



Executive Summary

Renewal of Institutional Licensure

Al Wasl University (Formerly: Islamic and Arabic Studies College - Dubai) Dubai

21-24 February 2022

A Renewal of Institutional Licensure Review Team (RILRT) visited Al Wasl University (AWU), formerly Islamic and Arabic Studies College (IASC), from 21-24 February 2022 to evaluate the *Self-Study* for the Renewal of Institutional Licensure (RIL). The findings of the RILRT reflect its observations at the time of the visit and relate to the *Standards for Licensure and Accreditation 2019* (hereinafter referred to as the *Standards*). The exit briefing was held on Thursday 24 February 2022.

AWU was established in 1986 by its founder, His Excellency Juma Al-Majid, under the former name The College of Islamic and Arab Studies. The College was established to be a platform for science and a tributary center for human development and human capacity building, and an effective tool in the service of the Emirati society, as it is concerned with science and knowledge aimed at confirming the distinctive cultural identity of the Emirati society.

The College of Islamic and Arab Studies began receiving students to study for the bachelor's degree at the beginning of the academic year 1986/1987, and the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research issued its approval to license the College to work in the field of higher education on 18/9/1993. The first master's program in Islamic law (specialization of jurisprudence and its origins) was opened in the academic year 1995/1996, followed by the master's program in Arabic language and literature in two specializations, the first (language and grammar) and the second (literature and criticism) in 2002/2003, then the doctoral program in Islamic jurisprudence and its origins in 2004/2005, and the doctoral program in Arabic language and literature in the specializations (language and grammar) and (literature and criticism) in 2007/2008, the initial license was issued in April 2019 to change the legal status of the college to Al Wasl University.

AWU currently offers a number of Bachelor's, Master's and Doctoral programs through two Colleges: the College of Arts and the College of Islamic Studies as follows:

1. Bachelor in Arabic Language and Literature
2. Bachelor in Library and Information Sciences
3. Bachelor in Islamic Studies
4. Master in Islamic Studies
5. Master of Arabic Language and Literature
6. Doctor of Philosophy in Literary and Critical Studies
7. Doctor of Philosophy in Jurisprudence and Its Foundations
8. Doctor of Philosophy in Linguistic Studies



As of Spring 2021/2022, there were 1474 students enrolled at AWU (1288 female and 186 male) comprising 26 different nationalities. The total number of faculty members in AWU in Spring 2021/2022 was 48, 2 of them are part-time, with a student to full time faculty ratio of 32:1.

In the College of Arts, the total number of students enrolled during the Spring 2021/2022 is 875 students, 820 students in the undergraduate programs, 31 in the master's programs, and 24 students enrolled in the two doctoral programs. The total number of faculty members in the College was 29, 1 of them is part-time, with a student to full time faculty ratio of 31:1.

While in the Islamic Studies College, the total number of students enrolled during the Spring 2021/2022 is 599 students, 503 students in the undergraduate programs, 56 in the master's programs, and 40 students enrolled in the doctoral program. The total number of faculty members in the College was 19, 1 of them is part-time, with a student to full time faculty ratio of 33:1.

Since its establishment as a College of Islamic and Arabic Studies, AWU has graduated 13061 students, 12761 students graduated from undergraduate programs, 209 students graduated from master's programs, and 91 students graduated from doctoral programs until the end of the academic year 2020/2021.

Through its consideration of AWU's *Self-Study* of the Renewal of Institution Licensure, examination of other documents, and interactions with administrators, faculty, students, alumni, and others, ERT noted a number of positive attributes of AWU as follows:

- ERT appreciates and appraises the non-profit model of AWU that contributes to human development and community legacy, especially offering some free Arabic and Islamic studies programs at bachelor degree.
- ERT appreciates the privilege AWU provides for female students through a fleet of buses for transportation purposes to and from the university that covers all UAE.
- ERT commends the services that AWU offers to the faculty members and their families including host, health insurance and free education.
- ERT commends the loyalty of BoTs, faculty members and administration team in AWU to its goals, mission, and vision. Moreover, the positive relationship and high moral of the AWU students and the respect they show for their cadres.
- ERT appreciates the five-years strategic plan (2021-2026) developed by AWU that includes seven aspects for research and scholarship in all different programs in which supports AWU vision of advanced education and promoting research skills and innovative thinking.

During the review the ERT has identified several matters that need to be addressed to bring AWU into full compliance with the *Standards*. The main issues of concern include the following:



- The poor quality of the *Self-Study* and of many of the manuals and documents. In general, manuals are incomplete and in need of revision, re-editing, and formatting.
- Different versions of the University's Mission and Vision appear in official documents.
- Organizational structure of the university does not reflect the actual situation and needs to be redesigned to reflect the organizational status of the university, its departments, and centers.
- Faculty workload is very high and more than what is recognized locally and internationally, faculty to student ratio is 1:31 and many of them are engaged in research and supervision of dissertations. Faculty employment is based on annual contract that renews annually.
- The campus lacks many facilities necessary to carry out academic work and extracurricular activities. These include internet access (WIFI) for students and recreational facilities for students.
- The need of promoting the knowledge depth of students each in their area of study and importance of work placement/internship for better communication skills.
- AWU website, available only in Arabic language, is insecure, unstable and needs to be redesigned and updated.

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