



International Quality Review of Emirates Aviation University

October 2021

Contents

About this review	1
Executive summary	2
QAA's conclusions about Emirates Aviation University	3
European Standards and Guidelines	3
Good practice	3
Conditions	4
Recommendations	4
Explanation of the findings about Emirates Aviation University	6
Standard 1.1 Policy for quality assurance	7
Standard 1.2 Design and approval of programmes	10
Standard 1.3 Student-centred learning, teaching and assessment	13
Standard 1.4 Student admission, progression, recognition and certification	17
Standard 1.5 Teaching staff	19
Standard 1.6 Learning resources and student support	22
Standard 1.7 Information management	24
Standard 1.8 Public information	26
Standard 1.9 Ongoing monitoring and periodic review of programmes	27
Standard 1.10 Cyclical external quality assurance	29
Addendum	30
Glossary	34

About this review

This is a report of an International Quality Review conducted by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) at Emirates Aviation University. The review took place from 25 to 28 October 2021 and was conducted by a team of three reviewers, as follows:

- Professor Jeremy Bradshaw
- Dr Dave Dowland
- Dr Harry Williams (student reviewer).

International Quality Review (IQR) offers institutions outside the UK the opportunity to have a review by the UK's Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA). The review benchmarks the institution's quality assurance processes against international quality assurance standards set out in Part 1 of the [Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area](#) (ESG).

In International Quality Review, the QAA review team:

- makes conclusions against each of the 10 standards set out in Part 1 of the ESG
- makes recommendations
- identifies features of good practice
- comes to an overall conclusion as to whether the institution meets the standards for International Quality Review.

A summary of the findings can be found in the section starting on page 2. [Explanations of the findings](#) are given in numbered paragraphs in the section starting on page 7.

The QAA website gives more information [about QAA](#) and its mission. A dedicated section explains the method for [International Quality Review](#) and has links to other informative documents. For an explanation of terms see the [glossary](#) at the end of this report.

Executive summary

Emirates Aviation University (EAU) was established in 1991 by the United Arab Emirates (UAE) Department of Civil Aviation and was initially named the Dubai Aviation College. The primary purpose of the College was to provide aviation-related training to private students and corporate clients. The College was first licensed as a Higher Education Institution by the UAE's Ministry of Education (MOE) in 1999. In September 2001, the College was amalgamated with the Emirates Group (EG) to form the 'education arm' of the Group. The change of name to Emirates Aviation College was then approved by the MOE in 2003. In 2010, having met the necessary criteria applied by the MOE for university status, the name of the institution was changed to Emirates Aviation University and approved by the MOE in January 2015. A Renewal of Licensure Review was conducted remotely in October 2020 by the Commission for Academic Accreditation (CAA) on behalf of the MOE and resulted in the licence being renewed until 2026.

EAU's Higher Education programmes are accredited by the Commission for Academic Accreditation (CAA), Knowledge and Human Development Authority (KHDA), and General Civil Aviation Authority (GCAA). EAU also obtained international accreditation such as Royal Aeronautical Society (RAeS), Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport (CILT) and European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA). EAU also has a collaborative partnership agreement with Coventry University in the United Kingdom to offer joint degrees in the UAE.

The University's vision is to be one of the world's leading institutes of higher education in aviation-related disciplines. Its mission is fourfold:

- To serve the multifaceted aviation educational needs of students from the UAE as well as the greater Middle Eastern and Sub-continent regions.
- To offer outstanding applied educational programmes that allow students to develop creative, analytical, communication and critical thinking skills in a collaborative, nurturing environment that promotes life-long learning and contributes to success in their professional careers.
- To value and support academic, vocational, and applied research amongst its faculty both in their disciplines and in the appropriate pedagogy necessary to be effective teachers and to serve the aviation industry.
- To support community outreach through collaboration between the University and the wider communities, both locally and internationally, with regards to the exchange of knowledge and resources. Through sustainable collaborative arrangements the University will strive to advance academic and applied learning to benefit civic responsibility and the public good through research, mentoring and outreach scholarships, primarily relating to the aviation sector.

EAU's organisational structure includes three academic schools, the Business School, School of Engineering and School of Mathematics. These three schools are each headed by a Dean. There is a fourth Dean, the Dean of Postgraduate Studies who leads the Postgraduate Centre. Research is managed by the recently appointed Director of Research.

The University has 1,197 students, 57% are full time and the remainder part time. There are 84 different nationalities represented in the student demographic profile with 34% from the UAE, 31% from Asia and 18% from the Middle East; 69% of students are male and 31% female. In 2019-20 the University awarded 427 degrees.

The work of the University is delivered by a total of 105 staff, 73 academic faculty and 32 administrative staff; 45 per cent of faculty hold doctoral-level qualifications.

The University has identified a number of immediate challenges that emerge from the Risk Register and are listed below. These include business continuity and crisis management in the COVID-19 pandemic and post-pandemic period; implementation of a new student information system; the aim to increase student enrolment annually; the availability and ability to attract high-calibre faculty who are research active; and student opportunities for internships.

In reaching conclusions about the extent to which EAU meets the 10 ESG Standards, the review team followed the handbook for International Quality Review (June 2021). The review process is evidence-based, and the review team was provided with a self-evaluation and supporting evidence by the University. During the four-day virtual review visit, which took place from 25 to 28 October 2021, a total of nine meetings were held, comprising the Vice Chancellor, the senior management team, teaching faculty, support services staff, students, alumni and employers.

In summary, the review team concluded that eight of the 10 Part 1 European Standards and Guidelines (2015) are met. The two standards that are not met are Standards 1.1, Policy for quality assurance and Standard 1.3, Student-centred learning, teaching and assessment.

Overall, the team concluded that Emirates University meets eight of the 10 of the *European Standards and Guidelines (2015), Part 1: Internal Quality Assurance*. The standards not met by Emirates Aviation University are: Standard 1.1: Policy for quality assurance; and Standard 1.3: Student centred-learning, teaching and assessment. Emirates Aviation University therefore **meets** the requirements of IQR **subject to meeting conditions** by the end of December 2022.

In May 2022, Emirates Aviation University submitted additional evidence with reference to actions taken to address the two conditions. After considering the additional evidence, the review team concluded that Emirates Aviation University **meets** the two conditions.

QAA's conclusions about Emirates Aviation University

The QAA review team reached the following conclusions about the higher education provision at Emirates Aviation University.

European Standards and Guidelines

Emirates Aviation University meets eight of the 10 ESG Standards and Guidelines. The standards not met by Emirates Aviation University are:

- Standard 1.1: Policy for quality assurance
- Standard 1.3: Student-centred learning, teaching and assessment.

Emirates Aviation University therefore **meets** the requirements for International Quality Review **subject to meeting the conditions** set out below.

Good practice

The QAA review team identified the following features of **good practice** at Emirates Aviation University.

- The University's continued investment in, and use of, high-quality technical learning resources which enhance the student learning experience (ESG Standard 1.6).

Conditions

The QAA review team identified the following **conditions** that must be fulfilled before all of the European Standards and Guidelines can be deemed met at Emirates Aviation University.

- Modify the approach to the construction of institutional academic and strategic plans to ensure there is full engagement of staff, students and other parties in design and implementation (Standard 1.1).
- Ensure the implementation of learning, teaching and assessment policies and procedures are underpinned by a university-wide understanding of a student-centred approach and take steps to ensure that these are consistently applied and fully embedded across schools and the University (Standard 1.3).

Following submission of an action plan and additional evidence by Emirates Aviation University on 23 May 2022, the review team concluded that the two conditions above had been fulfilled and that they were therefore now **met**.

Recommendations

The QAA review team makes the following **recommendations** to Emirates Aviation University.

- Implement the programme to advance the principles of equality and diversity to which the University is already committed in section nine of its Teaching and Learning Strategy (Standard 1.1).
- Enhance the approach for design of new programmes to fully involve students (ESG Standard 1.2).
- Ensure that there are effective arrangements to enable the sharing of good practice within and between schools and across the whole University (Standard 1.3).
- Ensure that the complaints policy covers the full range of possible complaint circumstances and is not restricted to student grievances (Standard 1.3).
- Establish arrangements for the monitoring and analysis of student complaints (Standard 1.3).
- Ensure that students are consistently provided with criteria for marking in advance of their assessment (Standard 1.3).
- Ensure that marking criteria map clearly to the grading system (Standard 1.3).
- Ensure that the policy for late submission is published and accessible to all students (Standard 1.3).
- Ensure that the mechanisms in place for reviewing the appropriateness of assessment practices are applied consistently (Standard 1.3).
- Establish and implement an institutional policy for the provision of feedback on assessed work (Standard 1.3).
- Establish and implement an institutional policy for double marking or assessment moderation at undergraduate level (Standard 1.3).
- Establish arrangements for the monitoring and analysis of grade appeals (Standard 1.3).
- Establish and implement a general university student induction that can be supported by programme level information (Standard 1.4).
- Establish and publicise a process by which admissions decisions can be appealed (Standard 1.4).
- Strengthen the arrangements in place for the monitoring and oversight of student support services (Standard 1.6).

- Complete the planned revision of the website to ensure that programme-specific admissions requirements, learning outcomes and pass rates are available to prospective applicants (Standard 1.8).

Explanation of the findings about Emirates Aviation University

This section explains the review findings in more detail.

Terms that may be unfamiliar to some readers have been included in a [brief glossary](#) at the end of this report. A fuller [glossary of terms](#) is available on the QAA website, and formal definitions of certain terms may be found in the operational description for the [review method](#), also on the QAA website.

Standard 1.1 Policy for quality assurance

Institutions should have a policy for quality assurance that is made public and forms part of their strategic management. Internal stakeholders should develop and implement this policy through appropriate structures and processes, while involving external stakeholders.

Findings

1.1 The university operates under significant oversight from the United Arab Emirates (UAE) government through the Ministry of Education (MOE) and the Commission for Academic Accreditation (CAA) as well as several accreditation and validation bodies and they, along with the needs of the parent industry, are a predominant influence on the institutional quality policy framework.

1.2 The overarching policy for quality assurance is available internally to all staff and externally through the institutional website. There is a compendium of University policies and procedures relating to quality assurance. The Quality Assurance Manual is available for all staff and faculty members in the internal shared drive of the University.

1.3 There is provision for institutional research (qualitative and quantitative reporting systems) as a foundation for quality assurance, coordinated by the Organisational Performance and Quality Assurance Unit (OPQA). The OPQA is overseen by the Academic Quality Assurance Committee (AQAC), which in turn is responsible to the University Council. OPQA publishes the EAU Fact Book - a summary of statistical information on the University - and a range of core datasets to support internal and external reporting.

1.4 OPQA is responsible for facilitating continuous quality improvement across the institution through school and support services operational planning. OPQA maps the operational plans against institutional performance indicators and follows up to check effectiveness of implementation. Longer term plans are approved by the Vice-Chancellor following advice from schools and committees. Responding to the cycle of programme and institutional licensure reviews, OPQA records and monitors responses to recommendations arising from external, programme and institutional licensure reviews and checks that follow-up action is taken.

1.5 Students are involved in governance through several committees, including the Student Council, the Graduate Council and Student Staff Liaison Committees. Student feedback also has impact on quality assurance through a range of programme and university-wide surveys carried out by OPQA. There are checks on each stage of the student journey, with the process review involving students. There is evidence of a series of improvements to the student experience arising from the process reviews, and students spoke positively of action taken in response to their feedback through course surveys, although they were unaware of any systemic approach to the dissemination of the results of such actions.

1.6 There is significant industrial input to the development and review of academic provision and the development of placements and internships through programme advisory boards and other industrial links including the notably close connection with the Emirates Airline.

1.7 EAU articulated some priorities in the Strategic Plan for 2019-24, placing a premium on development as an industry-focused institution and on high quality student experience, the maintenance of an excellent record in local and international accreditation, as well as the development of research. However the team noted that CAA, during the

2020 Re-Licensure, urged the development of 'a revised Strategic Plan...based on addressing EAU's current challenges rather than general aspirations of excellence'.

1.8 Other sections of the CAA report, however, mention examples of lack of clarity or omissions in the institutional policy framework and offer associated recommendations. The CAA conducted a re-licensure process on behalf of the MOE for EAU in 2020. The resultant report observed some weaknesses in the quality assurance framework, noting that 'while there was 'some evidence of quality assurance processes leading to action plans, there is much less evidence of how these are implemented, assessed, resourced and used in future planning'. The University was advised that the 'quality assurance systems themselves need to be regularly assessed and revised to ensure fitness for purpose'. The MOE subsequently renewed the licensure of the University until 2026. Nevertheless, the review team would encourage EAU to take action to ensure that the quality policy framework is comprehensively developed, reviewed and grounded in international good practice.

1.9 There is established risk management methodology with a Risk Register (2019-2024), which mentions several risks including, among others, the retention of faculty, the research active faculty, the maintenance of a good student experience and the maintenance of academic integrity and partnership development. The review team heard that the Audit and Risk Committee and the MOE monitor the risk register, although the review team did not see significant evidence that the Risk Register was prominent as a point of reference for staff more generally across the university. When asked about the current academic risks, senior staff referred only to the consequences of the pandemic and to the ongoing work on the development of research. The CAA and MOE Renewal of Licensure Report 2020 referred to the need to address the levels and qualifications of faculty; senior staff robustly explained to the review team the actions being taken to resolve that issue (see also Standard 1.6). The CAA and MOE concluded the licensure process by stating its confidence in the ability of the University to meet its standards.

1.10 The University has a Teaching and Learning Strategy and an E-Learning Strategy. The review team found that staff were able to cite examples of sound teaching and learning practice, supported by an operational planning process, but showed little engagement with the strategies as a driver of systemic development (see also paragraph 5.15). For example, the Teaching and Learning Strategy commits the University to a programme of action to ensure that 'different cultural backgrounds and perspectives are an integral part of our teaching and learning environment and that students are part of an academic community that treats its members with respect and creates equal opportunities for all to succeed, regardless of gender, ethnicity, cultural background or disability'. University representatives were unable, however, to point to the realisation of any programme of activity and there was a lack of recognition of the identified actions in the Teaching and Learning Strategy as an anchor for development of principles of equality and diversity. Taking account of the documentary evidence and after having heard from staff of the University, the team **recommends** the University modify the approach to the construction of institutional academic and strategic plans to ensure the full engagement of staff, students and other parties in design and implementation. This recommendation is a **condition** for meeting this standard. Secondly, the team **recommends** the University implement the programme to advance the principles of equality and diversity to which the University is already committed in section 9 of its Teaching and Learning Strategy.

1.11 Despite evidence of examples of sound practice, there is a need for a more coherent institutional quality framework as the basis for strategically driven, continuous improvement involving all parties. The review team concludes that Standard 1.1, Policy for quality assurance is **not met**.

1.12 Following submission of further evidence by EAU in May 2022 (See Addendum, page 30) the review team concluded that the actions already taken by EAU and those proposed for future action are appropriate in design to ensure that strategic plans and policy development includes staff, students, and other external stakeholders. The effectiveness of these proposals will take some time to emerge as they are operationalised, but the University has now put in place a more robust framework and implementation will be evaluated at the point of mid-cycle review. The review team therefore concludes that the condition is now **met**.

Standard 1.2 Design and approval of programmes

Institutions should have processes for the design and approval of their programmes. The programmes should be designed so that they meet the objectives set for them, including the intended learning outcomes. The qualification resulting from a programme should be clearly specified and communicated, and refer to the correct level of the national qualifications' framework for higher education and, consequently, to the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area.

Findings

2.1 Formal approval of programmes of study lies with the CAA and the Ministry of Education. The process for programme planning and development at EAU is, therefore, closely aligned with the government requirements.

2.2 Programme development is led by the relevant School Dean. The process, which is described in the EAU Policies and Procedures Manual, includes several steps, including market analysis and other evidence of demand, analysis of any competing programmes, projection of resource requirements, financial and resource analysis, needs analysis, demonstration of satisfactory linkage to the University strategic plan, and generation of an action plan.

2.3 The process for development and approval of a new programme begins with the appointment of a subcommittee by the relevant School Council to draw up a preliminary list of potential programmes based on market need and to decide on the most favourable programme to be selected.

2.4 A larger team is then assembled to make a thorough assessment of the market need for the programme, define the goals and outcomes of the proposed programme, assess the competitiveness of the programme in the higher education environment, develop a tentative structure for the curriculum, estimate the resource requirements for the programme, and estimate its likely growth and economic viability. This results in the submission of a detailed recommendation to the School Council.

2.5 If the initial recommendation is approved by the School Council, the second stage involves preparation of a detailed description of the programme, including its length, the allocation of credits to the different components, definition of the objectives, outcomes mapping of course learning outcomes to programme learning outcomes and their alignment to the relevant level descriptors in the UAE's Qualifications Framework. A workshop is then convened to allow three external academic experts to discuss the new programme and add refinements.

2.6 There is external industrial input coming from the programme advisory groups, field experts and the Emirates Group (EG) through the EAU/EG Partnership Management Committee. If there is an existing programme advisory board in a closely related field of study, it will be consulted during the development of a new programme. Independent Academic Advisers are sometimes appointed by School Councils and approved by the Vice-Chancellor.

2.7 Input from students and graduates is taken through the School Councils, from the Student Exit and Graduate Destination Surveys and through open day surveys.

2.8 The approval processes include checks that the programme documentation meets all the requirements of professional bodies, the National Qualifications Framework (at the

appropriate level), approving authorities (Knowledge and Human Development Authority - KHDA and MOE), and the collaborative partners (Emirates Group Business Units and Coventry University), programme specifications are developed in line with CAA standards.

2.9 The curriculum is approved by the Vice-Chancellor on the recommendation of the University Council, and a submission is made to CAA for approval to schedule an Initial Programme Accreditation. The proposal then goes for CAA Initial Accreditation. The institution has to demonstrate alignment of new qualifications to the Level Descriptors in the UAE National Qualifications Framework (QFEmirates) as part of that Initial Programme Accreditation. Following approval, the programme curricula are published in the EAU Catalogue and other promotional materials including the course descriptors, credit requirements for completion, and expected student workload.

2.10 Members of faculty participate in training and development in the articulation of programme content, learning outcomes and assessment, as well the construction and review of programmes, in line with CAA requirements. The fulfilment of assessment requirements is confirmed through semesterly course assessment reports.

2.11 Institutions with Institutional Licensure and Programme Accreditation awarded by the CAA are also expected to seek programme accreditation from international professional associations, where applicable. Coventry University has validated 21 EAU programmes as part of a partnership agreement recognised by the KHDA in Dubai, regulated by a process controlled by the Coventry University Collaborative Provision Development Committee. The programme specifications for these programmes refer to the relevant QAA Subject Benchmark Statement.

2.12 All existing programmes at EAU have been designed with overall programme objectives and specifications that are in line with the institutional strategy and have explicit intended learning outcomes. According to the EAU Policies and Procedures Manual, new programmes are designed with overall programme objectives that are in line with the institutional strategy. Senior staff confirmed that new programmes and programme assessment reviews are linked to the Five-Year Strategic Plan and the implementation plan.

2.13 The EAU Policies and Procedures Manual, stipulates that new programmes must have explicit intended learning outcomes. The manual states the requirement for each programme to have a detailed specification and provides a detailed description of what a programme specification should include. This is in alignment with CAA expectations, which state that each programme must have a comprehensive specification document. Programme specifications, including detailed learning outcomes, are available in the University Catalogue.

2.14 With reference to the requirement that programmes are designed by involving students and other stakeholders in the work, EAU policy refers to an assessment of 'student interest', which essentially comprises the scrutiny of student survey data and feedback from student representatives meetings. While this provides evidence of student consultation and feedback in the improvement of existing programmes, it does not provide evidence of explicit consultation of students in the design of new programmes. The review team therefore **recommends** the University enhance the approach for design of new programmes to fully involve students.

2.15 The CAA procedures refer to the Guidelines of Good Practice of the International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE), The Guidelines for Quality Assurance from the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA), and the common core standards for quality review, endorsed by the

Arab Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ANQAHE). Many of the programmes at EAU are accredited by an appropriate professional body.

2.16 Since new programmes are required to align with the national qualifications' framework, it is necessary to carry out market research. This normally includes looking at the offerings of competitor universities. OPQA is heavily involved in the approval of new programmes process. It carries out the benchmarking process and ensures the documents meet the requirements of CAA.

2.17 The industrial advisory board members of the relevant school play a role in the design of new programmes, using their industrial experience and their understanding of the current training needs and market requirements. If there is an existing Programme Advisory Board in existence in a closely related field of study, it will be consulted during the development of a new programme.

2.18 Although the EAU Policies and Procedures Manual does not explicitly require new programmes to reflect the four purposes of higher education of the Council of Europe ('preparation for sustainable employment, personal development, preparing students for active citizenship, and creating a broad advanced knowledge base and stimulating research and innovation'), the CAA requirements, together with the vocational nature of the programmes at EAU, ensure that this happens in practice. Programmes at EAU are mapped to the UAE Qualifications Framework, which has significant overlap with the four purposes of higher education. Existing programmes at EAU closely reflect the four purposes of higher education of the Council of Europe.

2.19 Alumni confirmed that the programmes in general, and specifically the internships, prepared them for sustainable employment and active citizenship. The internships instilled time management, teamwork and leadership skills for the participants.

2.20 According to the SED, programme curricula are designed to ensure that all students have a smooth progression to achieve the awarded degree. This is largely a reflection of the highly specialised, vocational nature of the programmes at EAU. There are arrangements in place to govern student study loads on the basis of defined numbers of credit hours. CAA Standards require programme specifications to detail the completion requirements and include an assessment plan. The EAU Policies and Procedures Handbook states that 180 credits are required for a master's degree and 120 for a postgraduate diploma. The University Catalogue published on the University virtual learning environment (VLE) includes credit allocations.

2.21 EAU provides opportunities for students to take up paid internships within the Emirates Group. The EAU Internship Framework includes detailed learning outcomes for the internship. These opportunities have principally been available to students of engineering and management. The availability of internships has recently been increased through agreements with other airlines, and expanded to all undergraduate programmes, so that all programmes now include a structured six-month internship opportunity.

2.22 Programmes are designed so that they meet the objectives set for them, including the intended learning outcomes. The qualifications resulting from programmes are clearly specified and communicated and refer to the correct level of the national qualifications' framework for higher education. The procedures for the design and approval of new programmes are heavily subject to government regulatory bodies and accreditation and validation bodies. Within, and often because of, this regulation, EAU **meets** Standard 1.2, design and approval of programmes.

Standard 1.3 Student-centred learning, teaching and assessment

Institutions should ensure that the programmes are delivered in a way that encourages students to take an active role in creating the learning process, and that the assessment of students reflects this approach.

Findings

3.1 The University's approach to learning, teaching and assessment is outlined in the Learning and Teaching Strategy for 2019-24. These map onto the University's broader Strategic Plan, also for 2019-24. In response to the SARS-COVID-19 pandemic, the University has also developed an eLearning Strategy to complement the Teaching and Learning Strategy, which aims to integrate more fully online and remote learning with in-person delivery.

3.2 The University aims to deliver programmes which allow students to develop creative, analytical, communication and critical thinking skills in a collaborative and nurturing environment. To this end, the University has developed a range of undergraduate and postgraduate programmes that seek to fill the employment needs of the aviation sector in the UAE and the broader Middle East. Each programme has a clearly structured curriculum, which is composed of defined courses, information on which is outlined in the University's Catalogue.

3.3 The University employs various modes of delivery, including face-to-face teaching, online or remote learning, as well as blended approaches, depending on what is considered appropriate for the topic. Classrooms, workshops, and computer laboratories allow for the delivery of in-person teaching; however, the University also has several specialist laboratories to support the delivery of technical material. The provision of physical and other learning resources is covered in more detail in Standard 1.6.

3.4 Faculty are subject to ongoing monitoring and review in the form of self-evaluation, students' evaluation, and line manager evaluation, as part of the University's performance review processes. The University's faculty are encouraged to employ innovative and effective teaching and learning methodologies, a requirement outlined by the University's 'Policy No. 3: Education Programmes' as well as the Faculty Handbook.

3.5 Academic performance is assessed using a range of methodologies. Information on the University's grading system is provided in the Student Handbook. Course learning outcomes are mapped to the overarching programme learning outcomes, which are themselves mapped against the National Learning Outcomes of the UAE Qualification Framework (QFEmirates).

3.6 There are processes in place for dealing with student complaints and deferring an assessment due to extenuating circumstances, which are outlined in the Policies and Procedures Manual and the Student Handbook. Feedback is given to students on all coursework, which identifies areas of strength and those which require improvement. There is some independent double-marking of assessed work; however, this is not fully embedded throughout the University. The University Policies and Procedures Manual describes the process for appealing an awarded mark, also known as a grade appeal.

3.7 The Learning and Teaching Strategy does not explicitly refer to student-centred learning. Therefore, during the review visit, the team sought to explore the University's own definition of student-centred learning and also how student-centred learning was embedded in the University's approach to learning, teaching and assessment. In meetings with senior and academic staff, the University was unable to provide a clear and consistent definition of

what it considered to be student-centred learning, and when asked to identify how its teaching and learning was student-centred, academic staff suggested this was principally about how many hours a student needed to undertake for each course. Considering this evidence, the review team **recommends** the University ensure the implementation of learning, teaching and assessment policies and procedures are underpinned by a University-wide understanding of a student-centred approach and take steps to ensure that these are consistently applied and fully embedded across schools and the University. This recommendation is a **condition** for meeting this standard.

3.8 The University's faculty are encouraged to employ innovative and effective teaching and learning methodologies, a requirement outlined in the Faculty Handbook. Faculty are encouraged to engage with outside conferences and workshops, with the University financially covering the cost of flights, conference registration and accommodation subject to approval by the School Dean and the Vice-Chancellor. During the review visit, the team also heard that there were mechanisms to share good practice internally wherein each school organises workshops and invites interested faculty to present. While the review team could see how this enabled faculty in the same school to share good practice, it was not clear how good practice was shared between schools. Moreover, the University was unable to provide any clear evidence of good practice being shared in a systematic and deliberate way outside of the individual academic schools. Therefore, the review team **recommends** the University ensure that there are effective arrangements to enable the sharing of good practice within and between schools and across the whole University.

3.9 To enable a sense of learner autonomy, undergraduate students may register for a selected number of independent, supervised credit-bearing courses. Students are encouraged to discuss undertaking an independent study course with their assigned Academic Advisor. Students can find a list of the non-compulsory elective units available to them, organised by programme, in the University Catalogue. Students and student representatives reflected positively on the opportunities available to them.

3.10 Student complaints are handled largely by individual schools and the relevant School Dean. Currently, the only grounds upon which students can formally submit a complaint is if they feel that either their rights have been violated or the Student Code of Conduct has been violated. The review team found this to be particularly restrictive and therefore **recommends** that the University ensures the complaints policy covers the full range of possible complaint circumstances and is not just restricted to student grievances. While the OPQA provides some administrative support to the School Deans and also deals with complaints about services, the review team found that there is currently no University-level monitoring and oversight of student complaints. The review team **recommends**, therefore, that the University establishes arrangements for the monitoring and analysis of student complaints.

3.11 Student performance is assessed using a range of examination methods. During the course of the review, the team found that while information on the method of assessment was consistently included in the relevant course specification, marking criteria was largely missing from the provided assignment briefs. Therefore, the review team **recommends** that the University ensure that students are consistently provided with criteria for marking in advance of their assessment.

3.12 In the small number of assignment briefs which did include an assessment marking rubric, the review team found that marking criteria did not actually map to the University's grading system. There is a risk therefore that students undertaking the assignment may not know what to do in order to achieve a certain grade. As a result, the team **recommends** that the University ensure marking criteria map to the grading system.

3.13 While reviewing the sample of assignment briefs submitted by the University, the review team noted that some cover sheets stated that late submission would lead to a deduction of marks; however, the number of marks that would be deducted was not clear. When the review team met with students, they found a confusing picture with students in different schools reporting different consequences should they submit work late. Raising this with the University, the review team was told by academic staff that the institutional policy towards the late submission of work should be included in the relevant programme specification, but the specifications submitted to the review team did not include this information. Other potential sources of information, including the Student Handbook, also fail to mention the institutional policy on the late submission of work. Therefore, the review team **recommends** that the University ensures the policy for late submission is published and accessible to all students.

3.14 The University maintains a course file for each course. The course file is updated each time it is offered, which for most courses is on an annual basis. The course file should contain an evaluation by the instructor on the efficacy of teaching methodologies as well as an evaluation of the appropriateness of assessment instruments in relation to the learning outcomes. However, an analysis of the course files provided by the University did not reflect this. The course files were incomplete, each containing a different level of information, with little evidence of evaluation by instructors on the efficacy of teaching methodologies or the appropriateness of assessment instruments in relation to the desired learning outcomes. Therefore, the review team **recommends** that the University ensure the mechanisms in place for reviewing the appropriateness of assessment practices are applied consistently.

3.15 Students receive developmental feedback on all assessed work. Students reported that while they were largely happy with feedback when it was returned from tutors, each tutor appeared to set their own deadlines for the return of feedback. Exploring this during the review visit, the University confirmed that it does not have an institutional policy for the provision of feedback, whether style or content of feedback or the timeframes by which feedback should be returned to students. The review team therefore **recommends** that the University establish and implement an institutional policy for the provision of feedback on assessed work.

3.16 There is some double marking or moderation of assessment marks. This is currently limited to major assessment tasks, such as capstone projects, on Coventry University-accredited programmes. Separately, in a request for additional evidence, the University confirmed there was no institutional policy towards double marking on undergraduate programmes. As a result, the review team **recommends** that the University establish and implement an institutional policy for double marking or assessment moderation at undergraduate level.

3.17 Requests for examination deferral must be accompanied by third party evidence and a supporting letter from an appropriate member of staff. Applications for deferral must be submitted before the date of assessment unless there are valid and exceptional reasons, as outlined in the Policies and Procedures Manual. At the time of the initial desk-based analysis, the text on mitigating circumstances in the Policies and Procedures Manual was only found under the postgraduate section. Clarifying whether this policy also applied to undergraduate students, the University confirmed that it did apply and also uploaded a new version of the Policies and Procedures Manual with updated text.

3.18 Students wishing to appeal a final mark must submit a petition to the Admission and Registration Department within two weeks following the announcement of the final mark. The request will be transferred to the responsible faculty member and a review of the exam paper will be undertaken. A final appeal may be submitted to the relevant School

Dean. Information on submitting a grade appeal is contained within the Student Handbook. During the review visit, the University confirmed that grade appeals are managed largely by individual schools and that there is no University-level monitoring and analysis of grade appeals. As a result, the review team **recommends** that the University establish arrangements for the monitoring and analysis of grade appeals.

3.19 The University aims to develop its students into successful graduates in the aviation sector in the UAE and further afield. While it appears that students are satisfied and student outcomes are positive, the recommendations in this Standard cover a range of issues including student complaints, grade appeals, and feedback on assessed work. Together, these present a significant risk to the student academic experience and therefore the review team concludes that Standard 1.3, student-centred learning, teaching, and assessment is **not met**.

3.20 Following submission of further evidence by EAU in May 2022 (See Addendum, page 30), the review team acknowledges that this is a difficult standard for the University to address because it is about a culture as much as it is about including 'student-centred learning' in the appropriate policy documents. The review team noted that the evidence supplied in response to the condition is focused on communicating the current Teaching and Learning Policy. The next phase should now focus more explicitly on reflecting the qualities associated with student-centred teaching, learning, and assessment. Notwithstanding this, the University has clearly taken steps to ensure staff throughout the University are cognisant of the Teaching and Learning Policy and to that extent there is notable improvement. More time will be needed before effectiveness of implementation can be fully evaluated. Given that there is a stronger policy base that can now form the bedrock for embedding student-centred learning, the review team has concluded the condition is **met** at a threshold level, but further work will be necessary to ensure full University-wide understanding.

Standard 1.4 Student admission, progression, recognition and certification

Institutions should consistently apply pre-defined and published regulations covering all phases of the student 'life cycle', eg, student admission, progression, recognition and certification.

Findings

4.1 The University provides information relating to its approach to higher education in several ways, including via its website, social media, printed marketing materials, and outreach events. The Undergraduate and Postgraduate University Catalogues provide more comprehensive information relating to course structure, content, and programme-specific entry requirements.

4.2 The Admission and Registration Department is responsible for coordinating student admissions, registration, and for maintaining student records. The EAU Admissions Policy and EAU Recognition of Prior Learning Policy, both of which are contained within the EAU Policies and Procedures Manual, outline the University's approach to the recruitment and admission of students. At the end of their programmes, graduates are issued with graduation certificates and a transcript of their academic studies.

4.3 Applications themselves are submitted online through the EAU website. After review, the Admission and Registration Department will issue a conditional letter of acceptance if the applicant's details meet the entry requirements of the programme. An applicant is only considered fully enrolled on a programme once their tuition fees are paid in full.

4.4 All new students are provided with a copy of the Student Handbook, which is also available on the University's VLE, and this includes information about the academic programmes, admissions and registration regulations, as well as information on the various services offered by the University. There is also an induction programme for new students which covers not only the University's facilities but also operational matters, including policies, procedures, and regulations.

4.5 There are policies in place to ensure that students with prior learning or technical skills can receive academic credit exemptions through the University's Recognition of Prior Learning Policy. There are also procedures in place to enable the monitoring of student progression, these are also outlined in the EAU Policies and Procedures Manual.

4.6 The EAU Admissions Policy, which is found in the EAU Policies and Procedures Manual, is the central document outlining the University's approach to recruitment and admission. The policy is reviewed annually and, where any changes are necessary, these are first approved by the relevant School Council before being sent to the Vice-Chancellor and the University Council for final approval.

4.7 While the EAU Admissions Policy does outline several key pieces of information, not least general entry requirements, the review team found that the policy did not outline a mechanism by which applicants could appeal admissions decisions. During the review visit, the review team confirmed with the University that while a mechanism was not currently captured in the EAU Admissions Policy, there was one circumstance in which an applicant could informally appeal an admissions decision. This was if a missing entry requirement had now been addressed, for example, resitting a qualification that would allow the applicant to meet the criteria. Nevertheless, given that currently no formal procedure exists to appeal an admissions decision, the review team **recommends** that the University establish and publicise a process by which admissions decisions can be appealed.

4.8 All new students are provided with a copy of the Student Handbook, which is also available on the University VLE. New and returning students are also invited to a student induction; however, the review team found that the information provided during the student induction process was highly variable. Exploring this during the review visit, the team heard that the student induction process was largely driven by individual schools with support provided by central resources. This inconsistency in approach could mean that students in one school were introduced appropriately and properly to the University's academic regulations, whereas students in another school are not. The review team therefore **recommends** that the University establish and implement a general University student induction that can be supported by programme-level information.

4.9 There are clear mechanisms in place to ensure students are supported to achieve throughout the student lifecycle. Each student has a defined 'Student Study Load', which is the total number of credit hours they are registered for during an academic semester. For undergraduate and undergraduate applied programmes, the minimum is 12 credit hours, and the maximum is 21 credit hours, with most students taking somewhere in between. Students failing to achieve a Course Grade Point Average of at least 2.0 are placed on academic probation during which their maximum number of credit hours is reduced to 13 credit hours. Students on a third consecutive semester of academic probation are dismissed. Information on specific progression requirements for postgraduate programmes is included in the University Catalogue.

4.10 The University also has minimum attendance regulations for their programmes. For students on undergraduate, undergraduate applied, and taught master's programmes, failing to attend at least 25% of the classes in any course will result in failing that particular course.

4.11 The Admissions and Registration Department at EAU is also responsible for ensuring that students nearing the end of their programmes are provided with graduation certificates and a transcript of their academic studies. Graduation certificates include the student's name, their programme level and programme major. Each transcript includes the student's level of study, programme title, year of award, and their achieved grades.

4.12 Notwithstanding the two recommendations in this Standard, the review team concluded that the processes for the admission of students, the recognition of prior learning, the arrangements for the monitoring of student progression and the procedures for graduation and certification broadly align with the requirements outlined in Standard 1.4. Therefore, the review team concludes that Standard 1.4, student admission, progress, recognition and certification is **met**.

Standard 1.5 Teaching staff

Institutions should assure themselves of the competence of their teachers. They should apply fair and transparent processes for the recruitment and development of the staff.

Findings

5.1 EAU's Policy and Procedures Manual provides a description of the procedure for employment of staff. It includes the establishment of a search committee that oversees the shortlisting, interview, and final selection. The process is the same for part-time staff. Contracts for full-time appointments are for two years; contracts for part-time appointments last for one or two semesters. Both may be renewable or non-renewable.

5.2 The EAU Faculty Manual describes the procedures for performance review, including self-evaluation, evaluation by students and annual evaluation by the line manager. Following a performance evaluation with the line manager, a report is submitted to the School Dean. The assessment criteria and the proportion that each contributes to the final score, are available to all staff in section 8.6 of the EAU Faculty Manual. The criteria for promotion are listed in the Policies and Procedures Manual.

5.3 The procedures for recruitment, employment and promotion of staff, as described in the Policy and Procedures Manual, are clear and unambiguous. The environment at EAU offers opportunities for, and promotes, the professional development of teaching staff.

5.4 Teaching staff are evaluated by the students they teach, through the Course and Lecturer Evaluation surveys. They also complete a self-evaluation survey for each course they deliver. Although the questions mainly concern the extent to which the learning outcomes were covered and details of the teaching methods used, some questions relate to the performance of the teacher. The results of these surveys feed into the process of evaluation by the individual's line manager.

5.5 The University states that it supports the professional development of its staff by encouraging participation in training courses offered by the Emirates Group Learning and Development Department as well as courses offered by external providers. Staff development is the responsibility of Heads of Department. Data was supplied showing engagement of academic faculty staff and administrative staff in professional development activities.

5.6 Staff described the annual review process, which is based on achievement of goals or objectives that are set one year and appraised the following year. It includes consideration of training needs, which may be driven by the individual or by the needs of the University. All staff have an annual review, though there are small differences between how this operates for academic and administrative staff. The criteria for promotion are clearly defined in the EAU Policies and Procedures Manual. Teaching staff confirmed that promotions criteria were clearly defined and similar to those of any comparable university.

5.7 The 2020 Renewal of Licensure Report from the Ministry of Education noted that the proportion of the existing faculty with terminal qualifications leads to a situation in which EAU is out of compliance with the Standards. However, the University has responded to this, and other issues identified in the report and has now satisfied the requirements of the Ministry. It has submitted to CAA a development plan for every faculty member who does not yet have a PhD. These plans include scaling up a dual award PhD programme with Coventry University.

5.8 The link between education and research is currently being strengthened at EAU, following recent changes to the CAA Standards for Licensure. The Faculty Manual lists the responsibilities of academic staff, which are heavily biased towards teaching and student support. However, research activity is a criterion for staff teaching at postgraduate level, or for promotion to assistant professor or above.

5.9 In alignment with a recent revision to the CAA Standards for Institutional Licensure and Programme Accreditation to promote research activity, the EAU Faculty Development Plan includes a Research Plan that aims to develop the EAU Research Centre. The plan includes encouraging staff to engage in research projects and to publish their research in conferences and refereed journals. New research facilities will be developed, and it is intended to build an income and partnership platform to support the research activities. The proposals also include the implementation of hiring strategies that promote team-based research collaborations and new programmes.

5.10 The current (2021-22) institutional budget for continuing professional development is AED 4.6 million (a little under £1 million). This amounts to approximately AED 60K per faculty member to support their professional development including research publications, and participating in workshops, conferences and travel cost to international conferences as well as for software to aid research.

5.11 A Research Director was recently employed. His role is to build research capacity and to drive the proposals forward. Research links are under development with Dubai International Airport and Boeing to supplement the existing links within the Emirates Group. There has been substantial investment in research facilities and infrastructure. There are plans to employ more researchers.

5.12 A section of the Faculty Manual titled 'Academic Freedom and Associated Responsibilities' states that 'faculty members are free to pursue the quest for knowledge and understanding'. Academic staff receive a teaching load reduction if they are engaged in research. They are provided with support to attend research conferences. Wednesday afternoons are kept free of teaching to enable staff to attend internal or external research seminars and workshops. Professional development related to research and scholarly activity is promoted.

5.13 Innovation and the introduction of new teaching methods has been stimulated through the University's response to COVID-19. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the institution published an eLearning Strategy. The strategy aims to provide a seamless integration of online learning with the existing and future course delivery through face-to-face instruction. The University recognised that an important factor in ensuring the success of the strategy would be the development and support of its academic staff to deliver it. Academic studies and IT were involved in the roll-out of the strategy. They issued guidance and provided training for staff on how to use the various delivery platforms and how to deliver online lectures successfully. Training and guidance were also offered to students.

5.14 The institution's response to COVID-19 showed that MS Teams had a lot of potential for teaching and that many of its functions could replace functions in the VLE platforms used by the University. As a result, the University has said it will not go back to the previous situation but will deliver a blended approach.

5.15 Teaching staff confirmed that training in e-learning delivery of teaching had been provided following the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and a shift to online delivery. Department support was made available to them, including the purchase of specialist software and training, electronic articles, and eBooks. The production of e-lectures has been facilitated by the purchase of improved recording equipment. The effectiveness of staff development related to teaching and learning was confirmed by students who stated

that the quality of the online teaching had improved markedly throughout the pandemic. However, when questioned, teaching staff gave no indication that they were familiar with the Learning and Teaching Strategy, or the eLearning Strategy, further supporting the recommendation made in paragraph 1.10.

5.16 The University has in place a plan to ensure that its teaching staff are competent, and it is actively pursuing that plan. Fair and transparent processes for the recruitment and development of the staff are operational and therefore Standard 1.5, teaching staff is **met**.

Standard 1.6 Learning resources and student support

Institutions should have appropriate funding for learning and teaching activities and ensure that adequate and readily accessible learning resources and student support are provided.

Findings

6.1 The University has a wide range of learning and teaching resources that support and enable students to achieve both academically and professionally. Classrooms and computer laboratories allow for the delivery of in-person teaching; however, the University also has several specialist facilities to support the delivery of technical content. The Learning Resource Centre provides material and resources to support curriculum delivery.

6.2 All programmes at EAU are facilitated by the VLE. Students are enrolled automatically onto programmes immediately after enrolment and payment of the relevant tuition fees. The VLE allows students to read news, review course content and submit assessments through plagiarism-detection software. The University uses other platforms to promote discussion and collaboration between students and faculty, and also to effectively deliver interactive online learning.

6.3 Students are assigned an Academic Advisor, who is responsible for helping students form educational goals and plan ways in which to achieve them. Each student is assigned an Academic Advisor within one month of arriving at EAU and thereafter should meet with their Academic Advisor at least twice each semester. The University requires formal records to be kept of all supervisions.

6.4 The Career Service Centre (CSC) is responsible for providing careers support and enhancing the employability of the University's students. The CSC organises a broad range of workshops, seminars, lectures, exhibitions and industrial visits with a view to providing as much information to students as possible. This work constitutes the EAU Career Advice and Career Development Programmes.

6.5 Students may approach the Student Life and Activities Unit either directly or through their Academic Advisor if they require professional counselling. The Student Life and Activities Unit will then direct the student to an appropriate external health provider. In urgent or extreme circumstances, students may access the professional counselling services of the Emirates Group Counselling System.

6.6 The elected Student Council acts as a link between the Student Life and Activities Unit and the student community. The Student Council encourages students with common interests to form clubs and compete in national and international competitions. The Student Life and Activities Unit also arranges various sporting activities and supports several teams, coached by qualified staff. Alumni are encouraged to continue their relationship with the University after graduation.

6.7 The University budget is allocated by the Emirates Group, according to the needs of the University submitted by the Vice-Chancellor. A system of ad hoc committees is responsible for reviewing the University's learning resources and, where additional resource is required, this is written into the next iteration of the University budget. Staff are encouraged to participate in training courses offered by the Emirates Group Learning and Development Department as well as courses offered by external providers, as necessary.

6.8 The University recently relocated to a new purpose-built campus, which includes a new library building, found at the Dubai International Academic City in January 2015. The new campus has a capacity of 5,000 students and should support the University's strategic

aim to expand, grow, and become the leading provider of aviation-related higher education in the region.

6.9 In addition to the new campus, the University continues to invest in infrastructure to support the delivery of the curriculum. This includes, for example, the purchase of two state-of-the-art wind tunnels, one of which is used for teaching, while the other is used for research purposes. There is operational information in the Student Handbook on accessing the University's teaching and learning resources. During the review visit, students and student representatives were positive about their access to facilities and especially impressed with the provision of technical equipment and technical workspaces. The review team considers the University's continued investment in, and use of, high quality technical learning resources, which enhance the student learning experience, as **good practice**.

6.10 The team explored the University's VLE and found that it was accessible and could therefore support students in their studies. However, the review team also found that different programmes had different levels of information available to students. The review team felt that this established a risk that students on different programmes may have significantly different experiences. This contributed to several recommendations in other standards, see Standard 1.3 and Standard 1.4.

6.11 The Student Life and Activities Unit is the key point of contact for students needing support, although the team found that this normally involves just signposting students to either external health providers or the Emirates Group Counselling Service rather than providing counselling themselves. Students may also approach their Academic Advisor for help. Students were generally positive about the support available to them, although during the review visit some students reported not knowing who their Academic Advisor was or having ever met them, despite being several months into their programmes of study.

6.12 While the University conducts regular surveys of the student body to gauge satisfaction with various services, the review team found limited other evidence of oversight and monitoring of the student support function. Therefore, the review team **recommends** that the University strengthen the arrangements in place for the monitoring and oversight of student support services.

6.13 There are strong links between the University and its student body. This allows students and student representatives to communicate frankly on matters concerning them. During the review visit, the review team heard several examples of students and student representatives approaching members of the senior leadership team with problems, which were promptly passed to the appropriate member of staff. The University encourages its alumni to keep in touch and to engage with events and activities, including workshops and career fairs.

6.14 The University benefits greatly from its relationship with the Emirates Group, which provides the core budget for the University. The team concluded that while the mechanism for planning and allocating resources lay within a system of ad hoc committees, the recent move to the new campus and the continued investment in high-quality teaching and learning facilities demonstrated that there were very good levels of funding available for teaching and learning resources.

6.15 The review team found that learning and teaching activities were well funded, that the facilities provided were excellent and readily accessible and, notwithstanding the recommendation around strengthening the arrangements for monitoring and oversight, that student support was provided. The review team concluded, therefore, that Standard 1.6, learning resources and student support is **met**.

Standard 1.7 Information management

Institutions should ensure that they collect, analyse and use relevant information for the effective management of their programmes and other activities.

Findings

7.1 The Organisational Performance and Quality Assurance Unit (OPQA) coordinates the preparation and dissemination of institutional research data. There is a comprehensive range of data sets. A selection of data about student enrolments, faculty qualifications and graduation figures are published internally through the Fact Book with some highlights included in a Fast Facts booklet available on the external website.

7.2 The research data informs institutional planning, monitoring and enhancement of performance of the academic and non-academic units and is subject to external scrutiny by the Ministry of Education through the CHEDS semester-based data collection. The Ministry uses the data for the enhancement of student support, curriculum design and to monitor research activity.

7.3 OPQA coordinates the systems and provides the data for the annual operational planning process for units/departments, guiding budgeting and resources. The data includes the results of institutional research obtained from surveys, benchmark activities and other sources. OPQA arranges monitoring of implementation plans through six-monthly periodic reviews with corrective actions identified for follow up.

7.4 OPQA and schools operate a process of collecting and analysing a wide range of data about student learning, which feeds into programme assessment reports. The data includes various forms of student, faculty, alumni and employer evaluation and surveys, graduate destinations, academic assessment results and other analytics, benchmarking reports and accreditation reports. Data is also drawn from various local and international benchmarking reports and QS Stars league table data, EAU monitors student retention, attrition and graduation rates with data included in the EAU Fact Book and considered through the programme assessment process.

7.5 There is significant use of surveys as a means of tracking institutional performances, including students, faculty, staff, graduates/alumni, and other external stakeholders. The VLE is programmed to require students to complete course surveys before they receive grades in order to collect maximum feedback. A VLE device requires students to give feedback before their grades are released to them.

7.6 The feedback mechanisms include workshops with students to analyse each aspect of the student journey and to identify and implement improvements. The students who met the panel said that they were, on the whole, happy that action was taken in response to their feedback. Neither students nor members of staff could point to a university-wide mechanism for feeding back systematically to students on action taken in response to their comments; they were, however, able to cite examples of action having had positive impact.

7.7 The University has been introducing a new student record system as a basis for a more integrated approach to the management of data and the production of management information reports. The institutional student records policy sets out arrangements for the maintenance, security, confidentiality and proper use of records. Registry/admission staff carry out some checks on the accuracy and completeness of data, including the qualifications and details of applicants for programmes of study and examination results

leading to progression and awards. Internal and external audits are also used to make various checks on the security of data.

7.8 The University collects, analyses and uses relevant information for the effective management of its programmes and other activities, therefore Standard 1.7, information management is **met**.

Standard 1.8 Public information

Institutions should publish information about their activities, including programmes, which is clear, accurate, objective, up-to date and readily accessible.

Findings

8.1 The EAU website includes a large amount of information about the institution and the learning opportunities it provides. In addition to the website, information about the University is available for prospective applicants and others in the form of printed documents, such as flyers for the various programmes on offer, general entry requirements, and details of the tuition fees.

8.2 The EAU website provides information about its programmes of study, including an overview and outline description of each programme, and the associated tuition fees. Details of any external accreditation and examples of graduate destinations are provided. Student handbooks are also available on the website.

8.3 The website includes 'Fast Fact', a page of institutional data describing students' enrolment data, academic qualifications of faculty members and staff, and graduate numbers by degree subjects per year. The Fast Fact page is updated every semester. The information presented on Fast Fact provides an interesting snapshot of the institution. However, the data is of limited value to a potential applicant. For example, while the number of graduates in each school is presented, there is no indication of what percentage of the total cohort is represented by each figure.

8.4 The website does not include information about the teaching, learning and assessment procedures used, and the learning outcome information is too high-level to be of much use to potential applicants. Similarly, the admissions requirements on the website are generic; potential applicants are directed to the EAU Admission team for the specific entry requirements for each programme. The University is aware of these shortcomings; the team was informed that work was underway to correct them as part of a larger review of the whole website. The review team therefore **recommends** the University to complete the planned revision of the website to ensure that programme-specific admissions requirements, learning outcomes and pass rates are available to prospective applicants.

8.5 The University's website is managed by the IT Unit. Responsibility for ensuring the accuracy and currency of the published information lies with the unit from which the information is generated. For content related to academic programmes, responsibility lies with the deans. Each school has an office that handles student data and data is checked by OPQA before publication. The review team was informed that the content of the website is checked every six months.

8.6 Undergraduate students reported that while preparing for admission the information they received from the University, or read on its website, was clear and accurate, and reflected the reality of the experience. A similar view was conveyed by postgraduate students with the exception that the student experience had been unavoidably impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

8.7 The University publishes information about its activities, including its programmes. The information is accurate, objective and up to date. The planned revision of the website should improve the accessibility of data therefore the review team concludes that Standard 1.8, public information is broadly **met**.

Standard 1.9 Ongoing monitoring and periodic review of programmes

Institutions should monitor and periodically review their programmes to ensure that they achieve the objectives set for them and respond to the needs of students and society. These reviews should lead to continuous improvement of the programme. Any action planned or taken as a result should be communicated to all those concerned.

Findings

9.1 All programmes delivered by domestic universities in the UAE are accredited by the CAA and reviewed for reaccreditation on a five-year cycle. As described in the Quality Assurance Manual, the University supplements this external revalidation process with an internal two-year cycle of programme review.

9.2 The internal programme review process is based on a biennial system of programme assessment reports and internal programme review. A programme assessment report is produced by the Programme Coordinator using a standard template, based on a comprehensive range of information that includes programme benchmarking, student registration and performance data, industrial programme advisory board recommendations, recommendations from external accreditations or reviews, recommendations from the Academic Quality Assurance Committee, and consideration of the risk register. There is a defined method for assessing the educational outcomes of a programme that includes input from students, staff and external sources, and consideration of student data. Each report is reviewed by the School Council and an action plan is prepared and shared with the Organisational Performance and Quality Assurance Unit which, together with the school, monitor progress with the action plan.

9.3 Students contribute to internal programme review not only through feedback surveys and participation in the Student Council, but also through student workshops which assess the efficacy of the processes to support the student journey. There are also undergraduate Staff-Student Liaison Committees dedicated to each programme and a Graduate Council at postgraduate level. In the intervening year between programme assessment reports, there is a light touch review.

9.4 The University also engages with international accreditation agencies and professional bodies in periodic review, as encouraged by the CAA. Collaborative programmes validated by Coventry University (CU) are subject to periodic review by CU, in addition to EAU processes. The CU review process is implemented through appointment of a Course Approval and Review Panel appointed by the Quality in Learning and Teaching Committee (QuiLT). An Annual Collaborative Course Quality Enhancement and Monitoring (CCQEM) report is produced jointly by EAU and CU every year.

9.5 The General Civil Aviation Authority (GCAA) and the European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) approve the University and they conduct regular audits of the institution. International programme accreditations are also a significant feature of the ongoing monitoring systems with accreditations already in place for 14 programmes.

9.6 Overall, the programme review process appears detailed, thorough and data driven, with action plans closing the loop.

9.7 Each school has a Programme Advisory Committee. Their terms of reference include participation in the programme assessment review process. Example minutes record such activity and show the committees to be operating effectively and contributing to the ongoing process of programme enhancement.

9.8 The example programme assessment reports mostly follow the process prescribed by the Quality Assurance Manual and start with the programme objectives and outcomes. They include the findings from a student exit survey, and alumni survey, together with corrective actions and recommendations for improvements.

9.9 The biennial programme review process includes a benchmarking exercise that includes evaluation of the content of the programme comparison to similar programmes offered by other institutions. This helps to ensure that the programme contents are up to date and reflect current developments in the field and the changing needs of society.

9.10 Each review also considers the programme objectives and learning objectives, evaluation of the assessment tools, the learning environment, student opinion and a set of student performance data that includes student enrolment, performance and academic misconduct cases, programme objectives and learning outcomes, and survey data from staff and students.

9.11 Example programme assessment reports include information from employer surveys, and minutes of meetings of the industrial advisory panel. Every programme has its own industrial panel.

9.12 Students contribute to the programme assessment review process through course and lecturer evaluation surveys, twice-yearly student workshops, Staff-Student Liaison Committees, and an exit survey. There is a Graduate Council, representing postgraduate students, which meets twice per year.

9.13 While the team did not meet any students that had been involved in the process of reviewing programmes, the student representatives confirmed that their role included communicating student feedback on their programmes to the staff. Postgraduate students reported that information received through the student surveys was used to enhance the provision.

9.14 As an example of enhancement to a programme resulting from the benchmarking process, a review of project delivery and assessment is cited. It resulted in a new database of projects. Evidence of completing the recommended corrective actions and closing the quality assurance loop were provided.

9.15 Under a new scheme, the CAA allows universities to change up to 25% of a programme before a mid-cycle revalidation is required.

9.16 In addition to the cycle of programme reviews, the University maintains a course file for each unit of instruction. This file is updated each time the course is offered, which for most courses is annually. The file must contain an evaluation by the instructor on the efficacy of teaching methodologies as well as an evaluation of the appropriateness of assessment instruments in relation to the learning outcomes.

9.17 Example course files provided were very variable and were found to be missing important information. Course files would be much more effective as instruments of course enhancement if they each contained a complete set of data information (see paragraph 3.14 and recommendation).

9.18 The University monitors and periodically reviews programmes to ensure that outcomes are being met and that they continue to be up to date and relevant. Monitoring and periodic review leads to action planning and improvement. The review team therefore concludes that Standard 1.9, ongoing monitoring and periodic review of programmes is **met**.

Standard 1.10 Cyclical external quality assurance

Institutions should undergo external quality assurance in line with the ESG on a cyclical basis.

Findings

10.1 The University is significantly engaged in cyclical external quality assurance and operates under close government oversight through CAA acting for the MOE, and KHDA. CAA accredited programmes and KHDA approved programmes have to comply with the UAE National Qualifications Framework, which is referenced to the European Quality Framework.

10.2 Coventry University validates a range of EAU programmes as part of a collaborative partnership agreement recognised by the KHDA. The process is regulated by the CU Collaborative Provision Development Committee. The review panel was pleased to note the sharing of good practice between Coventry University and EAU.

10.3 The University maintains accreditations with professional bodies including the Royal Aeronautical Society, the Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transportation, the European Aviation Safety Agency, the General Civil Aviation Authority and the National Qualification Authority.

10.4 The fulfilment of conditions from external reviews is monitored internally by the University Academic Quality Assurance Committee and externally by the accreditation bodies. The University satisfied the Engineering Council and Professional Engineering Institutions in the UK about its management of the implications of COVID-19 for accredited programmes. The external reports have resulted in overall positive outcomes for the University.

10.5 The CAA, on behalf of the MOE, conducted a periodic re-licensure process with the University in 2020. The review team reinforces the CAA recommendation that the University should maintain regular review and revision to assure fitness for purpose. The MOE and the CAA concluded the process by extending the institutional licence until 2026. The CAA noted, on the conclusion of the re-licensure process, that the international recognition of EAU is 'established at program and institutional level'.

10.6 The University undergoes external cyclical quality assurance that equates to or aligns with the European Standards and Guidelines and therefore Standard 1.10, cyclical external quality assurance is **met**.

Addendum

Progress Report Concerning Conditions Set at the Meeting of the Accreditation Panel held on 6 December 2021

1 Having reviewed the action plan provided by the Emirates Aviation University and accompanying evidence, the review team is of the opinion that the University has responded diligently to the range of conditions, recommendations and observations made in the International Quality Review (IQR) Report presented to the Accreditation Panel on 6 December 2021. Revised policies, processes and approaches have been put in place. Taking this into account, the review team has concluded that there has been sufficient progress with regard to the two conditions set under Standard 1.1 and 1.3 for them to now be considered **met**. The review team recommends that monitoring of the effectiveness of the actions taken should be evaluated at the mid-cycle review stage.

2 The International Quality Review (IQR) virtual review of Emirates Aviation University (EAU) was conducted from 25 to 28 October 2021 and the report subsequently presented to the Accreditation Panel at the meeting held on 6 December 2021.

3 The decision of the Panel was that the University, at that time, did not meet the requirements for accreditation by QAA. The requirement being that accreditation is only granted to those universities that meet all 10 of Part 1 of the European Standards and Guidelines (2015). EAU met only eight of the 10 standards. Two conditions were set, which EAU would have to meet in order for accreditation to be considered. The University was required to meet the conditions by the end of December 2022.

4 The University responded positively to the report and the conditions and produced an action plan and additional evidence at three points. Once in January 2022 (as a response to the original report), in February 2022, and most recently in May 2022.

5 This progress report summarises the situation with regard to progress made and sets out the opinion of the original review panel with regard to the evidence and commentary supplied by EAU.

6 Paragraph references for the conditions, recommendations and observations refer to the relevant paragraphs in the original report above.

Standard 1.1 Policy for quality assurance

Condition: The team recommends the University modify the approach to the construction of institutional academic and strategic plans to ensure the full engagement of staff, students and other parties in design and implementation (paragraph 1.10)

7 The University says it will engage the wider community of employers, staff and the student body in the next round of strategic planning, and the Programme Advisory Boards, with their broader community membership, will be asked to contribute their views during the development process. In addition these expectations have been added to the list of duties for all EAU Advisory Boards.

8 Additionally, the University has made it clear that the expectations for full consultation in developing the five-year EAU Strategic Plan with stakeholders is clear in the EAU Institutional Planning Policy.

9 EAU academic and non-academic units publish annual operation plans

(implementation plans), these plans are sets of initiatives with timelines, task owners, performance indicators, current status, and targets. The lists of initiatives are cross-referenced against the strategies at both unit and institution levels. Such implementation plans have been extended to the non-academic service and administrative units across the University. At the end of each year, the University academic and non-academic units' yearly implementation plans are evaluated, closed, and action plans for the following year are formulated. The full engagement of staff and faculty in the subsequent translation of the Institutional Strategic Plan into short-term implementation plans has been clarified in the sub-section of the Short-term Planning Policy. This amendment has been approved according to the Policy Development, Control, Review and Dissemination Policy.

10 The EAU Academic Quality Assurance Committee (AQAC) is now charged with oversight of the Institutional Strategic Plan development process to ensure that all faculty, support staff, Advisory Boards, the EAU/EG Partnership Management Group, and the student body are appropriately consulted and engaged in the development process. The Terms of Reference of the AQAC have been updated to reflect the additional responsibility. With respect to full engagement in planning for the support and administrative service units, the Organisational Performance and Quality Assurance Unit (OPQA) will be responsible for ensuring that suitable mechanisms are deployed in a timely manner to consult with representatives from all service and administrative units across the University. This function has been clarified within the updated EAU Quality Assurance Manual with regards to OPQA roles and responsibilities. In academic/non-academic service areas, and for external stakeholders, suitable workshops are to be organised to conduct SWOT/TOWS analyses and form a base line from which the next EAU Strategic Plan can be constructed. As pointed out in the CAA's Renewal of Licensure Report (2020) and QAA's IQR Report (Section 1.7 above), the next round of development of the five-year institutional Strategic Plan will focus more tightly on the 'current challenges' facing EAU, as indicated in the Risk Register and resulting from a SWOT/TOWS analysis conducted at the time, rather than the general aspirations of excellence referred to in the IQR report.

11 Monitoring the progress of the implementation plan is now a standing item on the agenda of all relevant meetings - School Council, Research Council, University Council, and so on.

12 The review team concluded that the actions already taken and those proposed are appropriate in design to ensure that strategic plans and policy development includes staff, students and other external stakeholders. The effectiveness of these proposals will take some time to emerge as they are operationalised, but the University has now put in place a more robust framework and implementation will be evaluated at the point of mid-cycle review. The review team therefore concludes that the condition is now **met**.

Standard 1.3 Student-centred learning, teaching and assessment

Condition: The review team recommends the University ensure the implementation of learning, teaching and assessment policies and procedures are underpinned by a University-wide understanding of a student-centred approach and take steps to ensure that these are consistently applied and fully embedded across schools and the University (paragraph 3.7)

13 In reviewing the Teaching and Learning Strategy, the term student-centred learning is not used in the document, but a number of related elements are covered in the text; for example, the engagement of students in research activities and problem-based learning, skills training for employability, variation in assessment strategies, and use of instructional technologies. Addressing issues of equality and diversity are embedded in the Teaching and Learning Strategy as discussed earlier in this report. School Deans have

been charged to ensure incorporating the Teaching and Learning Strategy in their yearly implementation plan.

14 School Deans have also been charged with reviewing the Teaching and Learning Strategy, and by consulting with faculty and support staff, make explicit reference to student-centred learning and define the scope of principles and practices that underpin this learning mode.

15 Faculty have been charged with amending courses to demonstrate that students have been empowered in their own learning through attention to curriculum design and course choices for students, teaching/learning methods and assessment practices, including the use of instructional technologies to encourage autonomy of learning. For example, the Business School updated the course syllabus of the internship to have six months' internship as suggested by students.

16 The University has set out a plan to conduct a series of workshops on learning and teaching to all faculty twice every semester. An EAU workshop on learning and teaching was conducted by Dr Petya Koleva (Assistant Professor at EAU and a Senior Fellow of the Higher Education Academy (UK)) on 10 January 2022. OPQA evaluated the workshop and 87% of the staff/ faculty were overall satisfied with the session. These university-wide workshops mark the beginning of steps in ensuring effective implementation of learning, teaching and assessment policies and procedures and will enhance understanding of a student-centred approach across schools and the University.

17 EAU's international collaborative partner, Coventry University, has particular expertise and innovative practices related to student-centred learning. The long-standing partnership with EAU first established in 2006, with frequent staff exchanges and visits to the EAU campus, means that Coventry University has a good understanding of the education and training ecosystem in the Emirates, the profile of the student body, and the curriculum and pedagogy deployed at EAU. Coventry University was invited to facilitate several workshops for EAU faculty and staff. This included coverage of the closely allied topic of 'Equality and Diversity' discussed earlier in this report and specific attention to the scope and practices of 'student-centred learning'. The outcomes from the workshop were documented and disseminated by the Deans within each school and the initiatives identified from the workshop are now feeding into the curriculum revision and approval process in preparation for the academic year 2022-23. During this process of review and revision, a second workshop was arranged internally to showcase examples of innovative approaches to student-centred learning and any successful strategies that had already been implemented in recent semesters. A workshop was conducted by Coventry University to EAU faculty on 21 Jan 2019, the title of the workshop was 'An Introduction to contemporary teaching and learning practices'. Details on the workshop and satisfaction results were seen by the review team.

18 EAU faculty members attended training related to assessing vocationally related achievement on 24 January 2016 arranged by the Knowledge and Human Development Authority (KHDA).

19 The review team acknowledges that this is a difficult standard for the University to address because it is about culture as much as it is about including 'student-centred learning' in the appropriate policy documents. The review team noted that the evidence supplied in response to the condition is focused on communicating the current Teaching and Learning Policy. The next phase should now focus more explicitly on reflecting the qualities associated with student-centred teaching, learning, and assessment. Notwithstanding this, the University has clearly taken steps to ensure staff throughout the University are cognisant of the Teaching and Learning Policy and to that extent there is

notable improvement. More time will be needed before effectiveness of implementation can be fully evaluated. Given that there is a stronger policy base that can now form the bedrock for embedding student-centred learning, the review team has concluded that the condition is **met** at a threshold level, but further work will be necessary to ensure full university-wide understanding.

Glossary

Action plan

A plan developed by the institution after the QAA review report has been published, which is signed off by the head of the institution. It responds to the recommendations in the report and gives any plans to capitalise on the identified good practice.

Annual monitoring

Checking a process or activity every year to see whether it meets expectations for standards and quality. Annual reports normally include information about student achievements and may comment on the evaluation of courses and modules.

Collaborative arrangement

A formal arrangement between a degree-awarding body and another higher education provider. These may be degree-awarding bodies with which the institution collaborates to deliver higher education qualifications on behalf of the degree-awarding bodies. Alternatively, they may be other delivery organisations who deliver part or all of a proportion of the institution's higher education programmes.

Degree-awarding body

Institutions that have authority, for example from a national agency, to issue their own awards. Institutions applying to IQR may be degree-awarding bodies themselves, or may collaborate to deliver higher education qualifications on behalf of degree-awarding bodies.

Desk-based analysis

An analysis by the review team of evidence, submitted by the institution, that enables the review team to identify its initial findings and subsequently supports the review team as it develops its review findings.

Enhancement

See **quality enhancement**.

European Standards and Guidelines

For details, including the full text on each standard, see www.enqa.eu/index.php/home/esg.

Examples of practice

A list of policies and practices that a review team may use when considering the extent to which an institution meets the standards for review. The examples should be considered as a guide only, in acknowledgment that not all of them will be appropriate for all institutions.

Facilitator

The member of staff identified by the institution to act as the principal point of contact for the QAA officer and who will be available during the review visit, to assist with any questions or requests for additional documentation.

Good practice

A feature of good practice is a process or way of working that, in the view of a QAA review team, makes a particularly positive contribution to the institution's higher education provision.

Lead student representative

An optional voluntary role that is designed to allow students at the institution applying for IQR to play a central part in the organisation of the review.

Oversight

Objective scrutiny, monitoring and quality assurance of educational provision.

Peer reviewers

Members of the review team who make the decisions in relation to the review of the institution. Peer reviewers have experience of managing quality and academic standards in higher education or have recent experience of being a student in higher education.

Periodic review

An internal review of one or more programmes of study, undertaken by institutions periodically (typically once every five years), using nationally agreed reference points, to confirm that the programmes are of an appropriate academic standard and quality. The process typically involves experts from other higher education providers. It covers areas such as the continuing relevance of the programme, the currency of the curriculum and reference materials, the employability of graduates and the overall performance of students. Periodic review is one of the main processes whereby institutions can continue to assure themselves about the academic quality and standards of their awards.

Programme of study

An approved course of study that provides a coherent learning experience and normally leads to a qualification. UK higher education programmes must be approved and validated by UK degree-awarding bodies.

Quality enhancement

The process by which higher education providers systematically improve the quality of provision and the ways in which students' learning is supported.

QAA officer

The person appointed by QAA to manage the review programme and to act as the liaison between the review team and the institution.

Quality assurance

The systematic monitoring and evaluation of learning and teaching, and the processes that support them, to make sure that the standards of academic awards meet the necessary standards, and that the quality of the student learning experience is being safeguarded and improved.

Recognition of prior learning

Assessing previous learning that has occurred in any of a range of contexts including school, college and university, and/or through life and work experiences.

Recommendation

Review teams make recommendations where they agree that an institution should consider developing or changing a process or a procedure in order to improve the institution's higher education provision.

Reference points

Statements and other publications that establish criteria against which performance can be measured.

Self-evaluation document

A self-evaluation report by an institution. The submission should include information about the institution as well as an assessment of the effectiveness of its quality systems.

Student submission

A document representing student views that describes what it is like to be a student at the institution, and how students' views are considered in the institution's decision-making and quality assurance processes.

Validation

The process by which an institution ensures that its academic programmes meet expected academic standards and that students will be provided with appropriate learning opportunities. It may also be applied to circumstances where a degree-awarding institution gives approval for its awards to be offered by a partner institution or organisation.

QAA2670 - R13224 - Jul 22

© The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education 2022
Southgate House, Southgate Street, Gloucester GL1 1UB
Registered charity numbers 1062746 and SC037786

Email: accreditation@qaa.ac.uk
Website: www.qaa.ac.uk