

ANNUAL REPORT

2020/2021

Applied Science University



ASU



جامعة العلوم التطبيقية
APPLIED SCIENCE UNIVERSITY



EST 1892

London
South Bank
University



His Majesty
King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa
The King of the Kingdom of Bahrain



His Royal Highness
Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa
The Crown Prince and Prime Minister

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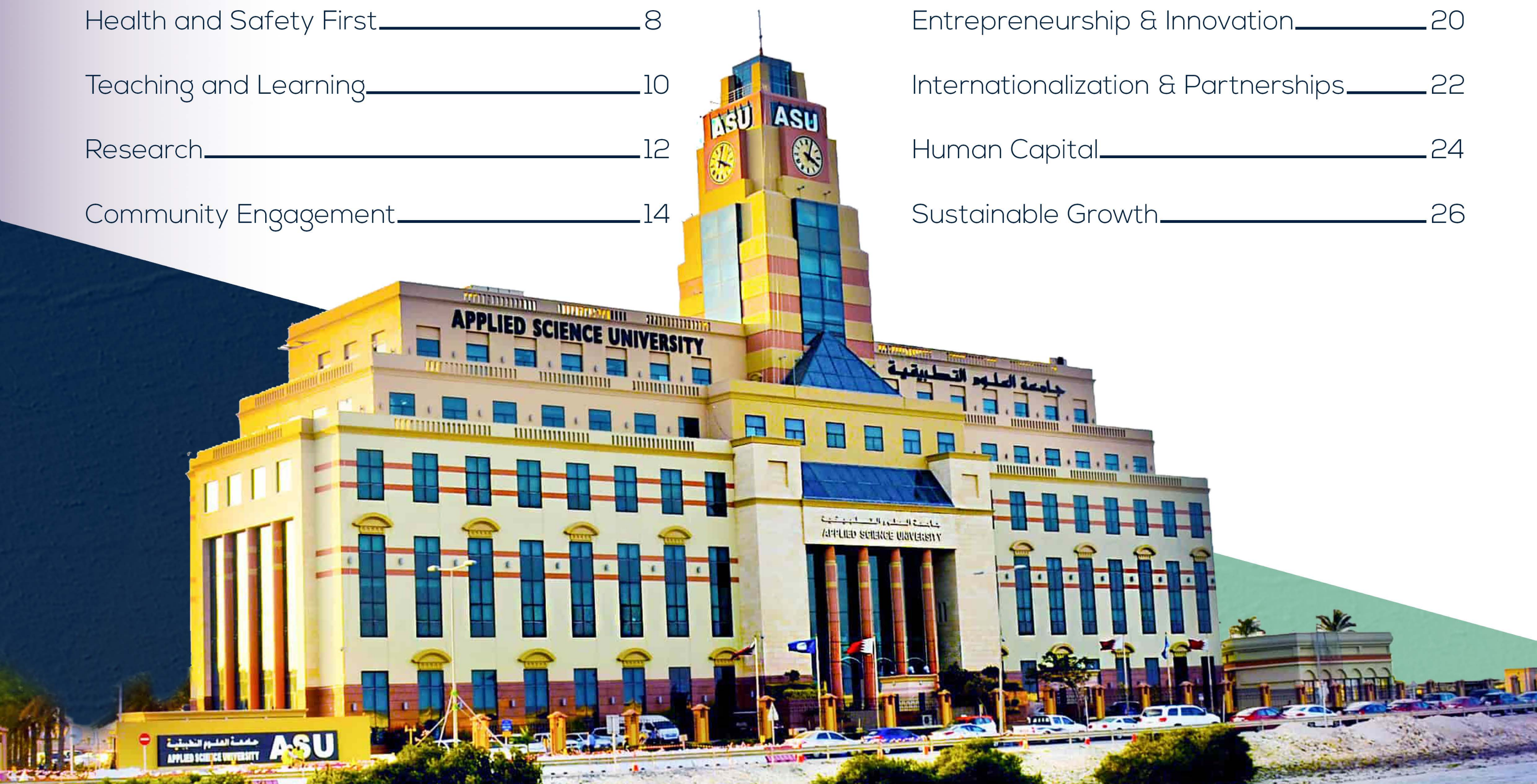
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Foreword by the Chairman of the BOT



Welcome to Applied Science University's Annual Report for the academic year 2020/2021.

This year marks the first year in our new Strategic Plan 2020-2025, an ambitious plan that builds upon the previous one (2015-2020) and sets the University to achieve greater success and reach higher grounds.

The Board of Trustees contributed significantly to the Strategic Plan 2020-2025 as we were consulted throughout all the stages of its development, and we believe that the academic year 2020/2021 was a good start to successfully kick off the implementation of the new quinquennial plan, despite the persistent challenge of the Covid-19 pandemic.

This annual report covers the main achievements and activities in the University for the 9 Strategic Objectives that make up the new Strategic Plan, and while I hope you will find this report useful, I strongly invite you to regularly visit the News Section on our website and also read the weekly President's News Digest which is available on our website to keep up with ASU's latest achievements and activities.

Finally, I take this opportunity to thank the President of the University, Professor Ghassan Aouad, for his commendable leadership, and the entire team of academic and administrative staff, for their continuous efforts to take ASU from strength to strength.

Happy Reading.

Introduction by the President



I am pleased to present Applied Science University's Annual Report for 2020/2021, a year that was marked by the continued spread of the Covid-19 pandemic around the globe, causing radical changes in the way we meet, teach, communicate, and do things in general. But it was also a year that showed humanity's resolve and ingenuity. We have seen how vaccines were developed efficiently by dedicated scientists and dispensed on a massively large scale to combat the spread of the Covid-19 virus. The world has come together to face this global threat and here, in Bahrain, we have witnessed the best examples of solidarity in the society, selfless commitment by the medical staff and people working in the health sector, and an inspired leadership with a government that truly set the benchmark globally for how states should deal with a pandemic.

Here, at ASU, we continued taking all the necessary health and safety measures required to ensure the health and safety of all our staff members and students and other stakeholders. As teaching continues to take place online, we enhanced that experience for our students by further investing in adequate hardware and software solutions to ensure our teaching and assessment are up to the best standards.

This Academic Year 2020-2021 is also the first year in our highly ambitious new Strategic Plan 2020-2025 which was developed in a participatory manner taking into consideration the views of all the University's stakeholders (staff, students, employers, alumni, advisory boards, etc.). Despite the fact that the Covid-19 had some impact on some of our activities, namely those related to community engagement, the overwhelming majority of our objectives for this academic year have been achieved. In this report, we highlight some of our key achievements and activities, and we hope it will give you a taste of the vibrant life we have here and perhaps we will be able to see you soon in our campus.

I'd like to conclude here by expressing my deepest gratitude to the Chairman of our Board of Directors, the Chairman of our Board of Trustees and the members of both Boards, to the Ministry of Education, the Higher Education Council and the BQA, to the employers who support us, to all our academic and administrative staff, and above all, to our dear students and their families.

Happy reading.

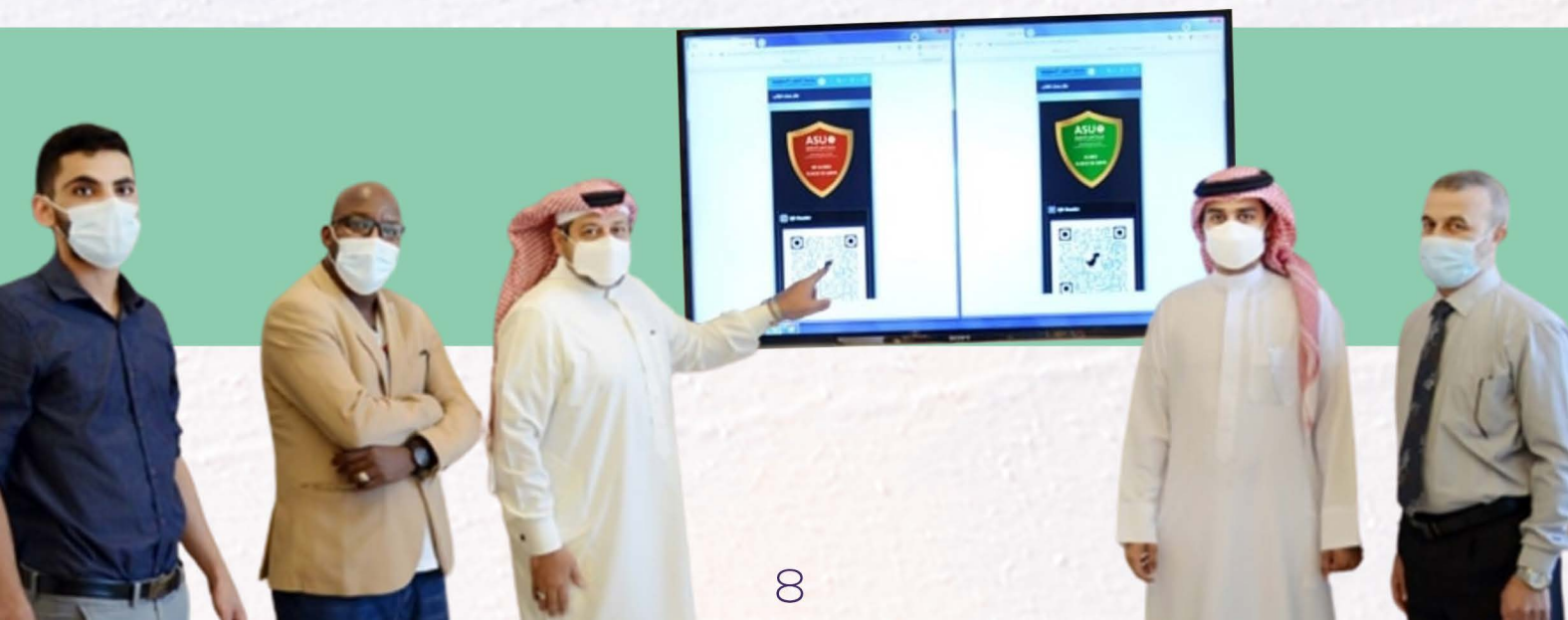
Health and Safety First

Before diving into the key achievements and activities under each of the 9 Strategic Objectives, I would like to highlight in this section the measures that the University took during the academic year 2020/2021 to ensure the health and safety of its staff, students and stakeholders:

- The COVID-19 committee chaired by the University's President that was formed in the academic year 2019/2020 as per the Ministry of Education guidelines to deal with all the COVID-19 related matters continued its meetings on a regular basis. The committee played an advisory role and helped the

University's management take the decisions and measures that are in our students' best interest.

- The University kept encouraging all its academic and administrative staff to get vaccinated and in fact reached a very high ratio of double vaccinated staff members.
- The University continued delivering its courses online and also conducting its exams online.
- The University continued conducting its meetings online, including the meetings of the Board of Trustees and the University Council (using Microsoft Teams, Zoom, Moodle, etc.).



- The University renewed its contract with a specialized company to sanitize the campus and the offices on a regular basis.
- Hand sanitizers were installed at various points across the campus.
- The University's administration continued its efforts to digitize the majority of its operations using a paperless approach including online payments for the University vendors to reduce physical contact.
- Different flexible work-from-home schemes were introduced for both administrative and academic staff members to reduce on-campus presence whenever needed. The schemes evolved based on the evolution of the COVID-19 situation in Bahrain.
- Another measure that the University took during this academic year is conducting rapid Covid-19 tests at the gate of the University to all its academic and administrative staff members before they are cleared for entry to the campus.
- The University continued operating the call center it created last year in order to help students with their enquiries regarding teaching, assessment, and administrative issues.
- For all the health and safety measures, guidelines and instructions that were produced, the University continued displaying them on-campus, and sharing them with all staff and students. The HR Department also continued sending reminders regarding these measures.
- In this evolving context, the University adapted its marketing strategy by investing more in online advertising and holding multiple virtual open days and online meetings.
- Deployment of new electronic system to facilitate student access to campus (developed in-house) in addition to advanced booking system for using the University facilities such as the Library.

Teaching and Learning

"Teaching and Learning" is the first of our three pillars and it's all about being a leader in applied programmes.

Key Achievements:

Opening of the Legal Clinic at the College of Law: The opening of the Legal Clinic at the College of Law was a major step towards the consolidation of applied learning for our students. Its activities include organizing workshops, mock trials, applied sessions and field visits, to equip the students with the practical skills they need to succeed in their careers.



New Achievement in the QS Arab Region Ranking: We have been ranked 29th in the QS Arab Region Universities Rankings up from 37th last year (and 45th the year before). We are now among the Top 30 universities in the Arab world and this just shows how far we have come in a relatively short period.



Retaining the ISO 21001:2018 Certification: The University was the first in Bahrain and the region to address the requirements of the newly issued ISO 21001:2018 Standard for Educational Organizations Management Systems last year, and this year it managed to retain after successfully undergoing the external audit.



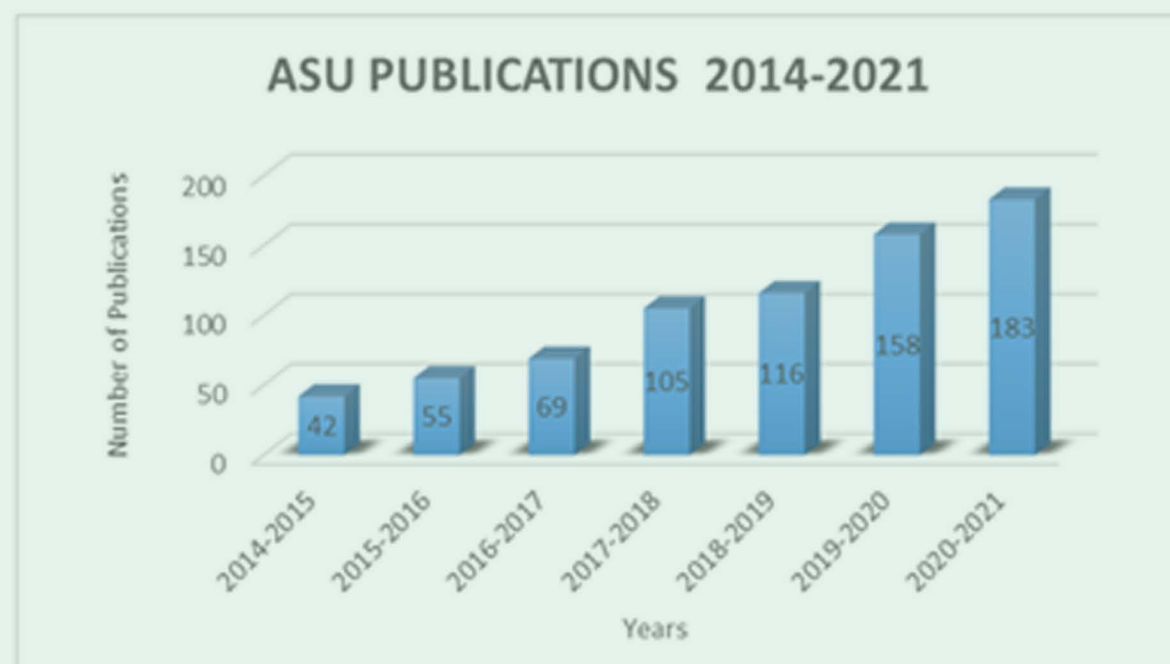
Research

"Research" is the second of our three pillars and it informs our teaching and learning and creates a culture of curiosity and knowledge sharing.

Key Achievements:

Significant Improvement in Research Publications in Terms of Quality and Quantity: Since its inception, ASU was keen on encouraging its staff to conduct meaningful research that is in line with the kingdom's research priorities. Since then, the number of publications has gone up, and this year we reached over 180 publications. But it's not just the quantity that improved, it's the quality too. This year, and for the first time ever, ASU crossed the 100 threshold of publications indexed ISI / SCOPUS.

TOTAL PUBLICATIONS

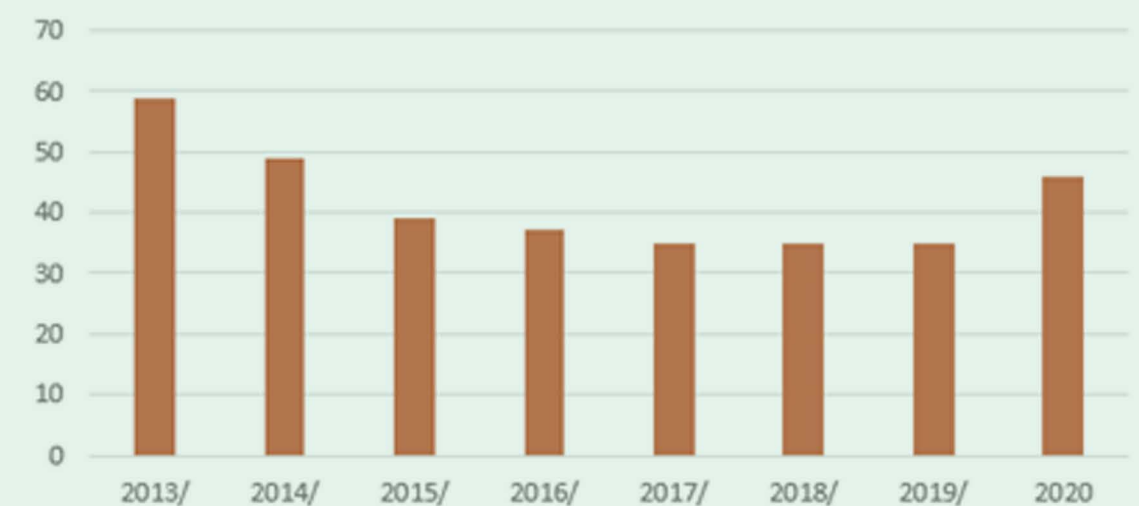


SCOPUS/ISI

2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
26	28	29	21	47	91	81	107

Increased Number of Master Thesis Defenses: the number of master theses has finally picking up the pace again with year over year improvement percentage of more than 30%. the university really encourages its master students to conduct applied research that solves real problems in their organizations and for their communities. In fact, the university has recently organized a fair for the students to exhibit their research projects and it was indeed very successful.

Number of Thesis Defenses



Community Engagement

“Community Engagement” is the third of our 3 pillars and it is an essential part of our identity as we truly believe in giving back to society.

Key Achievements:

ASU Wins 2nd Place Award for Community Engagement: organized by the capital governorate, the University won the second-place award for community engagement in the educational sector and this just goes to prove how committed we are to giving back to society and serving our community. Of course, this is also proven by the plethora of community engagement activities that we organize throughout the year. We cannot cite all these activities here so please refer to the community engagement booklet that is also publicly available on our website.



ASU Student Wins 1st Place Award for Community Engagement: In the same competition organized by the capital governorate, but in the “Youth Category” it’s one of the University students that actually won the first place award for community engagement. We feel very proud of this achievement because it shows that our values have been successfully transmitted to and fully embraced by our dear students.

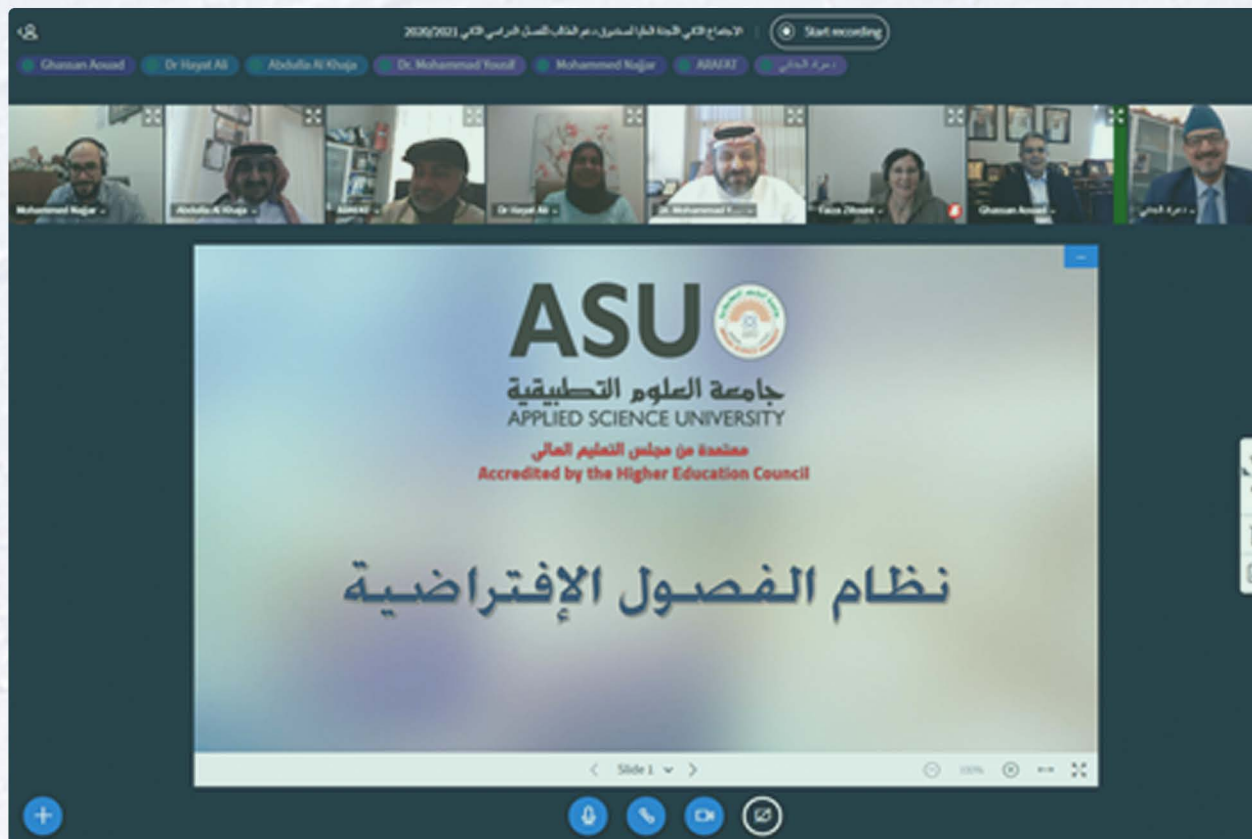


Student Support

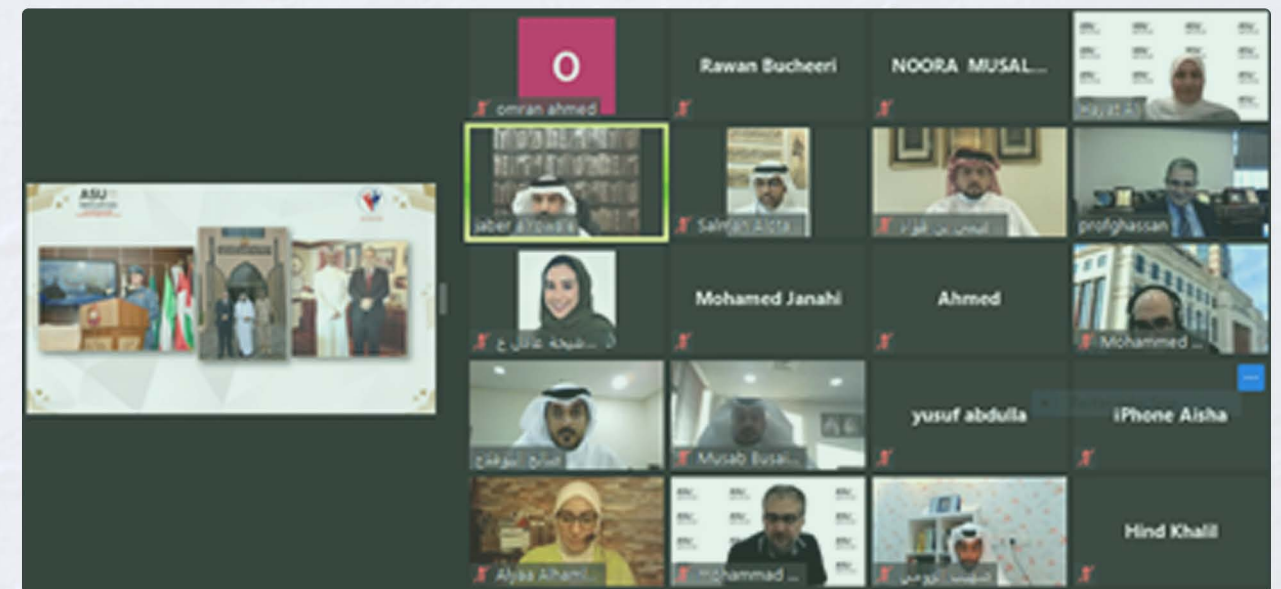
We pride ourselves on being a student-centered university, that's why "Student Support" is the very first of our six enablers.

Key Achievements:

ASU Gives Financial Aid to 245 Students Overall: Between the 1st and the 2nd semesters, the University provided financial aid to an overall number of 245 students with an allocated budget that far exceeds the budget from previous year.



ASU Annual Alumni Gathering for AY 2020-2021: It has become customary for the University to organize each year an annual gathering for its alumni. the COVID-19 situation did not prevent the university from holding the gathering this year as it took place online.



ASU Celebrates Bahrain Sports Day with its staff and students: The University organized many sports activities for its staff and students to celebrate Bahrain's Sports Day while observing all the health and safety measures related to Covid-19, and also organized an online awareness session about the importance of incorporating sport activities in our daily lives and lifestyle.



Quality Enhancement

Quality is at the heart of everything we do, and “Quality Enhancement” is our second enabler to help us achieve that.

Key Achievements:

ASU Achieves Full Confidence for its Bachelor in Computer Science:

The College of Arts & Science at the University successfully passed the BQA Program Review for its Bachelor in Computer Science thus achieving full confidence. The College hosts the 2 last remaining programs yet to undergo BQA Cycle 2 review which will most likely take place in 2022.



هيئة جودة التعليم والتدريب
Education & Training Quality Authority
مملكة البحرين - Kingdom of Bahrain

ASU Retains its ISO 9001:2015 Certification: The University gives utmost care to incorporate quality assurance principles and best practices in all of its operations, and this is asserted through the implementation of all the guidelines in the International Standard ISO 9001:2015.



ASU Starts the Process of IQA QAA: Believing that ASU has reached an advanced level of maturity in terms of quality assurance and management that on par with the best international standards, the University started the process of IQR (International Quality review) with the QAA (Quality Assurance Agency in the UK) and has indeed achieved a successful outcome of the scoping visit which will take us to the next review stage.

Accreditation by QAA



International Quality Review
Building a global reputation for your university or college

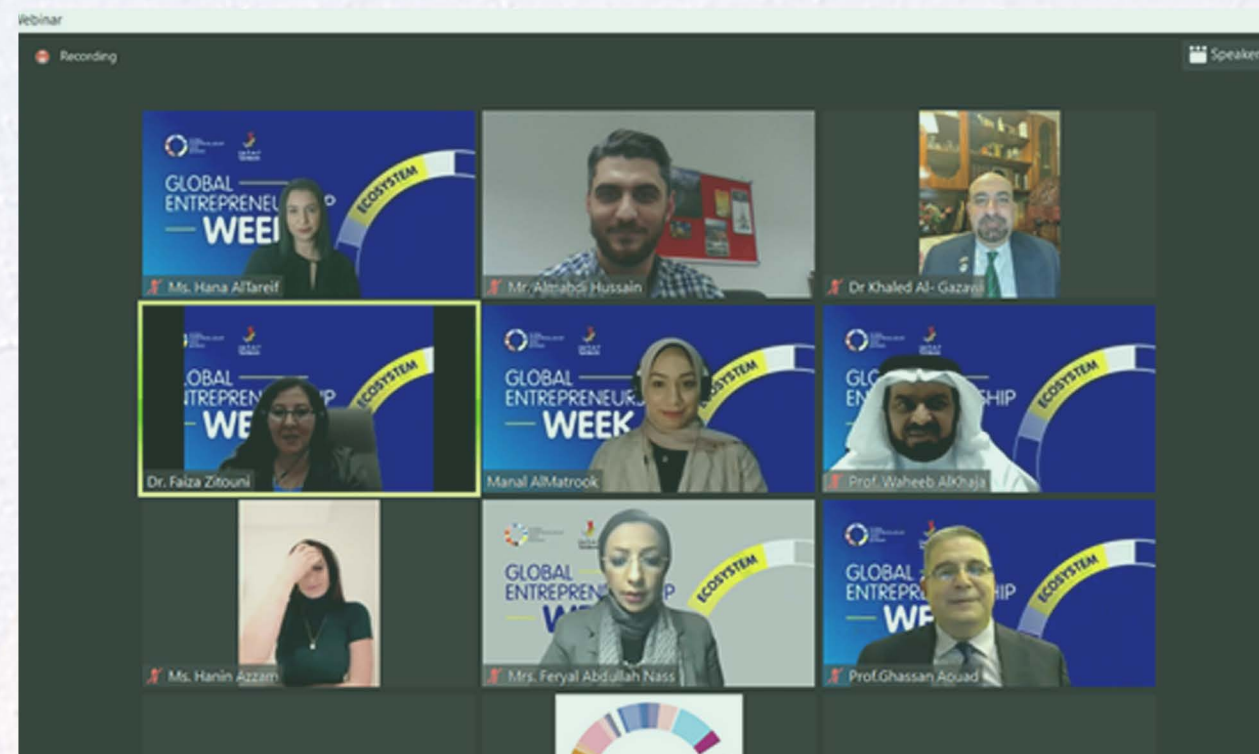


Entrepreneurship & Innovation

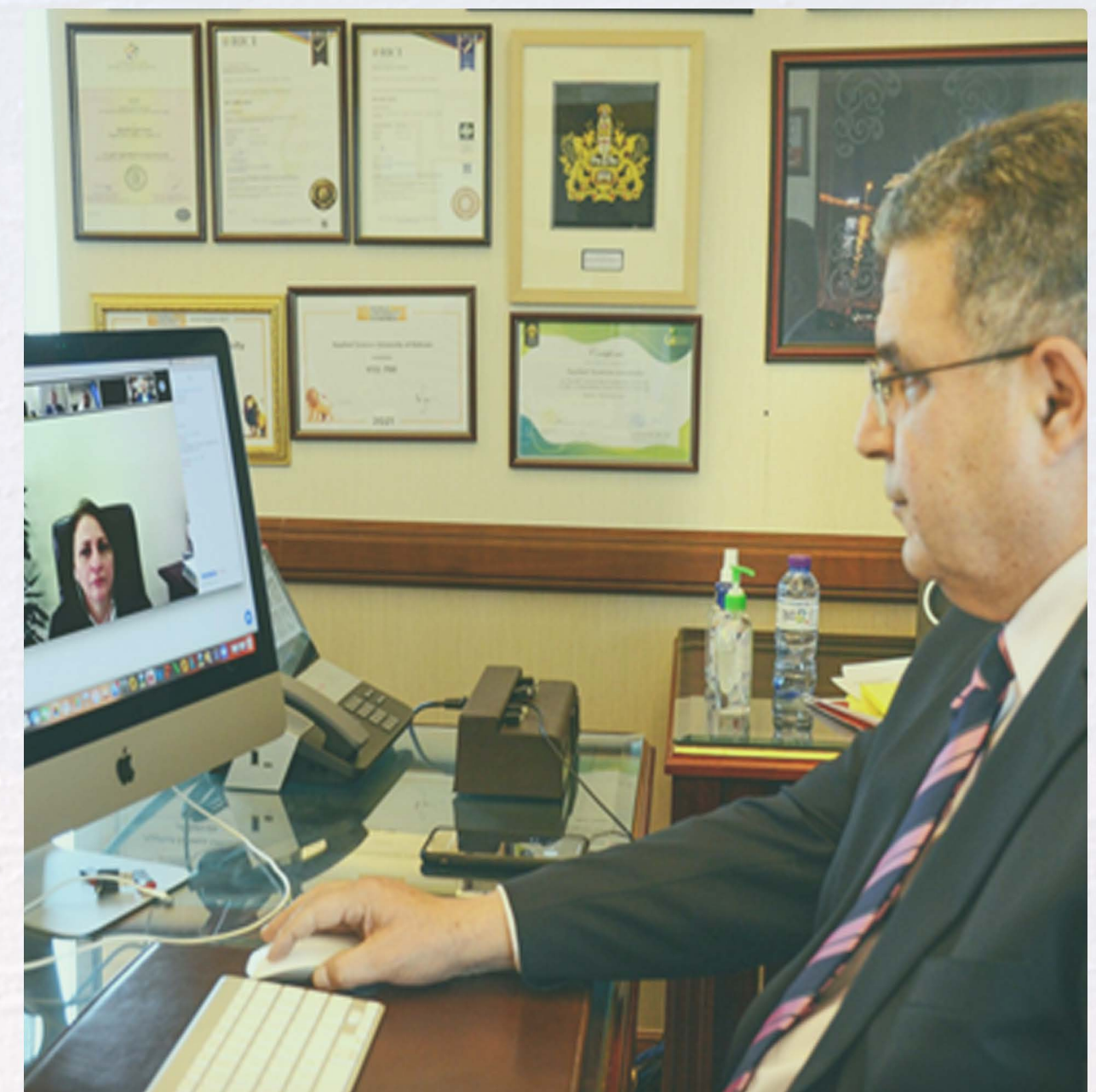
This third enabler in our strategic plan helps us create the perfect environment for our staff and students to unleash their creativity.

Key Achievements:

ASU Celebrates the GEW with Tamkeen: This year, ASU celebrated the Global Entrepreneurship Week in coordination with Tamkeen by organizing a virtual seminar titled "Funding Opportunities for Young Entrepreneurs in the Covid-19 Era", under the patronage of Professor Waheeb Ahmed Alkhaja, Chairman of the Board of Trustees seminar. Six distinguished guests from inside and outside the Kingdom of Bahrain contributed as panelists to the discussions of the seminar representing various funding institutions and organizations involved in promoting entrepreneurship and empowering young entrepreneurs in Bahrain and the region.



ASU Moderates QS Maple 2021 Session about Entrepreneurship & Innovation in Higher Education: This year, Professor Ghassan Aouad, the University's President, was selected to moderate a very important session at the regional event QS Maple 2021 about Entrepreneurship & Innovation in Higher Education. Good practices and new ideas were shared during what was referred to as "a very fruitful and well-moderated session".



Internationalization & Partnerships

This fourth enabler is important for the University's growth and outreach, and it does impact all aspects of our activities.

Key Achievements:

ASU Moves up on the QS World University Rankings: The University continued its impressive performance on the International League Tables as it moved up on the QS World University Rankings 2022 from 651-700 (2021) to 591-600 (2022). This really puts the University on the international map and consolidates its positioning as a top educational institution in Bahrain and the region.



ASU Consolidates its Partnership with LSBU by Validating 5 New Programs: After the successful launch of 2 Engineering programs with LSBU few years ago, the University is now taking its collaboration with LSBU to a new level and has indeed successfully validated 5 new hosted programs that shall be launched over the next few years:

- BEng (Hons) Electrical and Electronic Engineering (ASU)
- BEng (Hons) Mechanical Engineering (ASU)
- BA (Hons) Accounting and Finance (ASU)
- BA (Hons) Business Management (ASU)
- LLB (Hons) Law (ASU)



Human Capital

This fifth enabler is a testament that the University values its staff members and provides them with the right environment to grow and prosper

Key Achievements:

Increased Number of HEA Fellows in the Various Categories: The University continued its partnership with Advance-HE which resulted in an increased number of HEA fellows. In fact, ASU crossed an important milestone by achieving over 100 awarded fellowships to its academic and administrative staff members.



Category of Fellowship	No. of Recognized Individuals	No. of Fellowships Awarded
Principal Fellow	1	1
Senior Fellow	20	24
Fellow	53	68
Associate Fellow	21	21
Total	94	114

Joint ceremony with LSBU concluding staff development webinars:

The Academic Staff Development Unit (ASDU), organized a "Virtual Closing Ceremony of the series of webinars" delivered by LSBU, as part of our international partnership joint activities. The Ceremony consisted of two main merged programs; (1) Highlights of the webinars and (2) Sharing Online Teaching Practices. A significant number of ASU academic and administrative staff members profited from these trainings.



Sustainable Growth

Last but not least, this sixth enabler is there to support everything we do in a sustainable way that is both environment-friendly and beneficial to the University's operations.

Key Achievements:

ASU Moves up on the GreenMetric World University Ranking: The University continued its progress on the GreenMetric World University Ranking as it moved up to spot 484 globally, which makes it the top private university in Bahrain in this ranking and 37th in the Arab world.



ASU ranks very well in the Times Higher Education Impact Ranking:

The Times Higher Education Impact Rankings are global performance tables that assess universities against the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). ASU has performed well in the recent THE Universities Impact Rankings as we ranked in the range of 401-600 out of 1115 universities in the world.



ASU signs an agreement with Al Baraka Bank to provide student study loans: The University signed an agreement with Al Baraka Bank to provide our students with advantageous study loans so that they can pursue their studies at their favorite university without having to worry about the tuition fees' payment.



ASU



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