



Executive Summary
Renewal of Licensure
Hamdan Bin Mohammed Smart University

October 6–9, 2019

A Renewal of Licensure Review Team (hereafter RLRT) visited Hamdan Bin Mohammed Smart University (HBMSU) from 6th to 9th of October to evaluate the *Self-Study* for the Renewal of Institutional Licensure. The exit interview was held on 9th of October 2019.

HBMSU, the singular higher learning institution in the UAE with an e-learning infrastructure, initiated operations in September 2002 as the e-Total Quality Management (TQM) College. In 2009, under Decree 13/2009 of the Government of Dubai, the college adopted the name Hamdan Bin Mohammed e-University and was reorganized as a comprehensive University. HBMSU Currently offers 22 academic programs through the Schools of Business and Quality Management, Health and Environmental Studies, and e-Education. In addition, HBMSU offers three Doctoral programs, Total Quality Management, Educational Leadership, and Healthcare Management.

In Spring 2019, HBMSU enrolled 927 students with UAE nationals making a majority of the enrolled students. During the same period the university employed 21 full time instructional faculty and 99 Teaching Associates.

HBMSU occupies a unique position in the higher education landscape of the MENA region. It is a well-established provider of higher education with an enviable reputation. It continues to develop this reputation in consultation with other global players by shaping and strategizing the future direction for online learning in the region and country.

There is a clear cohesion between vision, strategy and understanding that is shared amongst faculty, staff, learners, and other stakeholders. Learners generally express a strong affinity for the institution and the support they receive. There is a continuous effort to retain excellence and currency in the online e-learning environment by deployment of SMART technology that helps underpin sustainable environmental principles. HBMSU enjoys enviable levels of support from the Dubai Government.

As with any accreditation review there are operations and areas with scope for improvement. Many aspects outlined in the PGRL were omitted in the *Self-Study* with documentary evidence in the appendices missing or lacking the depth expected. Substantial concerns exist in the

policy, procedures and practices around plagiarism, and these must be addressed as an urgent priority.

Previous RLRT teams in 2013 and 2009 raised concerns about the breaching of the Standards in the use of part-time (associate) faculty and these continue. Steps must be taken to address these urgently and this will require significant discussion with the CAA.

Finally, the RLRT believe that more effort needs to be executed in ensuring part-time/associate faculty hold the obligatory qualifications to teach at the requisite levels of HBMSU programs. Furthermore, Associates must also possess the experience and research requirements necessary for delivery of graduate level education. HBMSU must also deploy more effective approaches to evaluate associates to ensure these baseline requirements are met.

The RLRT makes its recommendations in a spirit of constructive engagement, with the aim of ensuring that the Standards are met, and to aid HBMSU in its desired objective to achieve institutional license renewal.