# *STANDARDS FOR LICENSURE AND ACCREDITATION OF TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING*

**Commission for Academic Accreditation**
**Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research**
**United Arab Emirates**

2009

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# *Preface*

*Nahayan Mabarak Al Nahayan*

The development of high quality vocational education and training (VET) programs in the United Arab Emirates is essential to the local and international labor market with its intense competition and high demand for a skilled workforce. The future success of VET Institutions in the UAE will be dependent on their ability to match the skills, knowledge and competencies of their learners with the requirements of the workplace. This will demand innovative methods of instruction, experiential learning, and full engagement with employers to provide learners with exposure to the world of work and to gain experience with industry-standard equipment and best working practices.

The Commission for Academic Accreditation has developed these Standards to ensure that the institutional framework for effective VET programs is in place from the outset, and the institutions have guidance in acquiring the appropriate infrastructure, coupled with the freedom to develop modern and relevant training programs. The Licensure procedure will make sure that appropriate institutional goals are set, physical and human resources are in place, and all the necessary policies have been established to provide a productive learning experience for the trainees. This includes the appointment of instructors with extensive industrial experience, institutional capacity building, assessment methods that evaluate competence in the workplace, community engagement, and curricula that make best use of occupational standards developed with local and international expertise.

These *Standards* represent a starting point in giving due attention to this vital sector of vocational education and training. Much development work remains to engage industry and commerce in producing validated occupational-skills standards for each of the major areas of employment. Skills councils will need to be formed to provide regular specialist input on the competencies required by learners, and to maintain their currency in rapidly advancing sectors of the economy. Collaboration will be needed to achieve swift and effective progress in this sphere and the Commission for Academic Accreditation will support all institutions in this vital effort to establish high quality programs with a strong reputation for vocational education and training in the UAE.

*Nahayan Mabarak Al Nahayan*
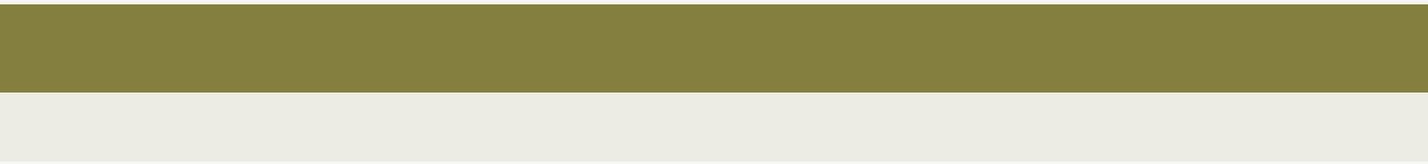*Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research*

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# Technical and vocational education and training

## Introduction

In today's technological era, modern standards for technical and vocational education and training are more essential than ever. As learners graduate and enter the work force they will need to demonstrate strong technical, vocational and academic skills as well as responsible attitudes and behaviors. Quality programs assist institutions in preparing learners for demanding technically based careers.

The demand for highly skilled workers is increasing. Most importantly, the transition toward a global economy based on the acquisition and application of knowledge as the driving force for new processes, businesses and industries depends extensively on progressively higher levels of skills in the labor markets of industrialized and other nations. In this regard, the demand for workers possessing appropriate and high level skills has increased dramatically over the past several years and will continue to increase over the next decades.

Technical and vocational education and training programs at post-secondary level differ from traditional education approaches in schools due to their primary focus on preparing people for entry into the labor market for the first time, re-training and re-skilling workers already in the labor market for emerging new jobs and new roles, and providing additional skills, knowledge and understandings as employees advance their careers through promotion and/or transfer. This means that the predominant focus of technical and vocational education and training programs is on ensuring prospective and existing employees are competent by industry standards in the skills, knowledge and understandings they possess.

The nature of this difference demands that institutions and the programs they offer are sharply focused on developing and delivering industry validated skills and skill standards, and that this is a vital element of the planning which occurs as an inherent part of institutional and program development. It should be noted however, that these skills and skill standards are not static i.e., they will change over time and sometimes quite rapidly, which means that institutions must keep their programs under constant review to ensure that they remain closely aligned with labor market and work force needs.

Today there are many universities and other institutions with a specific focus on delivering quality technical and vocational education and training at undergraduate and postgraduate level, and there are an ever increasing number of non- and sub-degree level programs delivered by technical and vocational education and training institutions from which advanced standing and credit transfer arrangements allow learners to move seamlessly into higher education.

In broad terms, typical characteristics of technical and vocational education and training provision are: that institutions and programs are focused on the labor market in general, or on particular or specific occupational groups in the work force; programs are often shorter than the three or four years of full-time study required in traditional higher education and are generally far more 'hands on' and may incorporate experiential learning in the work place through an internship or other approaches.

# *Licensure and accreditation*

In the United Arab Emirates, authority to license independent educational institutions to grant degrees and other educational awards, and to accredit their programs is vested in the United Arab Emirates Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research (Mohesr or the Ministry). Any non-federal institution located in the United Arab Emirates that provides regular, theoretical, practical, or applied curricula of an appropriate time period beyond United Arab Emirates secondary school certification (or equivalent) that lead to a technical and vocational education and training certificate, diploma or degree, must be licensed, and have its programs accredited in order to be officially recognized by Mohesr.

Within Mohesr, the Commission for Academic Accreditation (the Commission or CAA) is responsible for the quality assurance processes associated with institutional licensing and program accreditation. The standards that guide these processes and the criteria that institutions must meet are specified in the Commission publication: *Standards for Licensure and Accreditation of Technical and Vocational Education and Training, 2009* (the *Standards*), available in print and on the Commission's website, www.caa.ae.

The standards, policies, and procedures adopted by Mohesr to establish and operate technical and vocational education and training institutions and to accredit their programs are designed to promote institutional quality and assure prospective learners, their families, and other interested parties that licensed institutions meet standards of quality consistent with current and best international practice and professional judgment. Licensed institutions in the United Arab Emirates demonstrate that they adhere to standards of performance covering all aspects of technical and vocational education and training, follow principles of continuous improvement, and provide evidence of learning outcomes.

*Licensure* applies to the entire institution and all its activities. This is authorization of technical and vocational educational and training organizations and/or institutions under specified arrangements which allow them to deliver post-secondary technical and vocational education and training and issue nationally recognized qualifications.

In order to be licensed in the United Arab Emirates, the institution must meet the *Standards* that cover all important institutional activities. The licensure requirements and the *Standards* specify a number of documents for institutions to develop and keep current for various audiences. These documents and the requirements for their content are described in *Appendix A*: *Required Documents.*

Satisfying the criteria for each standard determines whether the institution fulfils that standard: i.e. meeting all criteria is essential to achieve licensure in the United Arab Emirates.

The first of the standards for institutional licensing: *Standard 1*, *Mission and Quality Assurance,* relates to all other standards and is at the heart of the Commission's determination to assure and enhance institutional quality and Mohesr's award of *licensure*.

*Licensure* signifies that the institution has a mission appropriate to higher (post-secondary) education and training and possesses the governance structure, by-laws, regulations, policies and procedures, physical and financial resources, technical and vocational education and training programs, teaching staff and other personnel, and quality assurance measures sufficient to accomplish its mission.  Licensure is granted for up to five years initially, after which the institution may apply to renew its license: something which must be done every five years.  A licensed institution is required to identify its status as *licensed* or *recognized* by Mohesr in all documents and advertising, and to comply with the Commission's requirement for reporting data annually to the CAA.

Only after being granted *Licensure* may an institution apply for *Accreditation* for a technical and vocational education and training program, which must be obtained before the institution may advertise that program and recruit and enroll learners.  Accreditation is a process through which a program of study is reviewed to ensure that it meets appropriate standards and complies with international best practice.

Most jurisdictions including the United Arab Emirates, strive to ensure that learners enroll in accredited programs where they can be assured of quality and that intended learning outcomes will be met.  In the United Arab Emirates, a technical and vocational education and training program is a program of study which leads to clearly defined outcomes.

This means that institutional licensing and program accreditation together define the scope of recognition applicable to an institution.  That is: the range of operations for which a vocational and technical education and training institution is approved, including whether it may deliver training as well as assessment, the fields or industries in which it may deliver training or assessment, and the maximum level of qualifications it may issue.

## *Institutional Licensure*

## *Applying for licensure*

Any party seeking initial licensure on behalf of an institution must follow these steps in order:

1. Meet with a member of the staff of the Commission to review the procedures and requirements for licensure and to assess the readiness of the institution to submit a formal application. Applicants should bring a completed "*Application for Initial Licensure*" form and a statement of the mission of the proposed institution to the initial meeting.
2. Apply for and obtain the approval of the relevant authority in the Emirate in which the institution is to be located, for example, an education council.
3. Submit all required documents as described in *Appendix A*. The Commission expects the documents that support the application to be both original and the product of those intimately involved with the institution.
4. Review the documents with a Commission staff member and an external consultant, if deemed necessary by the Commission, at one or more licensure review conferences scheduled by the Commission.
5. Submit any additional or revised documents as required by the Commission.
6. Arrange one or more on-site inspections of the temporary and/or permanent facilities for the proposed institution and a meeting with the architect, if requested.
7. Respect stated deadlines. The Commission reviews completed, accepted applications submitted by 1st November, during spring in the following year; those submitted by 1st May, during fall in the same year.
8. Support any visits the Commission considers necessary of commissioners or external consultants. The institution is responsible for the costs associated with such visits.
9. Pay the fees associated with licensure.

The granting of institutional licensure does not imply the *accreditation* of any programs or that such programs may gain accreditation in the future. Accreditation is an entirely separate process; each technical and vocational education and training program must be individually accredited before an institution may admit learners, or offer such programs for enrolment.

Applications that are not complete or applications submitted without the required documentation will be returned without comment by the Commission.

## *Eligibility*

Only institutions are eligible to receive licensure. Only licensed institutions are eligible to submit technical and vocational education and training programs for accreditation.

# *Initial Licensure*

When applicant/s propose a new institution, or seek licensure for an existing un-licensed institution, they must submit to the Commission four hard and electronic copies of the "*Application for Initial Licensure*" form, and each of the documents listed below, which must cover the topics indicated in *Appendix A: Required Documents*.

The Commission considers only one campus of a proposed multi-campus institution at a time, and requires a period of at least one year between applications for licensure at two or more separate locations.

Documents to submit include:
1. a feasibility study, including a statement of financial resources;
2. a financial guarantee that will cover the costs to learners of finding alternative means of completing the learning programs for which they are registered should the institution cease operating in the United Arab Emirates;
3. site approval and architectural plan;
4. a timed action plan;
5. an organizational chart;
6. a policies and procedures manual comprising all institutional policies;
7. a quality assurance (institutional effectiveness) manual;
8. a catalog;
9. a learner (student) handbook; and
10. teaching staff (trainers) and non-teaching staff handbooks.

When the CAA's evaluation of these documents is complete, the Commission makes a recommendation to the Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research (the Minister) who decides whether to approve or deny the application.

**Approved**: Licensure is granted for up to five years and the institution is permitted to apply to offer accredited programs in the United Arab Emirates. If the institution fails to offer programs and enroll learners within two years of obtaining licensure, the Commission will revoke its license. An institution may receive un-scheduled visits from the staff of the Commission to verify that it continues to meet the requirements of the *Standards*. Failure to meet the *Standards* may result in suspension or loss of licensure, as determined by the Minister.

**Denied**: The institution is denied licensure. Those seeking licensure may not re-submit an application under the same institutional name or another name, for at least one year from the date of the official letter of denial.

# *Licensure Renewal*

Licensure is not renewed automatically. Licensed institutions must maintain the accreditation of all programs, continue to meet the *Standards* for licensure, comply with all reporting requirements of the Commission, and monitor the deadline to apply for renewal. A year before the end of the period of licensure, the institution may apply for renewal of its license. The report and documentation described in *Appendix D* demonstrate that the institution meets the requirements of each *Standard*.

The applicant must submit to the Commission:
1.  a letter from the chief executive officer or chair of the board, requesting renewal of its licensure and verifying that the institution has maintained accreditation of its technical and vocational education and training program(s); and
2.  four hard and electronic copies of a *Self-Study Report* and the accompanying documents listed in the *Self-Study Guidelines (Appendix D)*.

After reviewing the documents submitted for renewal of an institutional license, the Commission either accepts the application or returns it for additional information.  If the application is accepted, the Commission schedules one or more meetings with representatives of the institution and on-site campus visits. An application review may involve the use of an external consultant, if deemed necessary by the Commission. When these steps are complete, the Commission makes a recommendation to the Minister who decides whether to approve, delay, or deny licensure or to place the institution on probation.

**Approved**: Licensure is granted for up to five years and authorizes an institution to continue to offer accredited programs in the United Arab Emirates. The institution may receive un-scheduled visits from the staff of the Commission to verify that it continues to meet the requirements of the *Standards*. Failure to meet the *Standards* may result in suspension or loss of licensure, as determined by the Minister.

**Delayed**:  The decision concerning licensure is delayed until the institution rectifies a problem, provides additional information, or resolves an issue.  If the institution fails to satisfy the *Standards'* requirements within six months following notification, it will either be placed on probation or denied re-licensure.

**Probation**: An institution placed on probation must correct any deficiencies noted to the satisfaction of the Commission within a specified period of time. Should the deficiency warrant it, the institution may not be permitted to admit learners to its programs during probation.  At the end of the probationary period, the Commission makes a recommendation to the Minister, which may result in the denial of re-licensure or approval for licensure renewal.

**Denied**: An institution denied re-licensure has its license revoked. It must cease admitting learners to any of its programs, cease offering its programs within a period of time specified by the Commission, and inform its learners that its licensure has been denied. The institution must guide its learners in gaining admission to other recognized vocational training institutions. Funds held as a financial guarantee will first be used to assist learners in completing their training programs and then to meet other institutional obligations.

## CAA website register

The CAA will maintain a database accessible through the CAA website (www.caa.ae), that lists all licensed institutions and their accredited programs for the period during which their licensure and accreditation remains current.

## Voluntary cancellation of licensure

An institution must apply in writing to the CAA to voluntarily cancel licensure.

There are a number of obligations an institution is required to meet in order to finalize the cancellation of licensure. These include:
1. making arrangements for all current learners/candidates for assessment to receive a copy of their learning and/or assessment records;
2. forwarding to the CAA a secure electronic and/or hard copy of the following information for each learner who has undertaken recognized assessment and/or learning through the institution since initial licensure:
   - the full name of each learner and an identifier (date of birth, address etc);
   - the learning modules/units completed within the program with grades achieved (if applicable);
   - attendance records (if applicable);
   - work practice/ experience/ details of any work-based provider/ endorsed records of any work-based assessments;
   - the name and code of all endorsed award(s) issued; and
   - the date on which each award and component award was awarded

## Change to an institution's ownership name, legal name or any contact details

- Licensure cannot be transferred, sold or otherwise assigned to another legal entity or organization by the licensee. However, the CAA, with the approval of the Minister, may assign an institution's planned programs to another appropriate licensed institution if a license is revoked, and it is in the best interests of learners and those seeking assessment and certification services to do so.
- The CAA must be notified of any substantive change to the organization's legal name, responsible persons, and business address/contact details throughout the period of licensure. Such changes will be logged, as appropriate, on the CAA database.

- If there is any planned change to the licensed institution's legal status, and/or ownership, the CAA must be advised immediately as such a change may require a review of licensure. Delay in notifying such changes may cause licensure to be suspended.

## *Complaints*

The website of the Commission for Academic Accreditation (www.caa.ae) has a policy and related procedures to deal with complaints and disputes in various categories as follows:

- Complaints against the CAA
- Complaints against licensed institutions

# *Program Accreditation*

## *Introduction*

To assure prospective learners, their families, and the public that technical and vocational education and training programs offered by institutions licensed in the United Arab Emirates meet appropriate standards, and international best practice, each program must be individually accredited. The *Standards for Technical and Vocational Education and Training* and the institution's program *proposal* or program *self-study* that addresses the S*tandards* in terms of the program provide the basis for review by the Commission staff and a committee of international experts (the Visiting Committee) who evaluate each program through a detailed examination of institutional documentation and a campus visit or visits.

After review, the Commission recommends an action concerning accreditation to the Minister of Higher Education and Scientific Research, who decides whether accreditation is to be granted. Licensed, independent institutions in the United Arab Emirates must receive initial program accreditation for each technical and vocational education and training program they plan to offer before recruiting learners or enrolling them; all programs offered by the institution must continue to be accredited.

## *Applying for Accreditation*

Any institution applying for the accreditation of a proposed program must follow each of the steps described below in order, with an application dated at least six months prior to the intended start of the program, or the deadline for accreditation renewal. The Commission normally reviews completed, accepted applications submitted by 1st November during spring the following year, and those submitted by 1st May, are reviewed during fall of that year.

The institution is responsible for monitoring deadlines related to accreditation and renewal. Each of the following steps requires the satisfactory completion of the previous step before the Minister determines whether accreditation is to be granted or renewed.

1. The institution is currently licensed.
2. The institution submits a complete application, including four hard and electronic copies of each of the following:
   - the CAA accreditation application form;
   - an application letter from the chief executive officer of the institution. This application letter verifies that the information in the supporting documentation is truthful, accurate and complete and that the proposed program i) has been approved by the institution's governing body, ii) is consistent with the mission and goals of the institution, and iii) will receive the necessary budget, personnel, physical, and other resources to inaugurate and sustain it;

- the Program **Proposal** for initial accreditation (the ***proposal***) of a new technical and vocational education and training program or the **Program Self-Study** (the ***self-study***) for full accreditation or the renewal of accreditation;
- the institution's catalog, teaching staff/non-teaching staff handbook, learner handbook, quality assurance (institutional effectiveness) manual, organization chart, and any other documents deemed relevant by the institution; and
- the feasibility study for the accreditation of a new technical and vocational education and training program.

3.  If the Commission finds the proposal, the self-study, or the other documentation incomplete or inadequate to warrant a full review, it returns the application with an explanation and information about re-submission.  An application may not be re-submitted for at least six months from the date of the official notification from the Commission.
4.  Assuming satisfactory documentation, the Commission may select several discipline experts (the Visiting Committee) to provide a written and an on-site evaluation of the program or proposed program.
5.  An on-site review, hosted and funded by the institution, results in a detailed evaluation report concerning the program.  That report includes both those matters not meeting the *Standards,* termed *recommendations*, which the institution must rectify to the satisfaction of the Commission, and *suggestions* from the Visiting Committee for improvement, which must be considered by the institution.
6.  The institution provides the Visiting Committee with a copy of its policies and procedures manual and any other relevant institutional documentation at the start of the on-site visit.

After review, the Commission makes a recommendation to the Minister who decides whether to approve, delay, or deny accreditation or to place the program on probation.

**Approved**:  Given a favorable review and decision from the Minister, and provided that the institution enrolls learners into the program within one year, the initial accreditation of a new program remains in effect for up to two years after the institution graduates the first cohort of learners from the program.  If warranted by the review, the Commission may schedule another visit or visits during this period.  If the beginning of the program is delayed for more than one year, the institution must re-apply for initial accreditation before offering the program. After the prescribed initial period, a program's accreditation must be renewed every five years. The program may receive un-scheduled visits from the staff of the Commission to verify that it continues to meet the requirements of the *Standards*.  Failure to meet the requirements of the *Standards* may result in loss of accreditation, as determined by the Minister.

**Delayed**: The decision concerning accreditation is delayed until the institution rectifies a problem, provides additional information, or resolves an issue concerning the program.  If the institution fails to satisfy the *Standards'* requirements within six months following notification, it may be placed on probation or denied accreditation.

**Probation**: where a program is placed on probation, the institution in question must correct any deficiencies noted to the satisfaction of the Commission within a specified period of time. Should the deficiency warrant it, the institution may not be permitted to admit learners to the program. At the end of the probationary period, the Commission makes a recommendation to the Minister, which may result in the denial of accreditation or its renewal.

**Denied**: An institution with a program/s which has been denied accreditation may not admit learners to that program, and the institution in question must initiate actions to close the program while protecting enrolled learners.

# Standards and Criteria for Licensure and Accreditation

The MOHESR has established the following *Standards* for licensure of institutions and for all technical and vocational education and training programs. Along with applying the *Standards*, institutions must also ensure that: (1) their technical and vocational education and training programs are based on industry skills standards as far as this is currently possible; (2) learners and teaching staff (trainers) operate in a healthy and safe environment; (3) teaching staff members are technically and academically competent in the specific teaching and learning areas for which they are responsible; and (4) they use advisory boards with industrial representation to provide advice in planning, development and evaluation of their programs.

Institutions are required to prepare a *Policies and Procedures Manual* that includes *all* policies and procedures of the institution that concern its mission, quality assurance, and all aspects of its operations covered by *Standards 1-10*. These policies and procedures as set out in *Appendix A*: I. *Policies and Procedures Manual* must meet the Commission's requirements; and the institution must implement these policies and procedures.

## Standard 1.   Mission and quality assurance

The institution has a distinct and clearly articulated *mission* appropriate to a vocational training institution, focused on its identity, its educational and other goals, and the learners and communities it wishes to serve. The mission serves to define the institution and aids in planning and resource allocation.  Consistent with the institution's mission, it delivers technical and vocational education and training programs; pursues other activities, such as continued professional development; and operates relevant training, learner, and administrative services.

The institution demonstrates *quality assurance* (*institutional effectiveness),* systematically evaluating its technical and vocational education and training programs, courses, and institutional services on the basis of evidence.  The institution uses the results of this evaluation in planning, budgeting, establishing priorities, improving technical and vocational education and training programs, and improving training, learner and administrative services. The institution employs appropriate methods periodically to assess its objectives and outcomes, and evaluates these on the basis of evidence obtained.  It is able to demonstrate how evidence-based planning has led to improvement in programs and services, to new programs and services, and to more effective use of resources.

## Criteria

**1.1    Mission.** The institution:
    1.1.1    has a *mission statement* that:
        1.1.1.1    accurately and truthfully describes the institution, its distinguishing characteristics, the learners and other stakeholders it seeks to serve, and its relationship to the community;

1.1.1.2      is approved by the governing entity (see *Standard 2*);

1.1.1.3      is periodically re-evaluated to assess its pertinence and usefulness in providing overall institutional direction;

1.1.1.4      provides overall direction for institutional planning; and

1.1.1.5      is clearly understood by all of the institution's constituencies;

1.1.2    has *institutional goals* that are consistent with its mission; and

1.1.3    includes its mission (mission statement and institutional goals) in appropriate publications.


**1.2**    **Quality Assurance Manual.** The institution prepares a *Quality Assurance Manual* as set out in *Appendix A*: II. *Quality Assurance Manual*; this document describes the institutional research unit and the program of quality assurance and institutional planning; it meets the Commission's requirements; and the institution implements the program of institutional research, quality assurance and planning activities that it describes.


**1.3**    **Quality assurance.** The institution demonstrates *quality assurance* – the interaction between *institutional research* and *institutional planning* – and has:

1.3.1    program goals and program outcomes for each of its technical and vocational education and training programs; the outcomes are derived from the goals, are measurable, and are linked with the outcomes of the courses comprising the program;

1.3.2    learning outcomes for each of the technical and vocational education and training courses. The learning outcomes of each course are based on industry skills standards where possible, are measurable, and contribute to the outcomes of each program within which the course is a component; and

1.3.3    goals, objectives, policies, and procedures for each of its learner support units and administrative support units; the objectives are derived from the goals and are measurable.


**1.4**    **Institutional research.** The institution has:

1.4.1    a well-designed *program of institutional research*. The research includes a variety of tools to generate evidence. It then evaluates that evidence to determine the extent to which:

1.4.1.1      the objectives of each of the institution's learner, and administrative services are being achieved;

1.4.1.2      the outcomes of each technical and vocational education and training program are being achieved. The institution uses evidence that the outcomes of relevant courses are met, together with evidence from other sources; it evaluates the effectiveness of programs on the basis of that evidence; and

1.4.1.3      the outcomes of each technical and vocational education and training course or learning module/unit are being met; the institution uses evidence that learners achieve these outcomes together with evidence from other sources; it evaluates the effectiveness of each course and the extent to which it contributes to the outcomes of the program(s) within which it appears;

1.4.2   an *institutional research unit* that is responsible for implementing the program of institutional research and that receives the necessary human and fiscal resources to realize its program of institutional research; and

1.4.3   a mechanism to review the institutional research unit and its program of institutional research.

**1.5   Institutional planning.** The institution:

1.5.1   has and up-dates both short-term plans including any business or corporate plan, and a longer-term strategic plan, which are mission-driven, reviews those plans periodically, and documents its planning policies and processes;

1.5.2   takes risk management into account in planning;

1.5.3   ensures that the results of institutional research are used to provide evidence and guide planning and resource allocation, and to modify and improve resources, programs, and services;

1.5.4   involves its stakeholders, advisory panels, and international practitioners in its planning where appropriate; and

1.5.5   successfully executes its plans and realizes its mission.

## Standard 2. Organization, governance, and leadership

The institution has a system of governance that facilitates the accomplishment of its mission, promotes quality improvement, and clearly distinguishes the authority, roles, and responsibilities of its governing entity or body (the *board*), the chief executive and administrative officers and the relationship between the board and the administration.

The institution's board has final responsibility for, and control over, the institution. The board organizes and governs itself in accordance with a set of by-laws. These by-laws provide specific regulation of membership and responsibilities. Effective leadership is established at all levels of the institution.

## *Criteria*

2.1 **Organizational Chart.** The organization of the institution demonstrably reflects and supports its mission, facilitates its effective and efficient operation, and ensures effective leadership at all levels. The institution has an *organizational chart* (*Appendix A*: VIII) that clearly expresses lines of authority and institutional relationships, and publishes it appropriately.

2.2 **By-Laws.** The board is subject to by-laws; the institution prepares these in line with requirements set out in *Appendix* A: VII. *By-Laws*; these meet the Commission's requirements; and the board operates in line with the by-laws.

2.3 **Catalog.** The institution prepares a *Catalog* that includes all the material set out in *Appendix A*: III. *Catalog*; this material is consistent with all other institutional documentation at the time of publication; the catalog is considered to be part of a contract between the institution and its learners.

2.4 **The Board.**
   2.4.1  The board includes representatives of the community; the majority of board members have no investment or other fiduciary interest in the institution.
   2.4.2  The education and experience of board members are appropriate for their role in a technical and vocational education and training institution.
   2.4.3  Except for officers who are board members by virtue of their position at the institution (i.e. ex-officio appointments such as the chief executive), no board members or owner(s) of the institution are involved in its day-to-day operation.
   2.4.4  The roles, functions and membership of the board, and of the administration and teaching staff, are sufficiently distinct to ensure appropriate separation and independence of board, administration, and teaching staff. Institutional policies note these distinctions.
   2.4.5  The board appoints and evaluates the chief executive officer of the institution and provides direction for the institution in terms of its mission and general policies, but delegates to the chief executive officer the responsibility for the day-to-day operation of the institution.

2.4.6    The board regularly evaluates its own effectiveness and the effectiveness of individual members of the board.

2.4.7    The board and the chief executive of any institution must be 'fit and proper' persons i.e. those who are suitable and who display sound ethical and other characteristics.

**2.5    Institutional governance.**

2.5.1    The chief technical and vocational education and training administrator (where applicable) is appropriately qualified and experienced to direct the learning and training affairs of the institution. (Note: In some small or single purpose institutions, the role of chief technical and vocational education and training administrator may be combined with another such as the chief executive officer.)

2.5.2    Administrative officers possess the credentials, experience, and demonstrated competence appropriate to their areas of responsibility.

2.5.3    Technical and vocational education and training administrative officers hold appropriate credentials and are qualified for appointment to the teaching staff.

2.5.4    All administrators, and technical and vocational education and training administrative officers, including the chief executive officer, are annually evaluated.

2.5.5    Teaching staff members (trainers) have sufficient opportunity to participate in governance.

**2.6    Multiple campus institutions.** The governance structure, teaching staff and other personnel, facilities, services, and technical and vocational education and training programs of multiple campus institutions ensure that learners attending any campus receive an equivalent educational/training experience and achieve the same learning outcomes, whether the individual campuses are located in the United Arab Emirates or elsewhere. Institutional policies ensure appropriate co-ordination among different campuses of the same institution.

## Standard 3.  Technical and vocational education and training program

The technical and vocational programs and courses offered by the institution are appropriate to its mission. International technical and vocational education and training standards and industry skills standards, where applicable, are reflected in program design and composition, in teaching and instruction, and in the assessment of learning and achievement.  The institution demonstrates that technical and vocational education and training programs are evaluated and continuously improved and that learners meet the outcomes of its programs, and courses.

## *Criteria*

**3.1    Credit-bearing programs.** The following criteria characterize the institution's credit-bearing technical and vocational education and training programs, whether certificate, diploma or degree.

   3.1.1    The institution thoroughly assesses the need for any new program, determining job market analysis, potential learner interest, resource requirements, and financial implications.

   3.1.2    Certificates, diplomas and degrees are described in widely used, standard technical and vocational education and training terms.

   3.1.3    In the case of credit-based programs, credits are based on an expectation of the equivalent of a notional minimum of 15 hours of class meeting time and 30 hours of out-of-class or workshop/laboratory assignments for each course credit.

   The Commission will also accept applications from those institutions that practice competency based or criterion referenced approaches which require learners to demonstrate that they have achieved a competency, rather than simply complete a number of classroom and other hours, if the institutions provide a well-argued rationale for such approaches.

   3.1.4    Each technical and vocational education and training program has well-articulated goals and outcomes; the outcomes are derived from given goals, and are defined in measurable terms. All program goals and outcomes are accurately described in appropriate publications.

**3.2    The curricula and learning outcomes.**  The institution must ensure that training programs:

   3.2.1    comprise an appropriate sequence and mix of courses or learning modules/units (such as essential components, technical, and electives; introductory and advanced with pre-requisites);

   3.2.2    include a number of notional hours consistent with best international practice in the discipline and level of award, or detail the required teaching and learning outcomes and competency standards learners must display to complete the course or module;

   3.2.3    are clearly described and published in the *Catalog* and other relevant publications;

   3.2.4    comprise a defined amount and quality of work of sufficient rigor;

   3.2.5    where applicable, are aligned and identified with appropriate internationally recognized skill standards; and

   3.2.6    are approved by the teaching staff and administration, including evaluation procedures and established learning outcomes.

**3.3**    **Learning and training policies.** Policies for admission, grading, assessment (including competency tests, examinations and any re-sits), satisfactory progress and sanctions (probation and dismissal), independent studies, advanced standing, exceptions, completion requirements, and grievances are clear, published in relevant documents, and meet the *Standards'* requirements.

**3.4**    **Technical and vocational education and training learning modules and outcomes.** The institution:

3.4.1    employs teaching and learning methodologies that are supported by appropriate technology and teaching and learning materials and tools, and are appropriate to the subject being taught;

3.4.2    involves learners actively in their own learning including assessment;

3.4.3    provides for prior learning and/or current competence to be assessed;

3.4.4    provides learning outcomes for each course or module that are:

    3.4.4.1    consistent with the institution's mission;

    3.4.4.2    consistent with current international best practice in the discipline and level of award, particularly the industrial standards involved;

    3.4.4.3    aligned with, and demonstrably meet, the teaching, learning and other outcomes of every program in which the course appears; and

    3.4.4.4    derived from current internationally recognized industry skill standards;

3.4.5    uses a variety of appropriate assessment tools to ensure that learners meet specified learning outcomes and, where applicable, industry validated skill standards;

3.4.6    provides each learner with a detailed description of the course and the learning outcomes and competency standards that are needed as described in *Appendix A*: X. *Course/unit/module guidelines;*

3.4.7    includes sufficient time for preparation, reflection, analysis and the achievement of learning outcomes for courses that are offered in concentrated time periods;

3.4.8    includes methods for monitoring and authenticating learners' work;

3.4.9    emphasizes the technical and vocational education and training and other skills needed for the labor market and/or the work place;

3.4.10    requires an individual skills portfolio for each learner;

3.4.11    ensures that equipment, facilities, and learning environment are comparable to those used in the modern work place;

3.4.12    ensures that teaching and learning programs are connected with apprenticeship programs, where appropriate; and

3.4.13    integrates teamwork and leadership skills into the content of each course, as appropriate.

**3.5**    **Internship.** The institution recognizes that an internship or practicum is increasingly a typical component of technical and vocational education and training in disciplines including teaching, construction, health sciences, mechanics, and other applied fields. When required, the practicum or internship adheres to *Appendix C*: *Guidelines for good practice in practicums or internships*.

**3.6** **Information literacy.** The institution ensures that its graduates at all levels have acquired basic knowledge of information technology and basic skills in using technology to access, organize, and communicate information.

**3.7** **Advising services.** The institution provides new learners at all levels of study with an appropriate orientation program and all learners with an effective system of advising, which is regularly evaluated. Advisors are prepared for their responsibilities and understand principles of career and learner development, the curriculum, and current employment opportunities in the labor market. They have ready access to learner records, and are responsible for a number of learners commensurate with effective advising and other responsibilities.

**3.8** **Preparatory and/or remedial courses and programs.** The institution:
3.8.1   may offer non-credit preparatory or remedial courses or programs to learners lacking a suitable background for post-secondary study and learning in one or more technical and vocational education and training areas, or more generally in literacy and numeracy e.g. English and/or mathematics;
3.8.2   ensures that its preparatory courses have clear, measurable learning outcomes that learners must achieve before enrolling in accredited award programs;
3.8.3   permits enrolment in a preparatory program for a specified period of time, after which learners are either admitted to a regular technical and vocational education and training program, or leave the institution; and
3.8.4   in credit-bearing programs, permits no more than a total of 12 credits (or equivalent) of course work towards a technical and vocational education and training certificate, diploma or degree while in a preparatory program (or such other broadly comparable limits on credits as are available in the system in use within particular institutions).

**3.9** **Continuing education and life-long learning.**
3.9.1   The institution maintains appropriate control and oversight over all of its technical and vocational education and training offerings, credit and non-credit, on-campus or off, and ensures that all programs meet their stated outcomes.
3.9.2   Any courses or program of studies taken on a non-credit basis may not later be awarded credit towards an award.

**3.10** **Program quality assurance.** All courses, programs, and instruction are regularly reviewed/ evaluated in a variety of ways according to the institution's program of quality assurance, with the results analyzed to show that learners meet specified outcomes; the institution demonstrates that such evidence is used for course and program improvement, and for institutional planning.

**3.11** **Health and safety.** Due to the environment and diversity of technical and vocational education and training programs, a broad range of health and safety concerns need to be addressed during

preliminary planning for new programs. These concerns include selection and design of facilities, purchasing of training equipment, and health and safety equipment and protective and other clothing for learners, where appropriate.

In addition, health and safety instruction must be integrated into each course taught when preparing learners for careers, especially those identified as hazardous by the relevant authority.

The institution:
3.11.1  ensures health and safety education is an integral part of all courses;
3.11.2  ensures that health and safety concerns are addressed in all stages of program planning through implementation;
3.11.3  provides for all health and safety concerns related to learner internships;
3.11.4  designs facilities that are safe and accessible to all users;
3.11.5  provides First Aid training for instructors and learners as appropriate; and
3.11.6  designates a Health and Safety Officer responsible for implementing health and safety policies.

**3.12  Advisory committee.**  Each technical and vocational education and training program operates with the support of an advisory committee.  Advisory committees meet regularly during the year.  Minutes of meetings will be recorded and copies will be forwarded to the *Board.* Advisory committees are organized for the purpose of making technical and vocational education and training programs as efficient and effective as possible. Members are chosen because of their knowledge and understanding of the various segments of the business and industry sector.

**3.13  Skill standards validation.** The institution has an established process for validating technical and vocational education and training skill standards offered in each program area. This institutional process needs to be outlined in the *Policies and Procedures Manual*. The process should establish a procedure for validating skills standards, irrespective of where and how they are acquired. Validation should be based on the technical and vocational education and training needed in the work place today and in the future.

**3.14  Assessment services.**  Strategies for assessment services must be approved by the Commission, and where they do not exist, accredited courses/ programs and practicums are developed in consultation with industry stakeholders.

**3.15  Industrial best practice.**  Staff, facilities, equipment, and assessment used by the institution are consistent with industrial standards and best practice, and the institution's own assessment and/or learning strategies.

**3.16  Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL).** The institution has procedures for the recognition of prior learning and where such arrangements are acceptable to the Commission, arrangements for RPL must:

3.16.1 follow procedures and criteria that meet the requirements of the Commission;

3.16.2 be conducted in accordance with the principles of competency based assessment and the rules of evidence; and

3.16.3 meet work place and, where relevant, regulatory requirements.

**3.17** **Transfer policy.** The institution has a clear policy (see *Appendix A*: I. *Transfer Admissions Policy*) for transfer of course credits from another institution, or from one program to another within the institution.

## Standard 4. Teaching and professional staff

The institution demonstrates that it has appropriately qualified teaching staff (trainers) of a sufficient number to meet all requirements of its courses of study and activities. All teaching staff members hold appropriate credentials and/or possess an appropriate amount of directly related commercial or industrial experience in lieu of formal qualifications; their preparation and qualifications are suited to the field and the level of the teaching and learning in which they are engaged. The institution has orderly, transparent processes and policies for recruiting, developing, evaluating, promoting, and retaining teaching staff members who exemplify diverse educational and cultural backgrounds.

The institution demonstrates that it has appropriately qualified administrative and technical staff (professional staff) of a sufficient number to meet its needs and achieve its mission. All professional staff members hold appropriate credentials; their preparation and qualifications are suited to the level of their appointment and their field of activity. The institution has orderly, transparent processes and policies for recruiting, developing, evaluating, promoting, and retaining members of its professional staff.

## Criteria

4.1    **Teaching staff handbook.** The institution prepares a *Teaching Staff Handbook* that includes all the policies and procedures set out in *Appendix A*: IV. *Teaching Staff (trainer) Handbook*; these policies and procedures are taken from the *Policies and Procedures Manual*; the institution implements these policies and procedures and distributes the *Handbook* to all teaching staff.

4.2    **Staff handbook.** The institution prepares a *Staff Handbook* that includes all the policies and procedures set out in *Appendix* A: *V. Staff Handbook*; these policies and procedures are taken from the *Policies and Procedures Manual*; the institution implements these policies and procedures and distributes the *Staff Handbook* to all members of the professional staff.

4.3    **Recruitment and records.**
    4.3.1    The institution has effective polices and processes for advertising, recruiting, and appointing teaching and professional staff and maintains records of these processes.
    4.3.2    The institution maintains a record for each full-time teaching staff, part-time teaching staff, and professional staff member, including attested transcripts of prior learning, the signed contract, and all documents required by the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs in the United Arab Emirates.
    4.3.3    The institution demonstrates that teaching staff members are competent in the language of instruction.

4.4    **Teaching staff preparation**. The preparation and qualifications including commercial and/or industrial experience, of all teaching staff, both full-time and part-time, are appropriate to the field and level of their assignments with degrees, certificates and/or other appropriate qualifications and/or experience earned from internationally recognized institutions or technical programs.

**4.5**   **Staff qualifications.** The qualifications and experience including commercial and/or industrial experience, of all professional staff members are appropriate to the level of their appointment and the duties they are assigned.

**4.6**   **The role of teaching and professional staff.**
  4.6.1   The organization of the institution makes clear the reporting relationships of teaching and professional staff.
  4.6.2   Teaching staff participate in institutional governance, the development of curricula, teaching and learning, learner support, professional development, management, and administration.
  4.6.3   Teaching and support staff are provided opportunities to maintain their occupational and other skills by participating in appropriate seminars, courses and workshops and spending time in relevant industrial contexts.
  4.6.4   Professional staff undertake such duties and responsibilities as directed by their area or technical managers.
  4.6.5   The institution makes clear its expectation that teaching and professional staff will carry out their duties in a professional, ethical, and collegial manner that respects the culture of the United Arab Emirates and enhances the mission of the institution.

**4.7**   **Teaching, technical and vocational education and training staff.**
Teaching and other technical and vocational education and training staff engaged with teaching and learning programs are normally expected to have academic qualifications and substantial, verified employment experience in specialized or general fields acceptable to the Commission.  They must be able to conduct technical and vocational education and training programs and assess skills based on industry standards.

Teaching and other technical and vocational education and training staff engaged with teaching and learning programs are normally expected to have comprehensive training and up-to-date work experience that qualifies them to work in their area of specialization.

Where an institution intends to apply for licensure in the United Arab Emirates, and for its programs to be accredited, it must submit full details of its proposed teaching staff, with sufficiently clear explanation and documentation in English, that enables the Commission to reach a decision that the institution has quality, experienced and suitable teaching staff who can successfully discharge the range of teaching, learning and assessment responsibilities for which they are engaged.

Academic qualifications are normally evidenced by a master's degree in the teaching field.  However, in certain fields in which advanced degrees are normally not available, a bachelor's degree and extensive experience evidenced by appropriate certification would be acceptable.  Institutions, whose teaching staff possess qualifications other than a bachelor's degree with extensive experience, or a master's degree, must obtain approval for those staff from the Commission prior to commencement of teaching.

In addition, teaching and other technical and vocational education and training staff engaged with teaching and learning programs:

4.7.1    are required to demonstrate technical and professional aptitude in the area(s) in which they teach;

4.7.2    are provided with opportunities to maintain technical skills by participating in industry seminars and training, technical and vocational courses, and technical conferences and workshops;

4.7.3    are required to have a professional development or improvement plan that is reviewed by an appropriate committee in the institution prior to contract renewal;

4.7.4    are allocated time and resources to administer technical and vocational education and training programs and approved training activities beyond the classroom, workshop, or laboratory;

4.7.5    are required to have current and validated First Aid training as appropriate; and

4.7.6    are required to supervise all program-related workshop or laboratory work performed by learners.

## 4.8    Appointment, remuneration, promotion, and contract renewal.

4.8.1    The institution provides teaching and professional staff members with contracts, letters of appointment, or other documents that clearly describe the terms and conditions of employment.

4.8.2    The institution defines the probationary period and the terms of the contract including its renewal and termination.

4.8.3    The institution demonstrates that it offers adequate salaries and benefits to attract and retain suitably qualified teaching staff of diverse cultural and educational background. Salaries and benefits are sensitive to market demands and are at a level that is at least comparable to those teaching staff employed elsewhere in the United Arab Emirates in similar disciplines. It publishes salary ranges and criteria for each level of appointment, and for salary increases.

4.8.4    The institution demonstrates that it offers adequate salaries and benefits so as to attract and retain quality non-teaching staff that can support the institution in its mission. It publishes salary ranges and criteria for salary increases.

4.8.5    The institution operates criteria and procedures for teaching staff promotion from one level of appointment to another and for awarding an extended or rolling contract.

4.8.6    The term of the contract offered after the probationary period provides a reasonable degree of security and fosters loyalty to the institution and its learners.

## 4.9    Professional development.

4.9.1    The institution has policies and procedures providing teaching staff development activities that support teaching, technical up-date, and scholarship; these activities are assessed to ensure they are appropriate and effective.

4.9.2    The institution provides technical, design, and production support services and professional development and training programs for teaching and other staff, in a variety of teaching and learning strategies and technologies, in order to foster interactive learning.

4.9.3    The institution trains teaching and other staff in using application software related to their disciplines and other educational goals.

4.9.4    As relevant to its mission, the institution demonstrates that teaching staff receive adequate

opportunities and resources for continued professional development; for example: organizing and participating in national, regional, and international conferences, workshops, seminars, or exhibitions; leave entitlement for sabbaticals and training; publishing or presenting research papers.

4.9.5   The institution has policies and procedures providing professional staff development activities that support their roles and improve performance; these activities are assessed to ensure they are appropriate and effective.

4.9.6   The institution provides an adequate budget allocation to support professional development of its teaching and professional staff.

4.9.7   The institution provides documentation that each member of the teaching staff in a technical field maintains currency through periodic visits with employers.

### 4.10   Teaching staff workload.

4.10.1  The institution employs a sufficient number of teaching staff to deliver the programs it offers, and to operate efficiently and effectively in line with its mission.

4.10.2  Workload assignments are equitable and reasonable and include the entire range of a teaching staff member's responsibilities, such as teaching, advising, committee work, guidance of learner organizations, professional development, service, and curriculum development; assignments take into account the number of course preparations, course enrolments, subject matter, support from clerical and other staff or teaching assistants, and administrative responsibilities and adhere to the maximum teaching workload specified in *Appendix A*: I. *Policies and Procedures Manual.*

### 4.11   Staff evaluation.

4.11.1  The institution conducts periodic evaluations of the performance of each of its full-time and part-time teaching staff, and professional staff members using a variety of appropriate measures based on international best practice.

4.11.2  The criteria, methods, and procedures for teaching staff and professional staff evaluation are equitable and disseminated to all teaching staff and professional staff members.

4.11.3  The institution demonstrates that the results of annual teaching staff and professional staff evaluation inform individual and collective professional development plans.

4.11.4  The institution assesses its teaching staff to ensure: effective teaching and instruction (for example, the effective use of teaching and learning strategies and technologies to actively engage learners in learning), achievement in professional enhancement, scholarship or service (according to the institution's mission), and the efficient and effective discharge of managerial and administrative duties.

**4.12  Disciplinary actions and appeals.** Standards for teaching staff conduct relate to the institution, the community and the culture in which it operates, and a teaching staff members' role; disciplinary actions may be taken against teaching staff members who violate these standards, and the institution has a policy that outlines disciplinary procedures, potential actions, and appeal procedures.

**4.13  Staff grievances.** The institution operates a grievance policy and associated procedures; these are available to all teaching and professional staff.

# Standard 5.  Learners

The institution defines the characteristics of the learners it seeks to serve, consistent with its mission, and provides an environment that contributes to their cultural, social, moral, intellectual, and physical development. Services to learners and programs are based upon an assessment of learners' needs, support the achievement of their educational goals, and are consistent with the institution's mission.

## Criteria

**5.1    Learner handbook.** The institution prepares a *Learner Handbook* that includes all the policies and procedures set out in *Appendix A*: *VI. Learner Handbook*; these policies and procedures are taken from the *Policies and Procedures Manual*; the institution implements these policies and procedures and distributes this handbook to all learners.

**5.2    Admission.**

5.2.1    The governing board determines the size and character of the number of learners, and the general admissions policies; these are implemented by the teaching staff and administration.

5.2.2    The responsibility for administering admissions policies and procedures is coordinated institution-wide, although units (such as educational departments or colleges) may have a separate admissions office.

5.2.3    Admissions policies and the criteria for admission decisions are consistent with the institution's mission and the goals of its programs. These policies are clearly defined, applied to all learners equally, and are published appropriately.

5.2.4    Admissions requirements include qualitative and quantitative measures and other preparation that is consistent with the current requirements of MOHESR and with the curriculum of the technical and vocational education and training programs in which a learner wishes to enroll.

5.2.5    Admission standards for programs and the institution are regularly assessed and such information is used in recruitment and enrolment planning.

5.2.6    For programs taught in English, the institution adheres to the minimum standards of English language proficiency as described in *Appendix A*: I. *Policies and Procedures Manual*.

5.2.7    Learners in a preparatory English language program meet or exceed these minimum standards of English language before advancing into a certificate, diploma or degree program.

5.2.8    The institution operates policies on potential credit for advanced standing and for transferred courses that meet the Commission's requirements as described in *Appendix A*: I. *Policies and Procedures Manual*.

**5.3    Learner records.**

5.3.1    The institution has appropriate policies governing the collection, maintenance, storage, disposal, safety, and security of all official and original learner records, including secure fire-proof storage and back-up, preferably off-site.

5.3.2    The institution has appropriate policies for maintaining continuous records of learning achievement to which the learner has access and into which the learner may place additional

information regarding other attainments. This record, sometimes called a 'skills passport' or 'skills portfolio' will remain with the learner after completion of all or part of their program.

5.3.3    The institution has policies concerning what constitutes the permanent learner record, who may manage and up-date records, who has access to them, how long they are to be retained, and what may be disposed.

5.3.4    The institution has a policy concerning the release of information to the public that respects the rights of individual privacy, the confidentiality of records, and the best interests of learners and the institution.

**5.4    Services for learners.**

5.4.1    A designated administrative unit is responsible for planning and implementing services for learners and it is headed and staffed by those with appropriate preparation and experience.

5.4.2    Professional counselors provide personal counseling services and program teaching staff members serve as advisors.

5.4.3    The institution provides access to health services and health education programs consistent with the verified needs of its community.

5.4.4    To assist learners in career planning and appropriate employment, career development services - career testing, information, and counseling, interviewing and other employment skills, job placement, and follow-up activities - are available to learners beginning with their first enrolment. Specific policies govern the career services available to learners, alumni, and employers.

5.4.5    For learners following programs leading to professional qualifications, placement services may include monitoring and follow-up activities and liaison with the relevant professional registration bodies.

5.4.6    If the institution offers financial aid, all awards, including scholarships, are centrally coordinated and awarded according to published criteria. All funds for financial aid programs are audited in compliance with United Arab Emirates law.

5.4.7    The services for learners are systematically evaluated as part of the program for institutional research, using a variety of methods that includes user surveys; the evidence is assessed and the results evaluated and incorporated into planning.

**5.5    Learner activities and publications.**

5.5.1    The institution has a program of learner activities commensurate with its mission and the learners enrolled, and guided by appropriate policies and procedures regarding the institution's supervision of those activities.

5.5.2    A written policy guides the institution's responsibility for any media operated by learners.

**5.6    Learner behavior.**  The institution has:

5.6.1     a clear statement of learners' rights and responsibilities;

5.6.2 policies and procedures regarding discipline, including the authority of judicial bodies and institutional administrators;

5.6.3 policies and procedures regarding various academic offences (including plagiarism); and

5.6.4 an appeals policy and procedures for learners.

**5.7 Learner grievances.** The institution has and operates reasonable policies and procedures for learner grievances.

**5.8 Residence halls (if applicable).**

5.8.1 The institution has policies and procedures governing residence halls, insuring insofar as possible a healthy, safe, and secure living environment with special consideration for female learners.

5.8.2 The learning environment in the residence halls supports the educational mission of the institution.

5.8.3 A sufficient number of suitably trained staff members administers the residence halls and enhances them as a learning environment.

## *Standard 6. Learning resource center (LRC) and other information resources*

The institution provides information resources and services for learners and teaching staff that adequately support teaching and learning, and, if applicable, research, in ways consistent with the institution's mission and goals. Information resources and services are sufficient in quality, depth, diversity, and currency for the institution's curricular offerings at the appropriate level for the programs offered, and they meet the needs of the teaching and professional staff, learners, and  support personnel, regardless of where they are located.

## *Criteria*

**6.1    Operation of the learning resources center and information services.**

    6.1.1    The institution operates its LRC and learning resource services in order to meet the needs of teaching and professional staff and learners, and to support its technical and vocational education and training mission and administrative functions.

    6.1.2    The LRC and other information resources and services are supported by an adequate budget.

    6.1.3    The institution's physical learning resource center, electronic environments, and other learning resource units provide adequate space, electronic imaging equipment, and an atmosphere conducive to study and research.

    6.1.4    The LRC is open for a sufficient number of hours to meet the needs of teaching and professional staff and learners.

    6.1.5    The LRC provides appropriate services, including efficient book and periodical circulation, acquisitions and inter-library loan services.

    6.1.6    The institution ensures the proper use of its technology systems and resources by users.

    6.1.7    The LRC and other learning resource units are systematically surveyed as part of the program for quality assurance and institutional research, using a variety of methods that includes user surveys; the evidence is assessed and the results evaluated and incorporated into planning.

**6.2    Electronic library.**  The institution provides electronic library services that meet international standards and support the needs of learners and teaching and professional staff as appropriate to its mission.[1]

**6.3    Learning resource center support.** Learning resource center and other staff provide learners, teaching and professional staff with orientation programs, workshops, personal assistance and other services so they develop the key skills of information literacy and can locate, evaluate, and appropriately use knowledge and information available on line, in print, or in other media.

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[1]See, for example, the American Library Association*'s "Guidelines for Distance Learning Library Services*: http://www.ala.org/ala/acrl/acrlstandards/guidelinesdistancelearning.htm/   Another useful resource is "Managing electronic library services: current issues in UK higher education institutions," http://www.ariadne.ac.uk/issue29/pinfield/

**6.4    Learning resource center collection.** The collection, including books, technical manuals, periodicals, databases, and other learning resources in both traditional and electronic form, is adequate for the education, research, and public service programs of the institution.

   6.4.1    Teaching and professional staff and other stakeholders are involved in the development of collections and the assessment of the acquisitions policy.

   6.4.2    The LRC collection reflects the level of awards offered.

   6.4.3    The collection is cataloged according to accepted bibliographical formats and conventions to provide users with convenient access both on campus and off campus to resources including electronic databases.

**6.5    Co-operative agreements.** The institution seeks co-operative agreements with other libraries and agencies; such agreements supplement, but do not replace, its own collection. Agreements are formalized, follow the requirements of any contractual agreement (see *Standard 9*), and are subject to periodic evaluation.

**6.6    Learning resource center staff.** A sufficient number of professionally qualified staff administers the institution's learning resource center, and services, and instructional and information technology support functions, so that professional staff are available during all hours of operation.

   6.6.1    An LRC Director/Head normally has a master's degree or equivalent in information and library science and substantial experience in library and learning resource administration.

   6.6.2    Other professional staff members have degrees in library (LRC) and information sciences and training and experience in electronic resources.

**6.7    Professional development.** The learning resource center staff members have the opportunity to participate in continued professional development.

**6.8    Training.** Teaching and professional staff and learners receive on-line training and support to use electronic library and information resources and instructional and information technology effectively.

## Standard 7.  Physical and technology resources

Whether owned or rented, the physical facilities - including buildings, materials, equipment, and campus - are designed and maintained to serve the needs of the institution in relationship to its mission. The campus area adequately provides for the institution's buildings and activities, and includes a sufficient number of classrooms and other specialized physical resources (such as laboratories, studios and workshops) to support its technical and vocational education and training programs. The necessary equipment, including computing and laboratory equipment, and software systems are readily accessible and meet educational and administrative requirements. A reliable network supports the uses of information technology.

## Criteria

7.1   **Physical resources planning.** The institution engages in comprehensive physical resources planning based upon its mission and goals and related to other institutional planning; it maintains a facilities master plan; the use of space is effectively managed; long-range and annual planning and budgeting include routine, preventive, planned and deferred maintenance of all property.

7.2   **Physical and technology resources.** The institution's physical and technology resources meet its needs in relationship to its mission, programs, activities and enrolment, including if applicable:
- buildings and grounds;
- classrooms;
- general offices;
- teaching and professional staff offices;
- network infrastructure;
- computer laboratories;
- technical and specialized laboratories;
- studios;
- workshops;
- technical equipment;
- learning skills centers; and
- clinical training facilities.

7.2.1   The physical environment of the institution takes into consideration location, accessibility, and parking facilities.

7.2.2   The space allocated is adequate for the function it serves.

7.2.3   Classrooms and workshops/laboratories are equipped with up-to-date educational media.

7.2.4   Facilities and equipment are adequate to support technical and vocational education and training programs.

7.2.5   The institution provides access to physical and technology resources, and provides necessary support services for teaching and professional staff, and learners with physical disabilities, as required by United Arab Emirates law.

7.2.6   The physical and technology resources are systematically surveyed as part of the program for quality assurance, using a variety of methods that include user surveys; the evidence is assessed, and the results evaluated and incorporated into planning.

**7.3    Occupational health and safety.**
The institution provides a healthy, safe and secure environment for the campus community and meets United Arab Emirates legal requirements for health and safety.
7.3.1    Health and safety programs are the assigned responsibility of a campus administrator.
7.3.2    The occupational health and safety policy and procedures are adhered to and regularly evaluated.
7.3.3    The institution has a policy requiring First Aid Training for technical and vocational teaching and professional staff, internship supervisors, and internship site supervisors wherever appropriate.

**7.4    Information technology.**
A reliable secure network enables all members of the community to use information technology and to access information resources.
7.4.1    Appropriate security measures protect the integrity and confidentiality of instructional systems, administrative systems, and institutional networks.
7.4.2    Information technology adequately supports the instructional programs, administration of the institution, quality assurance, and planning.
7.4.3    The institution has a policy and an implementation plan to maintain and up-grade hardware and software and keeps them consistent with current technology.
7.4.4    The institution demonstrates that it incorporates technological advances into its operations on a continuous basis.

**7.5    Technical support.**
7.5.1    The institution provides teaching and professional staff members and learners with technical support for any required educational technology hardware, software, and delivery system.
7.5.2    The institution has a policy statement that specifies what kind and level of technical support it will provide for learner-owned equipment and software.

## Standard 8.  Fiscal resources

The institution provides evidence of present and future financial stability with resources adequate to accomplish its mission effectively and to ensure that all enrolled learners are able to complete their technical and vocational education and training program. A finance officer, normally reporting to the chief executive officer, oversees all business and financial functions of the institution.  Essential policies and procedures for budgetary planning and control, accounting, and external audits are in place.

## Criteria

**8.1    Fiscal resources.**
>   8.1.1    The institution demonstrates financial stability with a budget adequate to fund the personnel, operation, and capital requirements to further its mission.
>   8.1.2    The institution has sufficient financial resources to support all of its technical and vocational education and training programs.
>   8.1.3    The institution maintains:
>>        8.1.3.1    budgets for the institution as a whole, and for departments and for programs;
>>        8.1.3.2    monthly and annual reports of expenditures to budget;
>>        8.1.3.3    audited financial statements; and
>>        8.1.3.4    statements of its current accounts and financial capacity.
>   8.1.4    The institution is required to maintain funds to cover the costs of compensating and/or transferring learners to other learning providers should licensure be terminated or the institution, for whatever reason, ceases to operate.

**8.2    Financial reporting.** The institution provides the Commission with all budgets, financial statements and reports, and prepares additional financial reports, on request.

**8.3    Financial organization.** Business and financial functions are centralized in a business office headed by a chief finance officer who normally reports to the institution's chief executive officer.

**8.4    The annual budget.**
>   8.4.1    The annual budget involves input from key constituencies and is approved by the governing board. The annual budget relates to short and longer-term institutional planning, studies of institutional and program effectiveness, and is based on conservative estimates of enrolment and other sources of revenue.
>   8.4.2    The annual budget is transparent and presented in a standard format including itemized details of revenues and expenditures for individual units and contingency funding.
>   8.4.3    The responsibility for approving and controlling expenditures rests with the chief executive officer.
>   8.4.4    Authority for expenditures within defined limits is delegated to unit heads;

8.4.5  The Chief Finance Officer provides periodic (usually monthly) statements to unit heads to ensure that the institution remains within its approved budget.

8.4.6  The institution has a process for revising the budget if necessary and for modifying allocations.

**8.5  Accounting and auditing.**

8.5.1  The accounting and auditing system is administered by appropriately qualified personnel, the accounting system follows generally accepted principles and practices for accounting in vocational education and training.

8.5.2  The institution has the necessary tools of information technology to maintain accurate accounts and generate timely reports.

8.5.3  The institution maintains revenue/expenditure reports either independently certified in the audit report or included as supplemental data in the audit report.

8.5.4  The chief finance officer prepares regular financial reports for institutional officers, the governing board, and, if requested, the Commission.

8.5.5  The institution demonstrates that it has an effective process of internal auditing and financial control that complements the accounting system and the annual external audit.

8.5.6  Independent, certified public accountants, chartered accountants, or registered auditors, not associated personally or professionally with the institution, conduct an annual, fiscal year audit.

**8.6  Purchasing and inventory control.** The institution operates within policies and procedures that ensure control over purchasing and inventory management.

**8.7  Fees collection and refund policy.** The institution's fees collection and refund policy adheres to generally accepted practices in the education community and is published in relevant documents.

**8.8  Cash management.** Adequate policies and procedures exist for the receipt, deposit, and safeguarding of institutional funds.

**8.9  Risk management.**

8.9.1  The institution has a detailed framework to define, assess, and manage its risks, including programmatic and financial risks.

8.9.2  The institution manages its financial risks by evaluating them, developing strategies to avoid or reduce them, obtaining appraisals of facilities and equipment, and insuring them; it carries liability and other insurance to protect the institution and its constituencies.

8.9.3  The risk management plan addresses, among various sources of risk, the risks of disruption or failure of information technology infrastructure and tools.

8.9.4  The institution has appropriate levels of insurance - or designated financial resources - to provide adequate replacement protection for its physical plant and to cover the potential liability of personnel.

### 8.10  Auxiliary enterprises.

  8.10.1  Income-generating activities operated by and for the institution such as bookstores, residence halls, food service operations, printing/duplicating services, childcare, and transportation services adhere to the same budget and reporting practices as the rest of the institution.

  8.10.2  Revenues and costs from such enterprises are accounted for separately and included in regular financial reporting.

  8.10.3  Revenues in excess of expenses for auxiliary services are used in a manner consistent with institutional policies to improve learner and training services - such as scholarships and support for learner activities.

## Standard 9.  Public disclosure and integrity

The institution adheres to the highest ethical standards in its teaching, professional development, and service in its treatment of its learners, teaching and professional staff, and in its external interactions and relationships.  It is committed to the search for and the dissemination of knowledge and skills acquisition. Both print and electronic publications for learners, prospective learners, and the public provide complete, clear, consistent and accurate information about the institution.

## Criteria

**9.1    Public disclosure and integrity policy.** The institution:

9.1.1    meets all legal requirements of the United Arab Emirates and of the Emirate or Emirates in which it is located;

9.1.2    makes no un-substantiated claims for itself, for the prospects of learners who pursue its technical and vocational education and training programs, for its relationships with other institutions, agencies, or employers, or otherwise portrays itself in ways that are other than clear, truthful, and substantiated by evidence;

9.1.3    takes all reasonable measures to foster academic honesty in its policies and practices;

9.1.4    demonstrates through its policies and practices its commitment to the free pursuit and dissemination of knowledge consistent with the institution's mission and goals; and

9.1.5    implements institutional policies and procedures on matters such as conflict of interest, research on human subjects, intellectual property, and grievances, and publishes these in relevant documents as appropriate.

**9.2    Publications.** The institution:

9.2.1    meets the Commission's requirements for all its publications;

9.2.2    maintains an active and accurate web presence;

9.2.3    ensures that all publications are internally consistent, consistent with one another, and accurately portray the institution; and

9.2.4    ensures that its recruiting activities, print and electronic publications, and advertisements accurately and truthfully portray the institution, its licensure status, its programs and their accreditation status, so that learners and their families may make informed decisions about enrolment.

**9.3    Enrolment practices.** The institution:

9.3.1    does not compromise its admissions standards or training progress policies to achieve a desired enrolment;

9.3.2    does not award credit for duplicated courses; and

9.3.3    may develop a policy to award credit for experiential learning or training provided by other institutions or through professional certification at under-graduate level, to be approved by the Commission.

**9.4    Courses and programs.** Descriptions and titles of the courses and programs convey content; and reflect what has been accredited.

**9.5    Institutional title.** The institution has a name which accurately reflects its status and affiliations.

**9.6    Relationship with MOHESR and the Commission.** The institution:
  9.6.1    provides the Commission access to information as requested, including enrolment and teaching and professional staff data, budgets, personnel information, all reports of its operations and accurate information about the institution, including reports from any licensing, auditing, external reviews, or other accrediting agencies;
  9.6.2    co-operates with the Commission in preparing for and conducting site visits or other meetings;
  9.6.3    facilitates, at its expense, on-site visits by a committee of experts when requested by, and under the supervision and direction of, the Commission; and
  9.6.4    fosters an open, cooperative, and collegial relationship with the Commission and MOHESR.

**9.7    Contractual relationships.** In developing contractual relationships, the institution's representatives take responsibility for anything undertaken in its name. It ensures that the range of activities that may form the basis of a contract meet the *Standards*; such activities include: co-operation in planning and developing technical and vocational education and training programs, courses, and teaching and learning material; providing such programs, courses, or teaching and learning materials; exchange of teaching and professional staff, learners, and administrators; co-operation in consultancy and research activities, and internship opportunities; or offering services such as the bookstore or catering operation.
  9.7.1    The institution submits any prospective contract or memorandum of understanding to the Commission for review and approval *before* signing it.
  9.7.2    Notwithstanding any given contract, the institution maintains full control of all aspects of its technical and vocational education and training programs and services, ensuring that it has primary responsibility for awarding any certificate, diploma or degree recognized in the United Arab Emirates and for the integrity, rigor, outcome, and management of the technical and vocational education and training program and compliance with the *Standards*.
  9.7.3    Notwithstanding any out-sourcing of services, the institution remains responsible for the quality and timeliness of the services provided, for protecting confidentiality, and for ensuring that such services meet the requirements of the *Standards*.
  9.7.4    If the contractual relationship involves an institution as a partner, the institution offers evidence of the partner institution's quality, ensuring that it is either licensed in the United Arab Emirates or known and respected internationally.
  9.7.5    The institution regularly assesses its contractual relationships for effectiveness and uses the results of the assessment for improvement.

9.8    **Associations with corporate entities.** Institutions associated with separately incorporated entities, such as radio or television stations, foundations, hospitals, business corporations, trusts, or similar organizations:

9.8.1    detail the nature of the relationship, describing the benefits and obligations of each party, particularly the ways in which the association furthers the institution's mission;

9.8.2    describe the associate's activities and the manner in which such activities relate to the mission of the institution;

9.8.3    provide a roster of the associate's board members and list any personnel who have responsibilities, compensated or not, with both the institution and the associate;

9.8.4    provide a copy of the associate's most recent annual financial audit report, its charter, and by-laws; and

9.8.5    demonstrate how quality assurance procedures within the owning organization will ensure that assessment and learning services delivered in United Arab Emirates will fully meet the *Standards.*

## Standard 10: Community engagement

When in accordance with the mission of the institution, clear statements should be communicated to all stakeholders acknowledging the extent, nature and range of activities pursued by the institution as community engagement. Community engagement implies collaborative external partnerships leading to productive relationships that bring mutually beneficial outcomes. Institutions should seek to identify and respond to real needs within the community and provide guidance and leadership through application of in-house expertise to inform and solve issues of concern to the community. The institution's community might include employers in business and industry, schools, professional bodies, government entities, alumni, ethnic communities and local citizens.

## *Criteria*

10.1 **Community engagement strategy.** When in accordance with its mission, the institution develops a strategic plan specifically directed at the selected areas of community engagement. The plan should involve all stakeholders in its development.

10.2 **Relationships with the community.** The institution defines and evaluates its mechanisms for developing and maintaining productive relationships with the community.

10.3 **Relationships with employers.** The institution incorporates the needs of employers and professional bodies in its curriculum development process in order to contribute to local economic growth and society as a whole.

10.4 **Relationships with other education providers.** Mutual benefits can be derived from positive relations with schools and other institutions providing enrolment opportunities or for further studies upon graduation. Such relationships that contribute to the mission of the institution are formalized where possible and evaluated for their effectiveness at appropriate intervals.

10.5 **Relationships with alumni.** Institutions establish clear lines of communication with their alumni. This includes updating of an alumni database, appropriate staff time allocation and professional development, organizing events and a networking infrastructure.

10.6 **Other partnerships.** The particular nature of community engagement need not be restricted to the above categories but may include others based on researching the local needs and considering the resources and expertise that the institution has to offer. In all cases the effectiveness of the relationships is evaluated periodically, through surveys and any appropriate direct measures, to ensure that mutual benefits result from the activities.

# *Appendices*

The Commission requires all institutions to develop, evaluate, and update each of the following documents for distribution: 1) *By-Laws* of the governing body, 2) *Catalog,* 3) *Staff Handbooks*, 4) *Learner Handbook,* 5) *Policies and Procedures Manual*, 6) *Quality Assurance Manual, and 7) Organizational Chart.* For initial licensure the Commission also requires a feasibility study, detailed financial analysis, and timed action plan described below. Because learners need to receive current documentation for each of their courses on the first class day, the requirements for modules and/or courses are also included.

All documents should be clear, factually accurate, and current. Although they primarily serve to meet the specific needs of the institution's constituencies and its distinct mission, each must also include the policies, procedures, topics, or specific information required by the Commission, as noted in the relevant sections. **Some of the policies listed herein have specific requirements with which institutions must comply.**

## *Representation of licensed status*

The Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research (Mohesr or the Ministry) recognizes only accredited academic or technical and vocational education and training programs at licensed institutions. After an institution is licensed, each program needs to be accredited before it can be offered, and continued licensure indicates that all programs have been accredited. The Ministry makes known to the public, government agencies, and interested international parties those institutions that are *recognized* or *licensed* in the United Arab Emirates and publishes their names on its website. Institutions placed on probation or denied licensure may not state or imply in any of their materials, official or unofficial, that they are either licensed or recognized by the Ministry.

In its publications and advertisements only a licensed institution may state or imply that it is recognized in the United Arab Emirates by the Ministry. When an institution's licensure is approved, it may refer to its status as either "licensed" or "recognized" by the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research. It must note its status in the catalog, prospectus, and other publications intended for the public, using this statement:

*[Name of Institution] located at [address], is officially licensed from [day, month, year] to [day, month, year] by the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research of the United Arab Emirates to award certificates, diplomas and/or degrees in higher education and/or technical and vocational education and training.*

# I. Policies and Procedures Manual

The institution maintains a *Policies and Procedures Manual* that contains *all* the official policies, procedures, and regulations of the institution. It contains policies required by the Commission for all institutions of higher education and others the institution deems necessary to meet its mission. The institution operates in accordance with its policies, procedures, and regulations at all times. In particular, *it adheres to all Ministry and Commission requirements.*

The policies, procedures and regulations are clearly written and consistent with best practice in institutions of post-secondary education; they are approved by the appropriate institutional bodies. When these policies, procedures, and regulations are worded for a specific audience to be published, for example, in the *Staff Handbook* or in the *Learner Handbook*, they are consistent and complete. They are distributed to those affected by them.

The Commission requires institutions to develop and maintain policies, procedures, and regulations covering the topics listed below.

1. **Mission and quality assurance.**
    a. *Planning policy*. This covers short-term (annual) and long-term planning, and the review and revision of the institution's mission and its strategic plan.
    b. *Quality assurance policy*. This covers the relationship between quality assurance systems, planning and budgeting (see also *Appendix A:* II *Quality Assurance Manual)* concerning institutional effectiveness.

2. **Organization, governance and leadership.**
    a. The *By-laws* of the governing body *(see also Appendix A:* VII *By-laws).*
    b. *Conflict of interest policy.* This includes a policy covering the limitations on financial dealings between board members and the institution *(see also Appendix A:* VII *By-laws).*
    c. *Organization.* This policy includes job descriptions and lines of authority/reporting structure for the principal administrative and instructional officers (where relevant):
        i. the chief executive officer;
        ii. the chief technical and vocational education and training program officer;
        iii. the chief financial officer;
        iv. the chief learner services officer;
        v. the heads of instructional units;
        vi. the registrar;
        vii. the head of the learning resources center;
        viii. the head of information technology;
        ix. the human resources (personnel) officer; and
        x. other persons responsible for major institutional functions;
    d. *Standing committees*. Terms of reference for all of the institution's standing committees.

e. *Multiple campus policy* (where relevant). This policy covers procedures and regulations to assure comparability in learning outcomes and services.

f. *Institutional relations policy* (where relevant). This policy details the roles and responsibilities in the areas of development and fund raising, communication with internal and external offices, and media relations.

**3. Technical and vocational education and training program.**

a. *Curricula approval and review policy*. This policy covers the procedure for the approval and review of curricula, training packages or other materials including individual courses or modules (also see *Appendix B*: *Policy on substantive change*).

b. *Internship policy* (where relevant). This policy governs procedures and regulations (also see *Appendix C*: *Guidelines for good practice in practicums or internships*).

c. *Independent study policy* (where relevant). This policy ensures adequate learner supervision, comparability in content and assessment methods with other courses, and limits the extent to which learners can gain credit for independent study, e.g. in institutions following a US approach to under graduate teaching and learning this would be 6 credits; in non-US models, the institution should indicate how much credit a learner may be granted for independent study.

d. *Certificate, diploma or degree completion policy*. The policy:

    i. ensures that each program provides an appropriate sequence of courses;

    ii. ensures that the total number of notional credit hours (or such other methods as are adopted or modified from time to time) required for each program is consistent with international best practice, recognizing that there may be considerable differences between programs based on time on task, and those requiring learners to demonstrate mastery or competency;

    iii. ensures that where they are designed to incorporate general education, each program has an appropriate distribution of credits between general education, major (or area of concentration) and electives;

    iv. generally requires that the majority of work in the final year is undertaken at the institution (the Commission recognizes that because of co-operative and other inter-institutional arrangements, some learners may carry out a major part of their activities elsewhere: if this is to be the case, it should be drawn to the Commission's attention);

    v. requires learners to clearly demonstrate mastery of all program requirements using approaches to teaching, learning and assessment which are consistent with the level and nature of the course or program; and

    vi. where a course or program is defined in terms of time on task, or some other method using notional time allocation, defines the minimum and maximum enrollment period allowed, however for competency based courses and programs, institutions may use a notional hours or other measure which is appropriate.

e. *Training progress policy.* This policy covers retention, dismissal, honors (if relevant), and graduation, including:
    i. clear and unambiguous statements about learner achievement consistent with the methods of teaching, learning and assessment which are used in particular courses or programs, noting that the Commission recognizes there may be considerable differences between programs based on time on task, and those requiring learners to demonstrate mastery or competency;
    ii. criteria for add, drop, leave of absence, withdrawal, and re-admission; and
    iii. criteria for probation, suspension from the program, and dismissal of learners unable to demonstrate satisfactory progress.
f. *Grading and assessment policy.* This policy provides:
    i. institutional guidance on grading in order to ensure comparability and consistency with the approaches to teaching, learning and assessment;
    ii. guidelines and standards for teaching and professional staff for methods of assessment, writing examinations and/or tests and making course assignments; and
    iii. procedures and regulations for the late submission of course-work.
g. *Assessments* or *examinations policy.* This policy includes procedures and regulations for all forms of assessment and examination.
h. *Technical and vocational education and training program advising policy.*

4. **Teaching and professional staff.**
a. *Teaching and professional staff role policy.* This policy:
    i. defines the role and responsibilities of the teaching and professional staff in technical and vocational education and training affairs: the curriculum, teaching, learner support, professional development, management and administration;
    ii. outlines course or module management requirements, including maintaining office hours, providing a detailed course description inclusive of expected teaching and learning outcomes for each course on the first class day, and grading and examination duties;
    iii. defines the role and responsibilities of teaching and professional staff in the institution;
    iv. defines the role of teaching and professional staff in governance;
    v. defines the organizational and reporting relationships for teaching and professional staff;
    vi. describes standards of professional ethics and cultural norms with which teaching and professional staff should comply.
b. *Employment policy.*
The Commission believes that institutions should normally employ most of the teaching and professional staff on a full-time contract basis, allowing institutions to engage a number (around 25 per cent) of teaching and professional staff on a part-time basis.
However, the Commission recognizes that in delivering technical and vocational education and training programs in some discipline areas, institutions may need to engage a larger number of part-time industrially or enterprise based teaching and professional staff to deliver industry standard teaching and learning and to ensure flexibility and responsiveness of provision.

Accordingly, when an institution proposes to engage most of its professional staff as part-time in particular programs or courses, it should indicate this fact in any application for licensure or accreditation, and provide a comprehensive rationale acceptable to the Commission, justifying this approach. The justification should be based upon the quality of instruction rather than any cost-saving benefits.

An institution's employment policy:

i.  describes the range and type of teaching and professional staff and the qualifications, skills and experience expected of such staff at different levels of appointment;

ii.  has regard to the qualifications, skills and experience of prospective teaching and professional staff, and that there will be an appropriate balance ensuring quality teaching and learning outcomes;

iii.  ensures that, under normal circumstances, the qualifications, skills and experience of full- and part-time teaching and professional staff are broadly comparable, ensuring consistent teaching and learning outcomes across and between programs and courses.

iv.  provides parity for all full- and part-time teaching and professional staff (in meeting the requirements for professional, experiential, and scholarly preparation, for professional privileges, and in remuneration arrangements;

v.  defines the probationary period and the terms of the contract including its renewal and termination for all teaching and professional staff (full-time and part-time);

vi.  provides procedures for the periodic evaluation of all teaching and professional staff, with its relationship to promotion and contract extension; the procedures include details of the evaluation, the criteria used, and the weighting of the criteria;

vii.  provides procedures for professional development, including details of development opportunities, the relevant criteria, and the application procedures to pursue them;

viii.  defines leave, including sabbatical, training, maternity, compassionate, Hajj, emergency, sick, and any other leave; the policy includes details of the relevant criteria and application procedures;

ix.  specifies the division of duties for all teaching and professional staff between teaching and learning and professional development responsibilities, where relevant;

x.  specifies any relationships between grant and contract funding and salaries, salary supplements, and/or consulting fees;

xi.  addresses consulting services provided by all teaching and professional staff in accordance with international best practice; and

xii.  provides procedures for appropriate orientation and supervision.

c.  *Promotion policy*. This policy provides:

i.  explicit and detailed criteria and the weighting of the criteria for promotion between different levels of teaching and professional staff;

ii.  procedures for applying for promotion; and

iii.  procedures for considering and awarding promotions.

d.   *Personnel policy.* This policy ensures the proper maintenance of employment records for all employees, including the original or officially attested qualifications and other testamurs, the original signed contract, contractual terms, a job description, a copy of the passport, and copies of other documents required by the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs in the United Arab Emirates.

e.   *Teaching and professional staff workload policy.* This policy:
    i.    specifies the number of total duty hours per week for each member of the teaching and professional staff and the notional or actual class contact hours expected of teaching and professional staff at different levels; and
    ii.   specifies the amount of time teaching and professional staff are expected to expend on duties other than teaching and learning including counseling and advising.

f.   *Policy on professional requirements for teaching.* The policy:
    i.    ensures that the preparation and qualifications of all teaching and professional staff are appropriate to the field and level of their assignments with degrees or other qualifications earned from internationally recognized institutions including both technical and vocational education and training and/or higher education;
    ii.   ensures that all teaching and professional staff have appropriate technical and vocational education and training or higher education degrees, or other acceptable qualifications and/or industry based experience; and
    iii.  provides for the recruitment and retention of teaching and professional staff who have extensive industrial, commercial or other experience which makes them uniquely qualified for teaching and learning in technical vocational education and training even though they may not have formal academic or other qualifications.

*Teaching courses in developmental/remedial programs:* teaching and professional staff are normally expected to hold a baccalaureate degree or broadly comparable qualification in a discipline related to the subject taught, teaching experience in that subject, or post-graduate education and/or training in remedial education;

*Teaching courses in non-transferable certificate or diploma programs:* teaching and professional staff are normally expected to hold a baccalaureate degree or broadly comparable qualification in a discipline related to the subject taught, work experience, and where appropriate, relevant professional certification.

*Teaching credit courses in professional, occupational, and technical areas* (where these are components of certificate or diploma programs and are not accepted either for transfer or continuation):  teaching and professional staff are normally expected to hold a baccalaureate degree or broadly comparable qualification with appropriate work experience and, where appropriate, relevant professional certification.

*Teaching courses in associate, bachelor and masters degree programs:* The professional requirements for teaching at these levels are defined in the *Standards for Licensure and Accreditation, 2007: Appendix A, f iii.*

     *g.*    *Remuneration policy.* This policy describes the remuneration and benefits for all employees including housing, travel, health insurance, education, furniture, repatriation and death benefits.

     *h.*    *Disciplinary policy.* This policy refers to the institution's standards of conduct and is accompanied by regulations and full operational procedures including a range of actions.

     *i.*    *Teaching and professional staff appeals policy and procedures.*

     *j.*    *Teaching and professional staff grievance policy and procedures.*

**5. Learners.**

     *a.*    *Technical and vocational education and training admissions policy.* The policy:

        i.    has clear criteria consistent with the institution's mission;

        ii.    is published in the *Catalog* and other relevant documents;

        iii.    sets admissions criteria appropriate to the requirements of the programs that are offered;

        iv.    is applied consistently to all applicants;

        v.    is regularly evaluated;

        vi.    includes qualitative and quantitative criteria;

        vii.    allows acceptance of learners with a United Arab Emirates Secondary School Certificate, or its equivalent learning experience that satisfies the guidelines set by MoHESR, who meet minimum admission requirements set in the Ministerial Decrees No. 200/year 2004 and No. 133/year 2005, or any such relevant decrees that supersede or post-date these;

        viii.    normally requires for programs taught in English a minimum TOEFL score of 500 (173 CBT, 61 iBT) or its equivalent in a standardized English language test, such as 5.0 IELTS or another standardized, internationally-recognized test that is approved by the Commission; the institution applies this admissions condition to all learners, including those who have previously been admitted to a non-credit bearing intensive English language program (or remedial English courses) offered by the institution;

        ix.    presents a rationale for students to commence the program at a lower threshold of English language proficiency in certain disciplines where a lower proficiency of English is required;

        x.    specifies additional criteria, including high school grades, for admission into a program (such as engineering and health sciences) that may require a higher proficiency in mathematics and/or sciences;

        xi.    includes criteria regarding potential credits for advanced standing;

        xii.    includes criteria regarding exemptions from courses on the basis of work or life experiences (experiential learning);

        xiii.    includes criteria for evaluation of prior learning, if applicable; and

        xiv.    includes conditions governing provisional or probationary admission, where relevant.

     *b.*    *Transfer admissions policy.* The institution:

        i.    specifies that only learners transferring from a federal or licensed institution in the United Arab Emirates or a recognized foreign institution of higher learning are eligible for admission;

ii.      requires transfer learners to meet the English language proficiency requirements of the program to which they transfer;

iii.      requires for admission to programs the submission of official transcripts;

iv.      specifies that transfer criteria apply to transfers through articulation agreements;

v.      accepts only learners who are in good academic standing (according to the nature of the course or program in which they previously enrolled, having regard to the nature of the teaching, learning and assessment regime which is in place) for transfer to a technical and vocational education and training program of study similar to that from which the learner is transferring;

vi.      generally permits learners who are not in good standing to transfer only to a program in a field different from the one from which the learner is transferring, however the institution may give special consideration to the particular circumstances for an individual and make appropriate judgments about the course or program in which they new enrolment is sought;

vii.      transfers under-graduate program credits only for courses relevant to the degree that provide equivalent learning outcomes and in which the learner obtained teaching and learning outcomes broadly comparable to those obtained and required by learners within the institution;

ix.      informs applicants for transfer admissions, or re-admission, of credit transfer arrangements based on outcomes from previous courses;

x.      generally limits credit transfer to less than 50% of the total amount of teaching and learning required to complete the program, but have regard to the needs of individual learners and make appropriate adjustments according to particular circumstances;

xi.      does not grant credit twice for substantially the same course taken at two different institutions; and

xii.      allows credit transfer for clinical or practical training only when done in the United Arab Emirates; in exceptional circumstances, the Commission may grant a waiver of this condition.

c.   *Career service policy*. This policy covers the use of career development services by learners, alumni, and employers.

d.   *Residential life policy* (where relevant). This policy includes safety and security matters.

e.   *Learner finance policy*. This policy covers tuition and fee payment, refunds, and financial aid.

f.   *Learner disciplinary policy*. This policy is accompanied by regulations and full operational procedures.

g.   *Learner education and training dishonesty policy*. This policy includes plagiarism and cheating, and is accompanied by regulations and full operational procedures.

h.   *Learner grievance policy and procedures.*

i.   *Learner appeals policy and procedures.*

j.   *Learner activities policy.* This policy covers the supervisory role of the institution over learner activities and learner life.

k.　　　*Learner rights and responsibilities policy.*
　　　l.　　　*Learner counseling policy.*
　　　m.　　*Health services policy.*
　　　n.　　　*Learner records policy.* This ensures:
　　　　　i.　　　the continuous maintenance and back up of learner records with one set stored in a secure location, preferably off-site in a vault or fire-proof cabinet;
　　　　　ii.　　special security measures to protect and back up computer-generated and stored records;
　　　　　iii.　confidentiality of records;
　　　　　iv.　a definition of what constitutes the permanent record of each learner;
　　　　　v.　　the right of access to learner records, including learners' access to their own records;
　　　　　vi.　the authority to manage and update learner records; and
　　　　　vii.　appropriate retention and disposal of records.
　　　o.　　　*Information-release policy.* This respects the rights of individual privacy, the confidentiality of records, and the best interests of the learner and institution.

6.　**Learning resource center (LRC) and other information resources.**
　　　a.　　　*Learning resource center policy*, *procedures* and *regulations*. This policy covers:
　　　　　i.　　　learning resource center access, circulation, acquisition, and collection reduction;
　　　　　ii.　　the role of librarians, teaching and professional staff, and researchers in the continuous development of collections and review of LRC  policies;
　　　　　iii.　operational matters (such as opening hours, staff availability);
　　　　　iv.　learning resource center services (such as inter-library loan, electronic resources, co-operative arrangements, orientation, training);
　　　　　v.　　a code of conduct for the use of learning resources; and
　　　　　vi.　image reproduction and copyright law.

7.　**Physical and technology resources.**
　　　a.　　　*Equipment and software policy.* This policy covers:
　　　　　i.　　　maintenance and schedules for replacement and upgrading; and
　　　　　ii.　　technical support for learner-owned hardware and software.
　　　b.　　　 *Occupational health and safety policy.* This policy includes:
　　　　　i.　　　the requirements of United Arab Emirates laws and regulations;
　　　　　ii.　　safety equipment in workshops, laboratories and other areas where hazardous materials are used;
　　　　　iii.　the orientation of the campus community to safety measures and emergency evacuation procedures;
　　　　　iv.　special consideration for those with disabilities; and
　　　　　v.　　special consideration for female learners.
　　　c.　　　*Use of technology resources policy.* This policy covers:

i.  appropriate uses and the handling of abuses of the information technology system;
ii.  instructional and administrative needs for information technology resources; and
iii.  confidentiality and integrity of the instructional systems, the administrative systems, and the institutional networks.

**8.  Fiscal resources.**

a.  *External audit policy*. This policy requires:
i.  audits to be conducted in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles;
ii.  approval of the external auditor by the governing body;
iii.  open access for the external auditor to all financial records and all persons within the organization who are involved in financial transactions;
iv.  inclusion of a management letter as part of the auditor's report;
v.  freedom from interference or intrusion into the auditing process by officials of the institution or others;
vi.  direct reporting to the governing body or to a committee formed for this purpose by the governing body;
vii.  a copy of the audited financial statements and management letter to the Commission upon request; and
viii.  a prohibition against any direct connection between the auditors and the institution either personally or professionally.

b.  *Financial policy*. This policy governs:
i.  revenues;
ii.  receipting;
iii.  deposits;
iv.  expenditures;
v.  authority to enter into contracts;
vi.  bank reconciliation;
vii.  production of regular (usually monthly) financial reports;
viii.  distribution of financial reports;
ix.  internal auditing; and
x.  fundraising.

c.  *Purchasing and inventory control policy*. This policy covers:
i.  authorization for purchases;
ii.  the assurance of competitive pricing;
iii.  a mechanism for receipting purchases;
iv.  inventory maintenance and updating; and
v.  reporting requirements for purchases and inventories.

d.  *Cash management policy*. This policy includes:
i.  a clearly defined system for the receipt, deposit, and safeguarding of institutional funds centralized in the business/finance office;
ii.  handling of cash receipts by authorized persons only;

      iii.      use of duplicate receipt forms and maintenance of hard copies of records, or in the case of electronic transaction, maintenance of backup files;

      iv.      maintenance of electronic files of hard copy receipts;

      v.      secure holding of receipts prior to deposit;

      vi.      regular depositing of receipts within approved time frames; and

      vii.      reconciliation of receipts and deposits;

e.      *Risk management policy.* This policy addresses a broad range of risks including financial, health and safety, and enrollment risks.

f.      *Auxiliary enterprises policy* (where relevant). This policy covers budget and reporting practices with procedures and regulations.

## 9. Public disclosure and integrity.

a.      *Copyright and intellectual property policy.* This encourages the pursuit of knowledge and academic freedom, and covers the ownership of intellectual property created by teaching and professional staff, or learners, and the dispersal of any revenues produced.

## 10. Community engagement.

When community engagement is relevant to the institutional mission, policies and procedures should cover the planning, management and evaluation of strategies to engage the identified groups in the community.

## *II. Quality Assurance Manual*

An effective institution can demonstrate how well it achieves its mission. It documents its effectiveness by 1) identifying the expected learning outcomes of all technical and vocational education and training programs, courses, processes, and services, 2) assessing through a coherent program of institutional research whether it achieves those outcomes, and 3) using an analysis of the results in planning and budgeting to sustain quality and foster institutional improvement.

Quality assurance (institutional effectiveness) is essential to maintaining and improving institutional quality. The Commission therefore requires institutions to have an organized, continuous process for evaluating what is documented in a written *Quality Assurance Manual*. The *Quality Assurance Manual* describes the institutional effectiveness system that defines what is to be evaluated, by whom, when, and how. For each area of the institution, it describes the type of evidence to be collected and analyzed to evaluate effectiveness, the instruments to be used to collect that data, and the ways in which the results will be evaluated and incorporated in institutional and program quality enhancement.

The *Quality Assurance Manual* fully documents the quality assurance (QA) system that the institution operates. The QA system relates to institutional planning and the *Manual* identifies the institution's planning leadership, committee structure, and time-frame and the ways in which the analysis of data from institutional research relates to short-term and long-term planning and setting budget priorities. The QA system specifies how analyzed data from all institutional research is used to further the mission of the institution and improve the learner experience, the teaching and professional staff experience, all units, functions, and services, and how plans are executed and their implementation is assessed.

A director or head of quality assurance (institutional research) is responsible for the operation, periodic evaluation, and revision of the QA system and is supported by sufficient resources-financial, physical, and human-for efficient and effective operation. The QA system describes an annual cycle and appropriately phased timetable for all data gathering, evaluation and planning activities, listing the assessment tools and methods of analysis.

Because a concern for quality assurance is central to maintaining and improving institutional quality, the QA system offers an analysis of the institution from multiple perspectives to determine whether institutional goals, program and course learning outcomes, and the objectives of service and administrative units are being met.

# III. Catalog

The *Catalog* or *Bulletin* is the basic reference document about the institution and its technical and vocational education and training programs for prospective and enrolled learners and should be readily available either on-line or in print (or both). The *Catalog* is considered as a contract between the institution and its learners so that the rules, regulations, and certificate, diploma, and degree requirements in effect at the time of a learner's initial enrolment remain consistent to graduation, assuming normal progress to program completion.

The *Catalog* has the following contents:

1. current institutional calendar;
2. brief statement of institutional history, plans, institutional mission and goals;
3. statement about licensure and program accreditation;
4. brief description of the institution's financial resources, physical setting, community resources, and any co-operative relationships with other educational and training institutions;
5. admission requirements and procedures, including application fees, admissions deadlines, policies on transfer credit, withdrawal and re-admission;
6. financial policies, including all costs (tuition, fees, and other program costs), schedule for payments, and policies and procedures for refunding fees and charges to learners who withdraw from enrollment, a description of financial aid policies and opportunities;
7. description of the availability of services to learners, including educational program advising, personal and career counseling, health services, services for any special groups, extra-curricular activities and groups, alumni activities, housing, dining, transportation, book-store, and other services to the extent that these are provided by the institution;
8. statement of learners' rights and responsibilities, constraints on learners, rules for maintaining order on campus, and general process for resolving complaints;
9. statement about honesty in training programs, including a definition of plagiarism and other training program offences;
10. description of governance, including the learners' role, if any;
11. definitions of training terminology such as *major*, *minor*, or *area of concentration* and the number and level of credits or other descriptions appropriate to the nature of the teaching, learning and assessment required for each;
12. course offerings, with required sequences and frequency of course offering explicitly stated, course descriptions, credits, class and laboratory or other practicum hours, teaching staff or professional staff, course content, and if appropriate, course level and pre-requisites;
13. certificate, diploma and degree program completion requirements;
14. description of any general education requirements or program, including outcomes;
15. program regulations, including the grading system and standards for training progress;
16. listing of the professional administrative staff and members of the governing body; and
17. listing of the teaching and professional staff with qualifications held, and the conferring institution.

# IV. Teaching Staff (trainer) Handbook

Written for and directed towards the institution's teaching staff, the *Teaching Staff Handbook* comprises information that is essential to them. The institution publishes such material specific to the institution's mission as it deems necessary for its teaching staff and trainers; it also ensures that the handbook covers the rules and regulations, practices, expectations, and responsibilities that pertain to the teaching staff listed under *Standard 4* in *Appendix A*: I *Policies and Procedures Manual*. It is distributed to all the institution's teaching staff.

The Commission requires that each institution adhere to certain definitions and practices and include them and relevant policies in its *Teaching Staff Handbook*. Those policies summarized below and included in detail in the *Policies and Procedures Manual*, should also be described in the *Teaching Staff Handbook*.

1.  *Role*: role and responsibilities in the institution; course or module management requirements; role in governance; organizational and managerial structures; professional ethics; intellectual property rights;
2.  *Employment*: full and part-time staff; levels of instructional appointment and qualifications; probation and contracts; teaching staff evaluation; teaching staff development; leave; consultancy; research; orientation and supervision;
3.  *Promotion*: promotion criteria; applications procedures;
4.  *Personnel*: employment requirements and job descriptions; record keeping;
5.  *Workload*: limits on workload;
6.  *Teaching*: academic preparation; qualifications and teaching assignments; compensation and benefits; grievances; appeals; graduate assistants;
7.  *Remuneration and benefits*;
8.  *Discipline, grievance and appeals*; and
9.  *Graduate assistants' (*if any*) policy*.

The *Teaching Staff Handbook* therefore includes information concerning those policies listed under *Standard 4* in *Appendix A*: I *Policies and Procedures Manual* that are relevant to the institution and its teaching staff. Within the *Teaching Staff Handbook*, such material is worded for the teaching staff readership, but the coverage should nevertheless be complete and consistent with the *Policies and Procedures Manual*.

# V. Staff Handbook

When not included in the *Teaching Staff Handbook* or in a *Human Resources Handbook*, information essential for the institution's staff should be compiled into a S*taff Handbook*. Written for and distributed to them, the *Handbook* includes those rules and regulations, practices, expectations, and responsibilities that pertain to staff members and is specific to its mission.

The matters to be included in a *Staff Handbook* from its *Policies and Procedures Manual* or other documents are summarized below.

1.    *Role*: organizational and managerial structures; professional ethics; intellectual property rights;
2.    *Employment*: full and part-time staff; probation and contracts; evaluation; development; leave; orientation; and supervision;
3.    *Promotion*: promotion criteria; applications procedures;
4.    *Personnel*: employment requirements and job descriptions; record keeping;
5.    *Working conditions:* standard and non-standard work weeks, over-time, or compensatory time;
6.    *Remuneration and benefits*; and
7.    *Discipline, grievance and appeals.*

# VI. Learner Handbook

Written for and directed to learners, the *Learner Handbook* comprises information that is essential to them. It is distributed to all the institution's learners. The institution publishes such material as it deems necessary for its learners but ensures that it covers the rules and regulations governing training courses and programs and campus life, the opportunities available to learners, the support services they can access, the facilities provided - such as the library, learning support centers, computer laboratories, recreation areas, dining services - and the expectations for their program performance and behavior on campus.

The *Learner Handbook* contains information regarding learners' rights and responsibilities, including training and learning integrity and a definition of plagiarism, and a clear description of the nature, extent, and availability of all learner services and activities. It details the way in which learners may access program advisors, career counselors and placement services, alumni services, and the health facilities and staff.

The *Learner Handbook* therefore includes information concerning relevant policies listed under *Standard 3* and *Standard 5* in *Appendix A*: I. *Policies and Procedures Manual* pertinent to the institution and its learners. This will include admissions, academic progress, grading, assessment (including any examinations), supervision, program advising, careers, residence, finance (including financial aid), learner discipline, training and learning offences, grievances, appeals, learner activities and life, learners'

rights and responsibilities, counseling, health services, learner records, privacy and confidentiality. In the *Learner Handbook*, such material is worded for the learners' readership, but the coverage should nevertheless be consistent with the *Policies and Procedures Manual* and complete.

# VII. By-Laws of the governing body

The *By-Laws* of the governing body (the *board*) regulate its responsibilities and procedures. A clear distinction is drawn between the policy-making and fiduciary functions of the board and the responsibility of the administration and teaching and professional staff to administer and implement policy; this is evident both in the *By-Laws* and in the operation of the board. The board is responsible for the *By-Laws* of the institution; these *By-Laws* include the following.

**1  Membership and protocol.** The board:
a.    consists of duly appointed or elected members in accordance with the institution's policies and procedures;
b.    has a membership that ensures an appropriate balance of individuals with the range of expertise necessary to guide the policies and strategic planning of the institution;
c.    has members representing the United Arab Emirates community;
d.    ensures that investors in the institution do not form the majority of board members;
e.    stipulates the term of office for board members;
f.    establishes a policy concerning conflict of interest including prohibitions and limitations on financial dealings between board members and the institution;
g.    approves the institution's by-laws;
h.    meets at least twice annually; and
i.    maintains official records of all meetings.

**2  Responsibilities.** The board:
a.    appoints the chief executive officer;
b.    establishes broad institutional policies;
c.    approves and periodically reviews the institution's mission and its strategic plans;
d.    approves educational programs of a quality consistent with the institution's mission;
e.    confers, or authorizes the conferring of all qualifications;
f.    secures financial resources to support the institutional goals adequately;
g.    approves the annual budget; and
h.    approves the selection of an external auditor and receives the auditor's report.

**3  Jurisdiction.** The board:
a.    does not interfere in management decisions or with internal program bodies; and

b.      is not involved in the day-to-day operation of the institution.

**4    Review.** The board:
a.      evaluates the performance of the chief executive officer and approves his or her contract and continuance in office; and
b.      evaluates its own performance and the performance of individual members and uses that evaluation for improvement.

## *VIII. Organizational chart*

Organization charts provide a convenient way to visualize and understand the official relationships within an organization. A good organization chart outlines the reporting structure of the institution's major units and offices-for example, the board, the offices of the chief executive officer, the chief academic or training officer, the chief learner affairs officer, the chief finance officer, and department/unit heads. The organization chart indicates hierarchical relationships and lateral relationships between different departments. The organization chart should identify all offices and personnel responsible for the major activities of the institution, such as the office responsible for institutional research. It is, however, most effective as a tool when it is not too cluttered with detail and enables those unfamiliar with the institution to understand readily who is responsible for which functions.

## *IX. Feasibility study, financial analysis, and timed action plan*

**Feasibility study.** In determining whether to grant licensure to a new institution or program accreditation to a new program, among the most important questions for reviewers and the Commission are whether the mission and programs proposed by the institution meet a need in the community and in the United Arab Emirates, and whether a sufficient number of prospective learners is interested in those programs and available to sustain them. A well-designed feasibility study is therefore a key document in the proposal as it provides substantial detail about the institution's business case. At the very least the study should provide evidence in the form of market data and other studies that responds to the following questions:

1.     What is the need for the program, based on market survey of prospective learners and of prospective employers of graduates?
2.     Who will the learners be - including numbers, backgrounds, and other pertinent information?
3.     Where will they come from?
4.     Which are the competing institutions offering comparable programs in the same geographic area?
5.     Why will learners select the proposed institution or program rather than its competitors?
6.     Who will hire the graduates of the proposed programs? What is the demonstrated need for graduates who have the learning outcomes the programs propose to provide?

**Financial analysis.** Another major consideration in licensing new institutions is whether they have the financial resources to sustain the institution over time, particularly should the forecast of learner numbers prove overly optimistic. The required financial analysis covers at least five years of operation, including the sources of anticipated revenues and all anticipated expenses including the costs of meeting licensure and accreditation requirements, capital, operating, personnel expenses, and a contingency fund. Sufficient detail is included so that the basis of calculation of each item is clear. The analysis also offers three different revenue forecasts - optimal, average, minimal - based on learner intake, which in turn should be based on the analysis of the potential market and the competition within it.

**Timed action plan.** Applicants for initial licensure submit a timed action plan, a plan that documents step-by-step - with dates and deadlines - everything necessary to realize the institution's mission and the delivery of its proposed programs from the time of the initial application through the first three years of the institution's operation. The plan includes:

1. each teaching and professional and staff position required to plan, organize, and operate the campus and its programs;
2. deadlines for submitting technical and vocational education and training programs for initial accreditation;
3. the dates of planned appointments; and
4. each of the steps so that the necessary facilities, infrastructure, programs, library, equipment, instructional technology, services, and other resources are in place prior to the intended date of enrolling learners.

## X. Course/unit/module guidelines

For each course offered, the institution provides descriptive and comprehensive documentation, containing sufficient information to ensure that:

1. those involved in curriculum, course or program development understand any pre-requisites or co-requisites and the learning outcomes of the course;
2. external reviewers understand the course's contribution to the program and connection to other courses in the entire program;
3. learners who take the course understand what they need to have achieved in order to take the course, what will be expected of them during the course, and what they will have achieved having taken the course;
4. any suitably qualified person could deliver the course satisfactorily within the curriculum; and
5. sufficient information on the course is available for the purposes of course and program review (program quality assurance).

Each course description must include the following information, along with anything else the institution chooses to add:

1. course title and course code/number, credit hours (where appropriate), pre-requisites (if any), co-requisites (if any);
2. name, contact information and office hours of the current member of the teaching staff;
3. brief course description;
4. intended learning outcomes and skills of the course;
5. course topics and contents on a week-by-week basis;
6. out-of-class assignments with due dates for submission;
7. methods and dates of learner evaluation, including the relative weight of various assessment methods in determining the overall and final course grade;
8. teaching and learning methodologies; and
9. course texts, training manuals, special tools, recommended reading, learning material and resources.

Licensure and accreditation assure that an institution has established the policies, procedures, personnel, programs, and other conditions to fulfill its mission. Because institutions change constantly, periodic reviews confirm that the institution continues to adhere to the *Standards* and to fulfill its mission. Some changes, however, may have an immediate effect on the scope, quality, integrity, or effectiveness of the institution. Any such substantive change initiated after the most recent review for licensure or program accreditation must be reported to the Commission and reviewed for approval before it is made.

Institutions should discuss prospective changes with the staff of the Commission. The Commission will determine the type and extent of review the change warrants, whether it is to be an on-site review by a Commissioner or an external review. Some changes are sufficiently limited in nature and scope that they may be approved with minimal review; others require an extensive review.

1. **Types of substantive change.**
   Institutions must inform the Commission of changes like the ones noted below. They include, but are not limited to, those that:
   i. change the legal status or form of control of the institution, including a change in ownership or a merger with another institution;
   ii. significantly alter the mission, goals, or objectives of an institution or of a program;
   iii. establish instruction in a significantly different format (such as an intensive term) or method of delivery (such as e-learning programs);
   iv. re-locate the primary campus or establish instruction at a new location, such as a branch or additional campus;
   v. close one of the institution's locations;
   vi. make significant changes in the organizational structure, such as separating one unit or institution into two or joining two separate units;
   vii. form a contractual relationship with another organization to provide teaching and learning services;
   viii. make major reductions in program offerings;
   ix. increase or decrease the number of actual or notional learning hours awarded for successful completion of a program or the length of the program;
   x. offer non-credit courses or activities that affect the mission or alter teaching or professional staff workload.

2. **Notice to the Commission.**
   i. *Before the change.* An institution considering a substantive change should notify the Commission early in its planning and meet with a Commissioner shortly thereafter. This provides an opportunity for the Commission to counsel the institution about the potential impact of the change in its status, if any, and the procedures that need to be followed.

ii.    *Upon deciding to initiate the change.*  The institution must give the Commission a report at least six months before the date on which the change is to be implemented.  The report should provide the necessary information and analysis in as concise a presentation as possible, preferably fewer than 25 pages; a one page executive summary should be attached.  Reports are to include 1) a justification of the change with a detailed description and analysis of it, evidence of the need for it, and authorization by the governing body and other relevant parties, and 2) a projection of any developments anticipated as a result of the change.  The following information should be included:

- rationale for change, relationship of change to mission;
- descriptions of changes in program or institutional design;
- teaching or professional staff and others needed to implement changes;
- qualifications of teaching or professional staff;
- learning resource center and other learning resources and facilities required;
- physical plan expansion and equipment required;
- projection of other needs over the next several years, including estimates of the additional costs; and
- evidence that the institution has adhered to the *Standards  for e-Learning* if the proposed change involves offering *e*-learning programs or courses*.

3.    **Evaluation by the Commission.**
When it receives the report, the Commission will review the change, determining the scope and type of evaluation required.  The Commission may decide to:
i.      approve the change without conditions;
ii.     approve the change with specified conditions;
iii.    require an on-site visit by the Commission;
iv.    require an on-site visit by an external team;
v.     defer consideration; or
vi.    deny the proposed change.

4.    **Notification and status.**
Only after the Commission has notified the institution that the change is acceptable may it assume that it has not affected and will not affect its institutional licensure or program accreditation.  If an institution proceeds with the change without Commission approval, it risks jeopardizing its status.

# Appendix C: Guidelines for good practice in practicums or internships

An internship or practicum provides learners with guided work experience that, ideally, enables them to connect theory to the workplace and meet other goals. Internships and practicums have long been a vital component and an inherent aspect of the education of learners in the fields of health sciences, education, and engineering, and, increasingly, in other disciplines as well.

Any institution offering internships as an integral part of the program is to demonstrate that it follows these *Guidelines for good practice*. Through a central office or individual departments, the institution ensures that:

1. prospective employers are screened for their suitability as placement sites for internships; they provide:
    i. healthy, safe and reputable environments for learners;
    ii. pertinent work experiences; and
    iii. work experiences suitable to fulfill the institution's expectations for learning outcomes;
2. official agreements with placement sites are signed by both parties, kept current and on file. Such agreements define the responsibilities and obligations of both the institution and the placement site;
3. employers commit to enabling learners to meet their learning objectives with a job description and suitable assignments;
4. with the help of a technical and vocational education and training program advisor, learners develop their specific learning goals for the internship;
5. learners formally reflect on their internship or practicum experience, and the achievement of outcomes is measured;
6. learners are oriented to the skills, knowledge, and behaviors they need to succeed;
7. an effective mechanism for matching learners with prospective employers exists;
8. the effectiveness of the placement site for learning is monitored, and feedback about both learner and supervisor performance is gathered;
9. an internship and practicum manual delineates:
    i. the responsibilities of the placement supervisor, the learner, and the teaching staff advisor;
    ii. the place of the internship in the curriculum, whether elected or required; and
    iii. the notional credit hours or other credit to be earned and methods of evaluation;
10. the practicum or internship is supervised by teaching staff members in the department or program to which the practicum/internship applies; and
11. the internship program is regularly evaluated, both in terms of individual learner experiences and the program as a whole, and the results are demonstrably used for modification and improvement.

The self-study for renewal of licensure demonstrates the ways in which the institution has met and will continue to meet the *Standards for Licensure and Accreditation* and their criteria (the *Standards*). Particular attention must be paid to *Standard 1, Mission and Quality Assurance.* Each *Standard* should be addressed and backed with clear, detailed evidence and appropriate documentation.

A self-study for re-licensure demonstrates that the institution delivers programs and courses; pursues other activities such as service, consultancy/research and scholarship; provides relevant instructional, learner, and administrative services; and all these activities are consistent with the institution's mission.

## Addressing the *Standards*

1.  **Mission and quality assurance.**

A.  **Mission statement**.  The self-study includes:
    i.      the institution's mission, whether the mission has changed since the last licensure, and whether the mission has been approved by the appropriate governing body;
    ii.     rationale for the new mission; and
    iii.    the process for changing the mission and involvement of teaching staff, other staff, learners, and other stakeholders.

B.  **Goals.**  The self-study includes a detailed statement of the institution's goals and how they are consistent with the institution's mission.  The self-study includes any changes in the goals since the initial licensure and the process of making such changes.

C.  **Quality assurance**. The self-study explains in detail how the institution's program of quality assurance (institutional research) has been used to assess and evaluate its performance against its goals and objectives and how institutional planning has used the results of institutional research to improve quality.
    The self-study includes:
    i.      a matrix relating institutional goals to unit objectives;
    ii.     the instruments used and to be used to evaluate the goals of the institution and the extent to which they have been met;
    iii.    the instruments used to evaluate unit objectives;
    iv.     a description of other instruments used and to be used to obtain unit-specific data, the mechanisms by which these data are analyzed, the ways in which the results are used and will be used for unit improvement and achieving its objectives; and
    v.      the roles and responsibilities of the office of quality assurance (institutional research) in evaluating institutional  effectiveness, planning for improvements based on an evaluation of the data, and implementing changes.

D. The self-study states how the **plan and strategy for the next phase of quality assurance and improvement** will be implemented, including details on up-dating the current plan, responsibility for implementation, the implementation timeline, and the use of results. It should specifically address learner success.

E. **Planning.** The self-study assesses the effectiveness of the institution's short-range and longer-term planning process and describes the process used in such planning. It provides a summary of the implementation of the strategic plan and what remains to be done, how it will be done and in what time frame. It includes a copy of the Strategic Plan.

F. The self-study **demonstrates how the institution has met the deficiencies and weaknesses** in the mission and quality assurance pointed out in the last licensure report, what weaknesses remain, and how it plans to address them.

2. **Organization, governance, and leadership.**

A. The self-study documents **the institution's current instructional and administrative organization** and includes:
   i. an organizational chart and a description of any changes since the last licensure;
   ii. any changes in its by-laws and the process of changing them;
   iii. significant changes in the *Policies and Procedures Manual* and the process of approving such changes; and
   iv. if the institution operates in more than one location, an explanation of how the co-ordination between or among different locations is managed and an assessment of the effectiveness of this coordination system.

B. The self-study includes a list of the **members of the governing body**; any changes in its membership since the last licensure; and any changes in the role of the governing body, the chief executive officer, and other administrators responsible for the institution and its administration. The self-study includes results of evaluation of the effectiveness of the governing body.

3. **The technical and vocational education and training program.**

A. **Technical and vocational education and training programs**. The self-study describes all existing programs offered, any programs discontinued, and any new programs planned during the next five years. It describes the process of determining which new programs to offer, and the role of the teaching staff in this process.

B. **Curriculum and teaching and learning**. The self-study includes detailed information on significant

changes in curricula and methods of teaching and learning, and the process of making these changes.

C. The self-study includes the **changes in the Catalog** with explanations of any significant changes in certificate, diploma or degree requirements, general education, internship, information literacy, advising services, preparatory or remedial courses and programs, continuing research and outreach. The self-study addresses the process of evaluating program effectiveness, providing summary of the results of regular assessment of all programs offered, describing the evidence that was collected to show how learners meet specific outcomes, and demonstrates that the evidence was used for program improvement, and for institutional planning (see *Standard 3*).

D. If **external review** was conducted or accreditation received for certain programs, the self-study includes summary reports of these external evaluations.

E. If **distance education** is used at the institution, the self-study includes an analysis of this mode of delivery and plans to enhance its effectiveness. If distance education is not used, the self-study includes details of any institutional plans to incorporate distance education over the next license cycle.

F. The self-study includes details on any existing **or planned outreach** or continuing education unit giving a general overview of what is being offered and if any offerings are for credit.

**4. Teaching and professional staff.**

A. The self-study includes any **significant changes in its *Policies and Procedures Manual,* and in its *Teaching Staff Handbook* and *Staff Handbook* (unless combined)** concerning the institution's teaching and administrative and technical staff.

B. The self-study analyses the information concerning teaching and support staff, demonstrates the effectiveness of teaching **staff development support** and programs, professional development support (if relevant), and work-load assignments, and outlines any plans for improvement.

C. The self-study discloses an assessment of the **adequacy of teaching and other staff** to support the institution's technical and vocational education and training programs and in meeting the *Standards*, and its plans for addressing any deficiencies. It includes an analysis of learner/teaching staff ratios in different programs, and plans to improve them against benchmarks.

D. The self-study assesses the effectiveness of teaching **staff contribution to the institution's governance, enhancement of technical and vocational education and training programs, and the improvement in institutional effectiveness.**

E. The self-study evaluates the **number of support staff** such as laboratory assistants and technicians to demonstrate effective utilization of laboratory/workshop/studio sessions, providing evidence for

how problems in the use of equipment were handled.

F.   The self-study details **current salary scales** and benefits for teaching staff, and assesses whether these are sufficient to attract and retain quality teaching staff.

**5.   Learners.**

A.   **Admissions.**  The self-study details any significant changes in admissions requirements.  The self-study analyses the effectiveness of the admissions requirements as predictors of learner advancement into the program and projects any plans for changing the admissions requirements.

B.   The self-study includes a **summary of learner enrolment growth** since the last licensure, enrolment management plans for the next licensing cycle, and the areas in which the growth is expected to occur.  The self-study appends enrolment data on a year-to-year basis to include:
   i.    new enrolment (first year and transfer);
   ii.   total program enrolment;
   iii.  measures of learner progress (percentage on academic probation etc.);
   iv.   attrition (withdrawal, academic dismissal, other dismissal); and
   v.    number of graduates.

C.   The self-study includes **data on job placement** of the institution's graduates and demonstrates the effectiveness of career development services.

D.   The self-study analyses various measures of **quality and learner satisfaction** in the area of learner services as outlined in the *Standards*, and projects any plans for improvement.

**6.   Learning resource center and other information resources.**

A.   The self-study details any significant changes in policies and procedures concerning the **learning resource center** and information resources and services.

B.   The self-study evaluates the effectiveness of the **learning resources, services,** and staff available for the institution and describes any plans for improvement.

**7.   Physical and technology resources.**

A.   The self-study describes any significant changes to the institution's **policies and procedures concerning physical and technology resources.**

B.   The self-study describes any **safety-related problems** and plans to address them.

C. The self-study **evaluates the physical resources** of the institution, including classrooms, office space, laboratories, workshops, studios or other specialized facilities, analyses their adequacy, reports the results of surveys of learners and staff satisfaction with its physical resources, and projects plans to address any deficiencies.

D. The self-study demonstrates the **adequacy of information technology**, including computers and other equipment, to meet the needs of the institution, projects future needs, and offers plans for improvement.

E. The self-study includes a **master plan** to accommodate the institution's future growth.

**8. Fiscal resources.**

A. The self-study includes any significant changes in **policies and procedures relating to fiscal resources** as outlined in *Standard 8*.

B. The self-study details any **key financial issues** faced by the institution and any plans to address them. It is accompanied by the institution's latest annual financial statements and an independent auditor's report.

C. The self-study assesses the effectiveness of the institution's **risk-management policy** and details any plans to improve risk-management.

D. The self-study assesses the **effectiveness of the institution's policies and procedures regarding fiscal resources** and details any planned improvements as a result of the assessment.

**9. Public disclosure and integrity.**

A. The self-study discloses any significant changes in its **policies and procedures concerning public disclosure and integrity** (see *Standard 9*). It assesses the effectiveness of its policies and discloses any plans to address any inadequacies.

B. The self-study explains any **contracts, memoranda of understanding**, or other agreements entered into since the last license. Copies of any such agreements are included in the self-study. The self-study also demonstrates the benefit of these contractual agreements.

C. The self-study discloses details of any **associations with corporate entities** including an evaluation of how the association furthers the institution's mission.

D.   The self-study demonstrates how and from which sources the institution's programs has received the **benefits of external review**, and how learners and teaching and professional staff engage with the external professional and workplace communities in ways that support the goals of its programs.

E.   The self-study discloses an institutional **summary of the current accreditation of each program.** If any program is out of compliance, the self-study indicates plans to bring it into compliance. It also details any additional institutional or programmatic accreditations received and plans to acquire the same.

**10.   Community engagement.**

A.   The self-study identifies any significant changes in its **policies and procedures concerning community engagement** (see *Standard 10*).  It assesses the effectiveness of its strategies and policies and discloses any plans to improve relationships and gain mutual benefits.

B.   The institution evaluates each external partnership to consider its contribution to the mission and the **resource demands** of maintaining the activity.

**Documents to submit include:**

1.   Mission, goals and outcomes
2.   *Fact Book*
3.   Governing body *By-Laws*
4.   Organizational chart
5.   *Policies and Procedures Manual*
6.   *Teaching Staff* and/or *Staff Handbook*
7.   *Catalog*
8.   *Learner Handbook*
9.   Annual financial report (including auditor's report)
10.  Strategic plan
11.  Facilities master plan
12.  *Quality Assurance* (Institutional Effectiveness) *Manual*
13.  *Annual Report*