

## Review for Educational Oversight: report of the monitoring visit of the Al-Maktoum College of Higher Education, June 2014

### Section 1: Outcome of the monitoring visit

1 From the evidence provided in the annual return and at the monitoring visit, the review team concludes that the Al-Maktoum College of Higher Education (the College) has made acceptable progress with continuing to monitor, review and enhance its higher education provision since the May 2013 [monitoring visit](#).

### Section 2: Changes since the last QAA monitoring visit

2 Following completion of the approval process, the College is able to offer five customised awards credit rated by the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) at Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework levels 8 to 11. At the time of the visit there were no students enrolled on these or any other programmes at the College. Discussions with staff indicated that recruitment to the SQA customised awards has started with a view to these being delivered from September 2014. The College reported no other changes of note since the May 2013 monitoring visit in the annual return and this was confirmed during the visit.

### Section 3: Findings from the monitoring visit

3 The report from the Review for Educational Oversight visit in May 2012 had three features of good practice, one advisable and five desirable recommendations. The College continues to make acceptable progress in addressing the action plan.

4 However, as was the case at the time of the 2013 monitoring visit, the College has no registered higher education students and is not delivering any higher education programmes. It therefore remains difficult for the review team to confirm whether the supportive learning environment and strong student representation noted as good practice in 2012 continues. Similarly, as the College is still exploring the feasibility of securing an agreement with a higher education institution to enable the delivery of its previous postgraduate provision, the review team is unable to scrutinise evidence to demonstrate progress in completing fully the 2012 action plan. However, areas of it that have not been completed do not have the potential to put academic standards or quality at risk.

5 Previous internal committees and processes will be reconvened to meet future awarding body or organisation quality and standards expectations. For example, the Academic Affairs Committee will be reconstituted in September 2014 to oversee the delivery, monitoring and review of the SQA customised awards. The remaining actions to address recommendations made in 2012 will be completed once programme delivery restarts.

6 The College has in place sufficient and appropriately qualified staff to deliver the SQA customised awards to the anticipated student numbers. The College Board has approved in principle sufficient funding for up to six full-time academic staff to support the delivery of future higher education programmes.

7 The College continues to support staff with their research and personal development activities. One staff member is completing doctoral-level study at the University

of Dundee with full support by the College. Other staff are research active in the areas of politics, philosophy and religion, for example delivering papers at the British Association for Islamic Studies' conferences. The College Board supports this research culture with the view to establishing the College as a recognised research centre in these areas.

## **Section 4: Progress in working with the external reference points to meet UK expectations for higher education**

8 During the process of achieving approval to deliver SQA customised awards the College was required to demonstrate the ability to take full account of SQA approved centre requirements and other policies and procedures. Many SQA policy and procedure expectations are equitable in outcome and similar to those of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education (the Quality Code). However, as means of ensuring that the Quality Code expectations continue to be met, the College will add a mapping of SQA expectations against its existing mapping of the Quality Code expectations to ensure that College policy and procedures meet the requirements of both external reference points.

## **Section 5: Background to the monitoring visit**

9 The monitoring visit serves as a short check on the provider's continuing management of academic standards and quality of provision. It focuses on progress since the previous review. In addition, it provides an opportunity for QAA to advise the provider of any matters that have the potential to be of particular interest in the next monitoring visit or review.

10 The monitoring visit was carried out by Mr Grant Horsburgh (Coordinator) and Mr Tom Cantwell (Reviewer) on 2 June 2014.

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