



Executive Summary

Renewal of Institutional Licensure Sorbonne University Abu Dhabi (SUAD) Abu Dhabi

22-26 October 2023

An external review team (ERT), appointed by the Commission for Academic Accreditation (CAA) of the Ministry of Education (MOE) of the United Arab Emirates (UAE), visited Sorbonne University Abu Dhabi (SUAD) from 22— 26 October 2023 to evaluate the self-study (*Self-Study*) submitted for renewal of institutional licensure (RIL). The findings of the ERT reflect its analysis of the *Self-Study* and observations made during the on-site evaluation in terms of requirements set out in Standards for Institutional Licensure and Program Accreditation (*Standards*) and associated Procedural Manual for Renewal of Institutional Licensure (*PMRIL*). The exit interview was held on 26 October 2023.

Sorbonne University Abu Dhabi (SUAD), formerly Paris Sorbonne University Abu Dhabi (PSUAD), was established in 2006 under the patronage of His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, then, the Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed Forces, through an agreement between Sorbonne University in Paris (SUP) and the government of Abu Dhabi. SUAD offers undergraduate and graduate programs to both Emirati and international students from around the world. In academic year (AY) 2023-2024, the data reported 686 undergraduate students and 125 graduate students, 392 students in foundation year totaling 1203 students in SUAD. A total of 899 females comprised the majority at 74.73% of the student body and 304 male students comprising 25.27% with total of 512 females and 174 males enrolled in undergraduate program; 90 females and 35 males enrolled in graduate programs; and 297 females and 95 males enrolled in the foundation program. It was noted that majority comprises of UAE nationals with 829 students (68.91%) and 374 international students (31.09%).

The University increased its resident faculty, and the ERT noted that SUAD now has 76 full time faculty; 205 visiting faculty; and 57 part time faculty in Academic Year 2023-2024, with majority (27) in the Department of French Studies. SUAD reported 39 female full-time faculty and 37 male full-time faculty; while the gender distribution of visiting faculty was noted to be 81 female faculty and 124 male faculty and 44 female part time faculty and 13 male part time faculty. The faculty qualification reported 64.80% of faculty holding terminal degree and 32.30% as non-terminal degree holders.

SUAD currently offers 11 Bachelor programs, namely, Bachelor in Law; Bachelor in Applied Foreign Languages; Bachelor in Records Management and Archival Science; Bachelor in Economics and Management; Bachelor in Mathematics with Specialization in Data Science for Artificial Intelligence; Bachelor of Geography and Planning; Bachelor in History; Double Bachelor in Philosophy and Sociology; Bachelor in History of Art and Archaeology; Bachelor of Physics; and Bachelor in French Literature.



SUAD also offers 14 Master degree programs, namely Master in Applied Foreign Languages: Specialty Management and International Business; Master in Applied Sociological Research; Master in Banking and Finance; Master in Environment: Dynamics of Territories and Societies; Master in Environmental Sustainability: Law and Policies; Master in Health Economics; Master in History of Art and Museum Studies; Master in International Business Law; Master in International Law, International Relations and Diplomacy; Master in Marketing, Management, Communication, Media; Master in Archaeology and Cultural Heritage; Master in Records Management and Archival Studies; Master in Urban Planning and Development and the Master in Teaching French as a Foreign Language.

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

Financial: the financial support of the Abu Dhabi government.

Class size: The small class size enables a more personalized education.

Faculty, Students and Alumni: The articulate, confident, and highly enthusiastic faculty, students and alumni with whom we met.

Graduates' Employers: The very supportive employers with whom we met.

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

Policies and Documentation: SUAD has obtained an exemption from some aspects of the General Education requirement specified in the *Standards*. A clear statement of SUAD's General Education requirement that accounts for the obtained exemption needs to be formulated and included in the Catalog. Courses that are taught in intensive/block mode need to comply with Annex 14 of the *Standards* with respect to the maximum number of contact hours in any 2-day block.

Faculty Workload: SUAD's faculty workload policy doesn't comply with the *Standards* and the workload of SUAD faculty does not conform to that specified by SUAD's published policy.

Manuals/Handbooks: Several required manuals and handbooks are missing elements required by the *Standards*.

Quality Assurance and Closure of the Performance Improvement Cycle: Criteria to assess the achievement of CLOs and PLOs need to be developed. There is scant evidence that collected effectiveness data are being used for improvement and planning.

Research: Whether SUAD's research budget meets the minimum required by the *Standards* is not evident in the *Self-Study* or other documents submitted to the ERT. The criteria for the inclusion of the research output of SUAD's non-resident faculty in SUAD's research statistics needs clarification.

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 renew its institutional licensure.