



Executive Summary
Renewal of Institutional Licensure
Ajman University (AU)
Ajman

13 – 16 February 2023

An external review team (ERT), appointed by the Commission for Academic Accreditation (CAA) of the Ministry of Education (MOE) of the United Arab Emirates (UAE), visited Ajman University (AU) from 13 to 16 February 2023 to evaluate the self-study report (*Self-Studies*) submitted for renewal of institutional licensure (RIL). The findings of the ERT reflect its analysis of the *Self-Studies* report and observations made during the on-site evaluation in terms of requirements set out in *Standards for Licensure and Accreditation 2019 (Standards)* and associated *Procedural Manual for Renewal of Institutional Licensure (PM-RIL)*. The exit interview was held on 16 February 2023.

AU was founded in 1988 as a private institution of higher education. His Highness Sheikh Humaid Bin Rashid Al-Nuaimi, member of the Supreme Council and Ruler of Ajman, issued on 17 June 1988 the Emiri Decree establishing Ajman University College of Science and Technology (AUCST), which received its first intake of students on 15 September 1988. In accordance with the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research (today, Ministry of Education), Decree 54, AUCST became Ajman University of Science and Technology (AUST). The name was changed again to Ajman University (AU) in 2016. AU, previously a two-campus university comprising the main campus in Ajman and a second campus in Fujairah, split in March of 2019 becoming Ajman University, based only in Ajman and the University of Science and Technology of Fujairah.

Currently, AU has nine colleges: College of Dentistry, College of Architecture, Art and Design, College of Mass Communication, College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences, College of Business Administration, College of Law, College of Humanities and Sciences, College of Engineering and Information Technology (CEIT), and College of Medicine. The university offers 22 bachelor's degree programs, 14 master's degree programs, and two doctoral programs.

AU reports 5468 enrolled students in the 2023 spring semester of which 20% are UAE nationals, 43% are males and 57% are female. The 22 undergraduate programs enroll 92% of the students while the remaining 8% are enrolled in the 14 graduate programs.

The total number of full-time faculty members in AU during Spring 2023 is 254, of which 226 have terminal degrees. Forty nationalities are represented among the faculty with the largest numbers coming from Jordan (35), India (27), Canada (16), and USA (13). The full-time faculty



to student ratio is approximately 1:22.

Through its consideration of AU's *Self-Studies* for RIL, examination of other documentation, and interaction with faculty, students, and others, the ERT identified some notable strengths. These include the following:

Facilities. The well-maintained facilities, including the Student Hub, which provide an excellent environment for teaching and learning.

Career Support. The university's recognition of the need to produce "career-ready" graduates and provide innovative career support as reflected in AU's new vision and mission statements.

Support and Commitment. The university's commitment to community service, including provision of free dental care to members of the community both on-site and across the UAE. The broadening of the university's commitment to "diversity" to include socio- economic factors, thereby expanding opportunities to qualified students regardless of their financial means.

There are, however, significant concerns must be addressed to comply with *Standards*. The main issues of concern include the following:

Documentation. While the *Self-Study* is well-written and organized, many documents, analyses, and assessments explicitly required by the *PM-RIL* are either missing or incomplete. These include: (1) discussion of all policies developed and implemented since the last RI; (2) description of the process for policy dissemination; (3) analysis of the effectiveness of the comprehensive risk management plan; (4) evaluation of the ways in which faculty and students are involved in the decision making of the institution; (5) documentation of regular performance reviews of the research strategy and related policies, along with enhancements made as a result of such reviews; (6) quantitative evidence to demonstrate that institutional support for research and scholarship is adequate; and (7) changes in inventory of physical spaces since the last RIL . In addition, statements asserting compliance with *Standards* are made without supporting evidence. Examples of such statements include: (1) "*the delegation authority for financial matters has been determined to be quite effective over the past decades;*" (2) "*AU firmly complies with all the conditions mentioned in the published fees and payment terms;*" (3) "*the process of internal auditing and financial control complements the accounting system and the annual external audit;*" and (4) "*adopted policies and procedures are being used effectively to ensure that academic honesty, ethical behaviour and research ethics are being practiced by students and faculty.*"

New Mission Statement: Unlike the old mission statement, the new mission statement approved by the BOT on May 10, 2022, does not include the "dual gender" description of the university.



This is inconsistent with the manner by which the majority of the university's programs are delivered. Additionally, discussions with AU personnel held during the visit indicated that there are no plans to eliminate gender-specific delivery of any programs (which currently offer it) during the next five years. Hence, the ERT views removal of the "dual gender" description of the university from the new mission statement to be misleading. The mission statement must explicitly and correctly reflect the dual gender nature of the majority of the university's programs.

Accommodation of People of Determination. While significant attention has been paid to meeting the needs of people of determination, a tour of the facilities indicated that some laboratories have manual "one-way" doors, which may hinder rapid egress of people of determination during rapidly evolving emergencies such as fires. The majority of the facilities, however, have "two-way" swing doors which allow for rapid exit during emergencies. Nevertheless, AU must conduct a safety assessment of all facilities and promptly implement appropriate corrective actions, as needed, to allow safe and rapid egress of people of determination from all facilities during emergencies. Additionally, when appropriate, AU must ensure that its policies and procedures related to people of determination include not only students, but also faculty, staff and visitors.

The ERT makes its requirements and suggestions in a spirit of constructive engagement, with the aim of ensuring that the *Standards* are met, and to aid AU in its desired objective to obtain Renewal of Institutional Licensure.

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