



Executive Summary
Initial Licensure
University of Wollongong in Dubai

March 27- 30, 2018

A Re-Licensure Review Team (hereafter RLRT) visited the University of Wollongong in Dubai (UOWD) between 27 and 30 March 2018, to evaluate the Application for Renewal of Licensure.

The University of Wollongong in Dubai was founded in 1993 as “*Institute for Australian Studies*”. The institution changed its name to the University of Wollongong in Dubai [UOWD] in 1999 and first received licensure through the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research (now the Ministry of Education). In subsequent years, UOWD received accreditation for both undergraduate and graduate programs with approval for doctoral programs in 2010. The license through the CAA was renewed in 2013. With the current Application for Re-Licensure, UOWD is in its fourth cycle of licensure.

The *Fact Book* submitted with the *Self-Study* indicates a current total enrolment of over 2,100 students which represents a decline in recent years. Nearly half of those students are enrolled in business programs with a quarter of the total students in engineering programs. The institution has significant diversity with Indian, Pakistani, Jordanian and Egyptian students well represented. Nearly 14% of the undergraduates and nearly 22% of the graduate students are Emirati. UOWD reports that there are 72 full-time faculty in the Faculties of Business and Engineering and Information Sciences. Forty-five percent of the full-time faculty are women.

The RLRT found UOWD to be an organization with a desire serious to deliver its mission successfully and a strong commitment to do so.

There are, however, a number of areas to which the RLRT believes UOWD can commit further focus and effort in order to strengthen its operations.

1. Organization

The current situation in which the Faculty of Engineering and Information Sciences is accommodating General Education, Arts and Humanities programs, at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels is, as recognized by the institution, unsustainable, and the establishing of a new faculty is a matter of urgency. UOWD may also wish to consider senior appointments to cover distinct mission components, such as academic affairs,

research and community engagement as the institution now becomes more complex and larger.

2. **Quality Assurance Staffing**

The RLRT notes the broad role undertaken by quality assurance personnel. These include, institutional research, data analysis, preparations for CAA licensure and program accreditation, support for TEQSA accreditation, and the development and management of policies and procedures. There are currently only two of three positions in this area, and three is insufficient.

3. **Institutional Effectiveness**

There is a significant number of areas in which the RLRT expected to see evidence that activities and processes are reviewed, data analysed, and decisions taken on the basis of evidence that led to improvement. In some cases, such activities are not yet undertaken, and in others it is likely that the Application and the *Self-Study* in particular, does not give a comprehensive picture of UOWD's approaches and their implementation. The weakness in the submission and these weaknesses in the reach of institutional effectiveness are to some extent a result of the understaffing in this area, as discussed above.

4. **General Education**

General Education at UOWD is a program comprising key generic areas that are differently instantiated in the two Faculties. The *Self-Study* provided some evidence of way in which these instantiations meet the generic requirements and meet program-level learning outcomes. There is, however, no mention in any materials provided to the RLRT of this information. There is no program oversight and routine program effectiveness embedded into institutional systems.

5. **Faculty Matters**

There is a cluster of issues that have an impact on the faculty establishment. At present, UOWD is operating with structural understaffing such that there are permanent overloads, which faculty members pro-actively bid for. The matter is worsened by problems with the overall availability of expertise in some areas, insufficient preparation of faculty with credit-bearing duties, a lack of faculty of professorial rank, insufficient teaching release for some management duties, and a high level of part-time staffing. This should be addressed through a thorough review, and the development and implementation of a comprehensive faculty plan.

6. **Lower-level Strategy**

There is good activity to report in the areas of research and community engagement. The introduction of Associate Deans for Research and a Director for the doctoral programs are welcome innovations at UOWD. In both areas the RLRT formed the view that there is a good deal of support, new thinking and increasing achievement. There is also a good sense of commitment throughout the University. At present, the strategic direction for these areas is driven by relatively small components of the overall institutional Strategic Plan. There are already some weaknesses at this level such as the measures of success not wholly aligned with the strategic objectives. In addition, there is a great deal of activity that is not directly anticipated by a single goal with a small number of objectives. As a result, there is a real opportunity for UOWD to better deliver its missions in research and community engagement through the development of lower-level focused strategies that capture and

provide a clear sense of direction for the interesting and worthwhile work that is currently undertaken in these areas,

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