



Executive Summary
Renewal of Licensure
Sorbonne University, Abu Dhabi

October 15- 18, 2017

An External Review Team (hereafter ERT) visited the Sorbonne University, Abu Dhabi (SUAD), previously known as Paris Sorbonne University Abu Dhabi, from 26 to 29 January 2020, to evaluate the *Self-Study* (hereafter the *Self-Study*) for Renewal of Licensure. The exit interview was held on 18 October 2017.

SUAD was established in 2006 through an agreement between the Government of Abu Dhabi and the leadership of Paris Sorbonne University (PSU). SUAD was established by Federal Decree, Law No. 14 of 2006, ordered by H.H. Khalifa bin Zayed, Ruler of the Abu Dhabi Emirate. The rationale behind establishing SUAD was to bring the “*benefits offered by one of the world’s renowned institutions*”. SUAD works toward fulfilling the vision of Abu Dhabi leaders to develop a knowledge based economy.

As stated in the university’s application, “*the establishment of the University fulfills a primary objective of Abu Dhabi and the UAE, as stated in Article 4 of the Establishment Decree, Law 14 of 2006, to participate in fostering and diversification of the higher education opportunities in the State, in the GCC countries and the Middle East.*”

SUAD offers academic programs that employ both English and French as the medium of instruction. The undergraduate programs using French as the medium of instruction include Diploma in French as a Foreign Language (FLE), Bachelor of Applied Foreign Languages (LEA), Bachelor of Archaeology and History of Art Bachelor of French Modern Language: Literature, Publishing, Media, Audiovisual, Bachelor of Geography and Planning, Bachelor of History, Bachelor of Philosophy & Sociology, Bachelor of Economics and Management, and Bachelor of Law. Diploma in Sports Management and Bachelor of Physics are offered using English as the medium of instruction.

Fourteen graduate programs are offered by SUAD. The programs include Master of Teaching French as a Foreign Language, Master of Environment: Dynamics of Territories and Societies, Master of Urban and Regional Planning, Master of History of Art and Museum Studies, Master of International Business and Languages, Master of Marketing, Management, Communication

& Media, Master of Performing Arts, Master of Social Research: Consulting, Survey and Evaluation, Master of Banking and Finance, Master of Health Economics, Master of International Business Law, Master of Sustainable Development Law, and Master of International Law, International Relations and Diplomacy.

SUAD offers PhD and MBA opportunities in collaboration with Paris-Sorbonne, Paris Descartes & UPMC.

In the academic year 2016-17 SUAD enrolled a diverse group of 848 students of whom 30% were male. The university has the capacity to grow to 2,500 students.

Through its consideration of SUAD's *Self-Study* submitted for relicensure, examination of other documentation, and interaction with faculty, students, and others, the RLRT identified several strengths at SUAD. These include the following:

- The University's commitment to replicating the high standards of Paris Sorbonne;
- The state-of-the-art facilities with ample room for growth;
- The University's commitment to institute quality assurance frameworks and processes; and
- The articulate, confident, and highly enthusiastic students and alumni with whom we met.

Matters that need addressing to bring SUAD in compliance with the Standards can be grouped into the following thematic areas:

- Sustainability. SUAD is many years away from being financially self-sufficient. Its benefactors need to provide some assurance that they will continue to bridge the gap between operating expenses and revenue until self-sufficiency is attained.
- Curriculum. A general education program that is compliant with the *Standards* is needed for undergraduate programs. A strategy to ensure that all SUAD programs align with *QFEmirates* at the appropriate level needs to be developed. An analysis of whether modules offered in 2-week compressed mode allow sufficient time for preparation, reflection, analysis and the achievement of learning outcomes. A demonstration that degree completion requirements comply with the *Standards*.
- Policies and Procedures. SUAD has yet to develop many of the policies and procedures required by the *Standards*.
- Manuals/Handbooks. Several required manuals and handbooks are either missing or do not comply with the *Standards*.
- Quality Assurance and Closure of the Performance Improvement Cycle. Data are being collected but not being used for improvement and planning.
- Research. Required research policies and strategies are lacking.

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