeit relatively small numbers on the graduate programs.

After reviewing the *Self-Study* and required documentation, documents submitted to it during the visit and holding discussions during the visit, the ERT identified strengths and areas for improvements.

The key Strengths are:

1. Student and alumni's enthusiasm and support for SJUD

- Students were clear in their praise for the quality of their learning experience.
- The teaching was highlighted by the students for the quality, and the arrangements made for delivery during COVID-19 pandemic.
- The access to resources was noted as a positive.

2. The support of the mother campus in Beirut and the collaboration between the two campuses

- The Beirut campus provides a secure academic infrastructure within which SJUD can operate.
- The enthusiasm shown by Beirut to support and help develop SJUD.

3. The faculty delivering the programs

- The part-time faculty add a rich and knowledgeable resource, which strengthens the student learning experience by bringing current UAE practice and experience to the teaching.



- The flying faculty from Beirut bring the strengths of the mother campus experience to the programs.
- The small but enthusiastic and dedicated full-time resident faculty at SJUD who demonstrated their commitment to delivering the student experience.

Matters which need addressing to bring the institutions to full compliance with the *Standards* can be grouped into three thematic areas:

1. Activities based on informal structures:

- The relatively small size of SJUD has led to many campus-wide activities being quickly addressed through informal discussions. Whilst this is a real benefit in some circumstances, it places the University in a vulnerable position if key personnel are absent, and formal structures are not the focus of decision making.
- Although academic misconduct during examinations is treated swiftly, some activities such as moderation of assessments and the process for the detection of student plagiarism lack robustness
- Not all policies and procedures are finalized or fully implemented.

2. Lack of clear reporting of strategic plans or clear research plans

- The institutional plan, whilst providing direction, does not fully establish measurable or accurate targets, particularly at interim stages, making progress reporting more challenging.
- The current approach to research lacks a clear research policy, agenda, expectations, recognition, and reporting.

3. The process of regular and documented self-reflection on activities, processes, and external relations.

The ERT makes its recommendations in a spirit of constructive engagement, with the aim of ensuring that the *Standards* are met, and to aid SJUD in its desired objective to renew its licensure.