

PRESIDENT'S NEWS DIGEST

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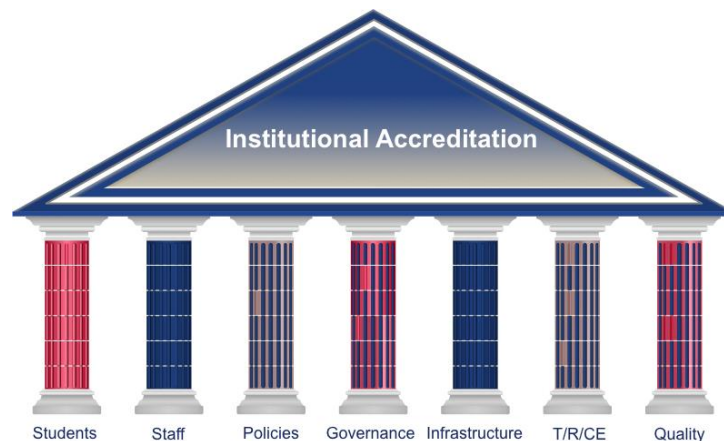
MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

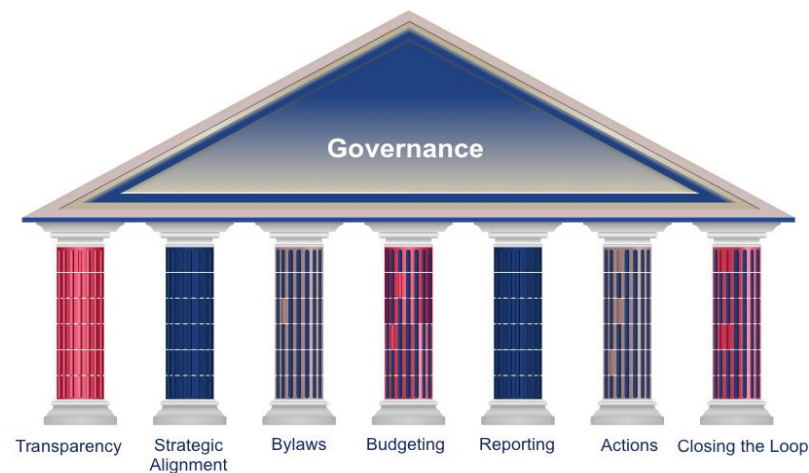
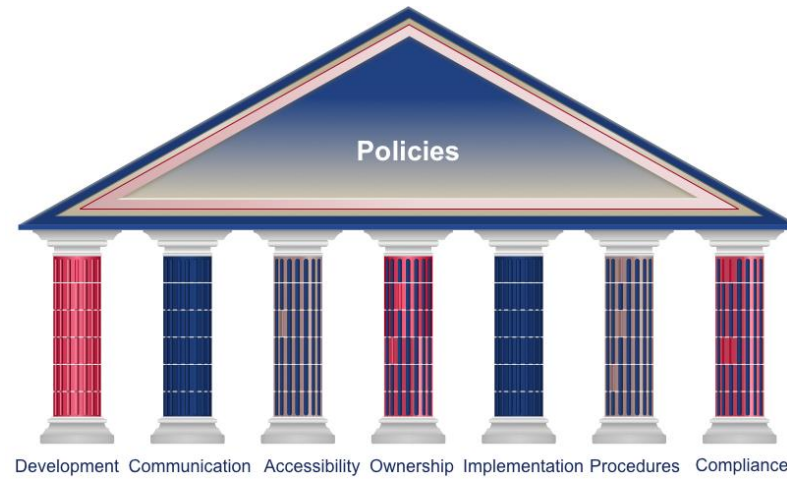
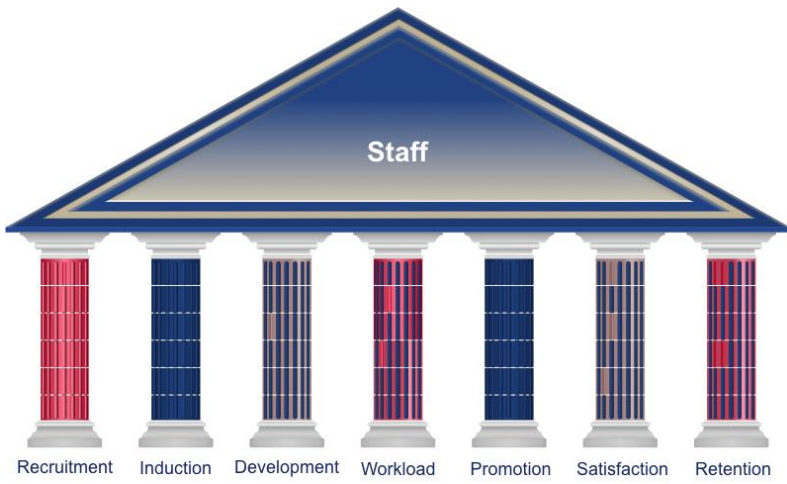
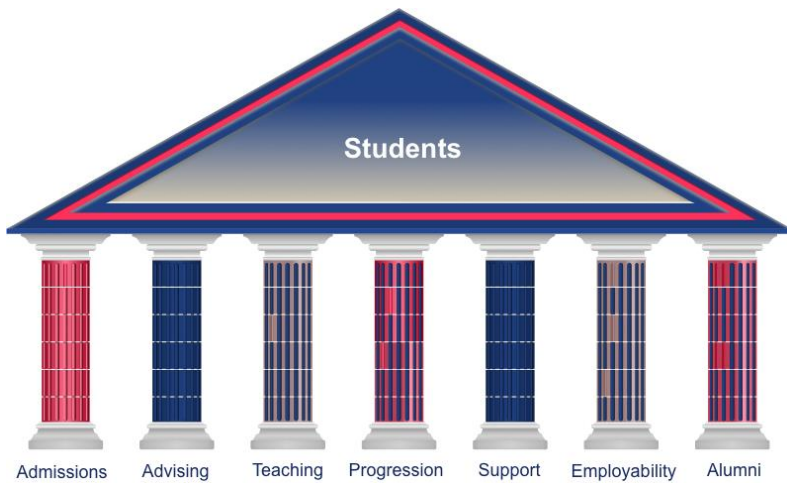
Welcome to the 12th issue of the 3rd year of the President's News Digest.

In this issue, I will be covering the issue of institutional accreditation.



I am pleased to inform you that our application for accreditation has been approved by the HEC. This is fantastic news for us, but it means that a lot of work needs to be undertaken over the next 4 weeks and we have to submit our SER report and all supporting materials within 4 weeks. Let's keep up the momentum and good work and please remember that all of us should contribute to this important activity when the contribution is needed. This is a collective responsibility and we should all be proud that we have reached this stage in our preparation for accreditation. With your efforts, loyalty and dedication we should be able to achieve this accreditation, which will reflect nicely on the University, our programmes, students, alumni and all of us. Accreditation is a stamp of quality and as a result our University's reputation will be enhanced. Tania has already circulated the accreditation handbooks in both Arabic and English in order to remain familiar with the 8 areas, 33 standards, and 218 key indicators which will help us during the accreditation visit (the accreditation handbooks should become your night reading material for the next few months). Our main focus should be on students, staff, policies, governance, infrastructure, T/R/CE, and quality. I produced life cycles of these important factors represented as pillars and as indicated below:





INTERVIEW OF THE WEEK

We would like to feature the interview this week with:



Name: Dr Nadya Abdull Jabbar Al-Shareeda

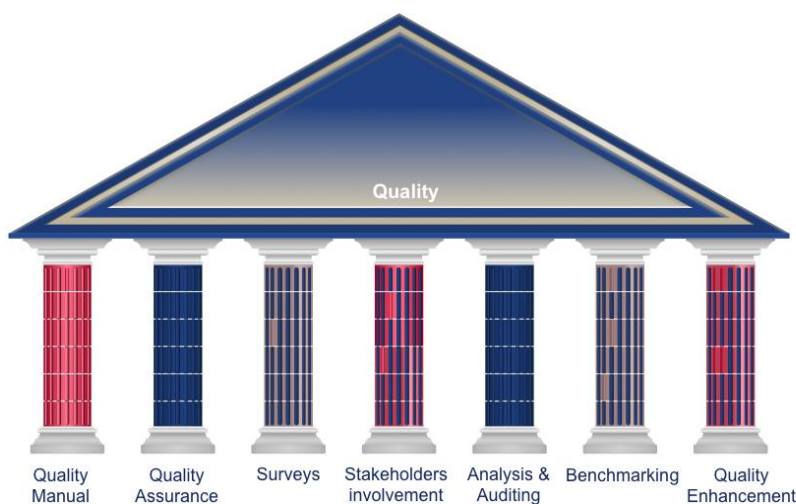
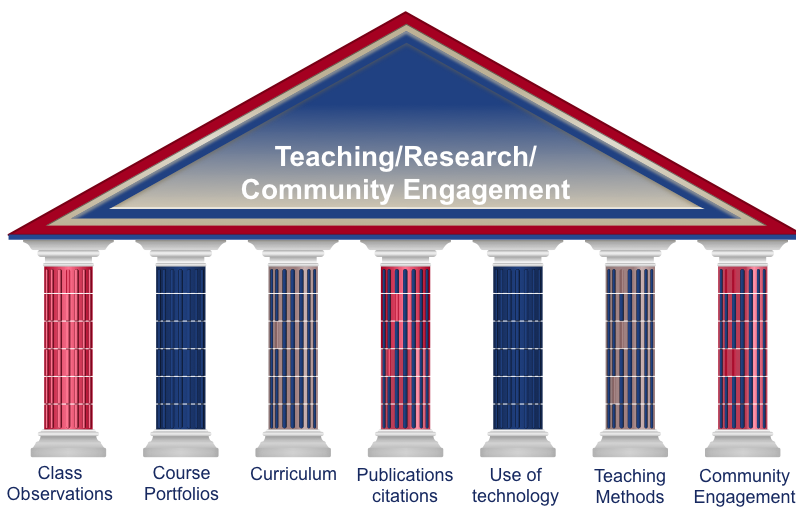
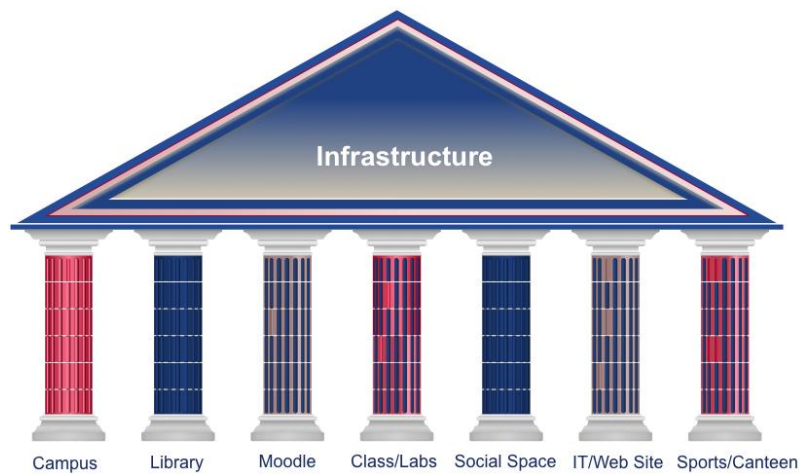
Position: Faculty member in the Accounting and Finance Department

1. Tell us about yourself: (Your childhood, academic background)

I was born in Baghdad, and my childhood was wonderful with a big family. I got married right after I completed my Secondary school, thus handled more responsibilities, but with a big support from my husband.

I completed both my bachelor and Master's degree at the University of Baghdad and was ranked first among my fellows. In the Kingdom of Bahrain I worked 3 years as faculty member in the Accounting Department at Gulf University. In addition, I am the first woman from Bahrain who received the “Certified Budgeting Professional” from Institute of Certified Cost & Management Accountants-ICCA in 2013. During the same year I joined Applied Science University.

After I got my 3 children, I decided to pursue my postgraduate education, and in 2018 I received my PhD in Accounting of Islamic Banks from World Islamic Sciences University. My PhD dissertation is “The Impact of Commitment to Requirements of General Presentation and Disclosure Standard on Achieving Competitive Advantage (an applied study in Kingdom of Bahrain Islamic banks”.



It is important as part of accreditation to be student-centered in all our activities. We should all provide a memorable student experience to our students. The student experience covers all aspects of their time at university: admissions, registration, orientation, academic advising, counseling, exciting teaching in the classrooms and labs, extra-curricular activities, student exchange, provision of social space, clubs and sports, community engagement and volunteering, functions and events, use of Moodle and technology, provision of excellent library resources, internships, site visits, student conferences,

This is the first PhD about Accounting Islamic Standards in the Kingdom of Bahrain.

2. Tell us about your job at ASU

I joined ASU in 2013 as a faculty member in the Accounting and Finance Department (I was the Coordinator of my department for 4 years).

I strongly believe that teamwork is the essence to success in any institution; hence, I am thankful to all my colleagues.

3. Tell us about your aspirations for the University

I hope to see the ASU continue to build its strong reputation, gain full institutional accreditation and become one of the top ranked universities in the region, as it is currently one of the best universities in Bahrain. I also hope to see each and every one of our students achieving their educational dreams and graduate from the university instilled with the desire to be lifelong learners.

4. What do you enjoy most about your job?

I enjoy every bit of my job and it's fulfilling to see my students grow as learners. I am also very pleased to help students and guide them both academically and socially.

5. Tell us about your hobbies

- Reading
- Attending conferences and workshops related to Accounting and Islamic Banks inside and outside Bahrain.

graduation, employability, satisfaction with studies and University life, alumni, employers engagement, and most importantly students voice (ie input and feedback).

It is also very important for all of us to keep our web site up to date and we should all identify mistakes or missing information. This is a collective effort and the accreditation-visiting panel will scrutinize our web site before their visit. All Deans, Directors, Heads of Departments and Units, etc should check their divisions and ensure that the information is correct and up to date. Please give this activity the attention it needs, as a professional web site will give a good impression of the University.

It is also equally important and part of good governance that all committee chairs in the University should look at the terms of reference of their committees and set the agenda of the meetings according to these terms of reference and any other needed business. This will help us in putting the right agenda, with detailed minutes and actions, which need to be passed to higher committees when needed or to other entities in the University. This will help us in closing the loop. Let's take one example:

Committee A looks at the Risk Register, the actions are: the information needs to go to the BOTs for reporting about these risks and another action goes to the University Management Committee (UMC) to address these risks. An audit trail should be conducted to check that all actions have been addressed, which indicate that the loop is closed. Let's take another example, if we want to develop a new programme, the expected cycle is as follows: Department Council Decision goes to College Council, then University Curriculum Committee, then Quality Council, then University Council, then BOTs for final approval if there are resource implications. The accreditation panel may audit trail this cycle and ensure that we are following our policies through the committee structure. All Committee Chairs and Secretaries are responsible for the good running of these committees. I asked Ms Eman, our new Head of Governance and Strategic Planning, to produce graphical representations of the terms of references of all committees in the University.

Finally, as you are aware over the last few weeks three of our colleagues, Dr Ahmed Azzam, Dr Horiya and Mr Rashid, have been successful in achieving HEA Fellowship status, many congratulations. Those colleagues were trained as part of the collaboration between the HEC and HEA. Some other colleagues are still preparing their applications.

6. Tell us about your favourite food

Barbecued food.

7. Tell us about the book you are reading now

I am reading now several books related to education pedagogies as I am completing my application for the HEA Fellowship. Furthermore, I am reading "Shari'a Standards for Islamic financial Institutions" book to get ready for the International Exam" Certified Sharia Advisor & Auditor (CSAA) program", which will take place next week.

8. Final words

I wish all success and prosperity to my beloved ASU and to get the institutional accreditation soon, under our wise and efficient management guidance.

In addition, we have another group being trained by the HEA and the UoB trains a third group. I strongly encourage our colleagues to work hard to achieve HEA status, as this will have a good impression of the University. Being recognized by a prestigious international body will definitely help us in promoting quality education in the University resulting in a better learning experience for our students. Achieving HEA status is also a significant personal achievement and will help you to become part of a very prestigious body that promotes excellence in teaching, learning and assessment reflecting nicely your own standing in the teaching profession as well as on accreditation. Let's keep up the good work and make sure that quality is the oxygen we breathe every day.

TRAINING

The Training and Continuing Education Center has conducted several training sessions for the administrative members of staff as a part of their continuing education to cover the knowledge and skills gaps identified through the Training Needs Analysis for the academic year 2016-2017.



The Training Needs Analysis was created by utilizing the feedback and scores received through the annual appraisals, with the relevant data we produced a full report and have organized the training mentioned below.



Assertiveness Skills - 17-18 October 2017

Building your self-esteem and assertiveness is essential for confidence and success, and it all begins with you. Of all the judgments you make in life, none is as important as the one you make about yourself.



Without some measure of self-worth and self motivation, life can be enormously painful. The session helped the participants to discover some simple techniques that dramatically change how they feel about themselves while understanding how to recognize the importance of learning self-acceptance and building their assertiveness skills.

Telephone Handling Skills - 8 November 2017

Customer service is one of the most important aspects of any business. It's not just a question of reacting to your customers' needs - it's also about defining what they really want, even when they're not sure themselves! This session focused on helping the attendees react better to customers' needs - and deal with situations when they become difficult in regards to telephone queries and conversations.



Practical Sales Skills - 11 - 13 December 2017 and 3 January 2018

The core aim of this training was to provide the attendees with a set of tools that can be practicably used in their role as a salesperson. The skills that were provided are simply a collection of valuable methods of achieving sales in the selected role. The skills have been produced from many years experience in sales and have been tried and tested in a business environment.





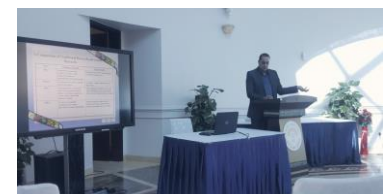
“CROSSING THE BRIDGE TOGETHER”

Aiming at building up and raising the professional capacity of ASU academic members, during the period between the 1st and 2nd semesters, ASDU organized a series of training workshops under the name of “Crossing the Bridge Together”. This series consisted of the following:

1. Course Portfolio Management/ Study plan.
2. Presentation and communication Skills in Higher education.
3. Publishing Scientific Research.
4. Methods of Participation in Community Engagement.
5. Reflective Writing.
6. Conducting Action Research.



The above workshops were delivered by subject specialized members of the academic staff, and were attended by members of all four colleges. This workshop series targeted some professional capabilities required by all members of academic staff, in addition to the specific skills and competencies required by our HEA Applicants. “Crossing the Bridge Together” will be continued next week with a variety of professional academic capacity related workshops.



ASU REPRESENTED BY PROFESSOR WAHEEB AHMED ALKHAJA HONOURED BY H.H SHEIKH KHALID BIN HAMAD AL-KHALIFA

On 18 January 2018, Applied Science University represented by Professor Waheeb Ahmed Alkhaja, Chairman of the Board of Trustees, was honoured by His Highness Sheikh Khalid bin Hamad Al-Khalifa, First Deputy's President of the Supreme Council for Youth and Sports, Honorary President of Bahrain Mixed Martial Arts Association, President of the Organizing Committee of the International Brave Week for Martial Arts, at His Highness Council in Al-Wadi Palace for its support in organizing the International Brave Week for Martial Arts.



As part of the initiatives of the Community Engagement Office at Applied Science University in supporting the national and community activities, the University was adopted as a strategic partner of the International Brave Week for Martial Arts that included World Championships Amateur MMA 2017 and Brave 9 under the patronage of His Highness Shiekh Nasser bin Hamad Al Khalifa, His Majesty the King's Representative for Charity and Chairman of the Supreme Council for Youth and Sports, and with the direct supervision of His Highness Shiekh Khalid bin Hamad Al-Khalifa. The Community Engagement Office and Deanship of Student Affairs participated in organizing the championships and Brave 9 which were held in Sheikh Khalifa Sports City in the Kingdom of Bahrain during the period 12 to 18 November 2017. One hundred and seventy one volunteers from Applied Science University, of whom the majority were students, participated in organizing the championships; in addition to a number of administrative staff and members from the local community.



MEETING THE BUSINESS CHALLENGES IN BAHRAIN

On 17 January 2018, Prof. Saad Darwish, President's Advisor for Special Projects, attended an event for SMEs titled "Developing minds to run business of the future". The event was in collaboration with Tatweeri; a programme designed to foster and enhance skills of Business Owners, Entrepreneurs, Directors, Executives, Managers and Team Leaders, aiming to steepen the learning curve, allowing these individuals to expand their market reach as well as increase the quality of the products and services their companies have, to offer. The discussions were based on how to deal with the challenges facing businesses and enhancing the economy during times of economic down turn . The programme drives the process of rapid improvement. Individuals will be trained predominantly on the strengths of their overall competence and background, giving them a leading edge.



WORLD ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENT CONFERENCE AND EXHIBITION (WEEC) 2018



Dr Assem Al-Hajj, Vice President for Academic Affairs and Development, represented Professor Ghassan Aouad, President of the University, at the World Energy and Environment Conference and Exhibition (WEEC) 2018, held in Bahrain on 16-17 January 2018, under the patronage of MP Ahmad Ibrahim Al Mulla, Chairman/Speaker of the House of Representatives in the Kingdom of Bahrain. The conference is the 5th Series 'Shifting to Clean Renewable Energy in Times of Transition'. Speakers included personalities from Bahrain and abroad (Canada, Pakistan).

Dr Assem presented a paper entitled 'The Role of Academia in Capacity Building for Sustainable Energy Development' on behalf of Prof Ghassan on 17 January, the second day of the conference.

The conference was also attended by some of Applied Science University (ASU) students who also exhibited the "Green ASU" prototype, a project which students have designed proposing a sustainable and eco-friendly ASU.

NQF APPLICATIONS SUBMISSION

After many months of hard work, the University successfully submitted its first set of qualifications placement applications on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) in Bahrain. The applications for the Bachelor in Business Administration and the Bachelor in Law were submitted to the General Directorate of Qualifications (GDQ) at the Education and Training Quality Authority (BQA) as scheduled, on Thursday 18 January 2018. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the members of the Mapping Panels and Confirmation Panels and all members of the academic and administrative staff who worked on the preparation of the documentations at the college of Administrative Sciences and the College of Law for their hard work and dedication. I would also like to thank the President of the University, the senior management team, all members of the University Mapping Committee, the Quality Assurance and Accreditation Centre at the University, and all our external consultants for their support, hardwork and for sharing their knowledge and experience with us. In addition, I would like to note that the University will now start working on the applications for the placement of two new programmes namely the Master in Human Resources Management (MHRM) and the Master in Business Administration (MBA) to be ready in June 2018.

Written by Dr Assem Al-Hajj, VP for Academic Affairs and Development, and Chairman of the University Mapping Committee.

ASU CLOSING IN ON GETTING THE ISO 9001:2015 CERTIFICATION

Under the patronage of Dr. Mohammed Yousif and with the unlimited support of Mr. Abdulla Al-Khaja, the University is now closer than ever to getting the ISO 9001:2015 certification.

In the latest step, the University received on Wednesday 10 January 2018 the external auditor from the certifying body to conduct Stage 1 Audit for the entire day.



Stage 1 Audit consists of auditing the entirety of the university's documentation to check its readiness for Stage 2 Audit which will only be conducted if the audited organization successfully passes Stage 1 Audit.

The audit day started with an opening meeting with representatives from the various administrative departments and deanships within the scope of the certification, where the external auditor explained the purpose and methodology of the audit and explained that, although at this stage the focus will be on the documentation, he may need to conduct few interviews with some of the staff for further details or clarification. He then was accompanied by Mr. Hatem Dammak, Coordinator of the ISO Certification Project, who shared with him all the necessary documentation to be reviewed.

At the end of the day, the external consultant held a closing meeting (see photo) to share the good news with the staff who attended the opening meeting: the university has successfully passed Stage 1 Audit and is now ready to go through Stage 2 Audit where the external auditor will be visiting the various departments within the scope of certification to check that the processes and procedures mentioned in the documentation are indeed being implemented and properly documented.

This is considered to be a significant progress towards the certification after several months of intense preparations led by the members of the “ISO Quality Management Committee”.

Stage 2 Audit will be organized in early February and could last for up to 2 days maximum. Meanwhile, the University will keep up the momentum and pursue its preparations, namely to address the few areas of improvements that it identified through its own internal audit process or mentioned by the external auditor further to his visit.

HEC ACCREDITATION DAY: COLLECTIVE REVIEW OF THE SER'S 33 STANDARDS

Under the patronage of Prof. Waheeb Al-Khaja and with his active participation and support, the University President, Prof. Ghassan Aouad, organized a day-long Workshop called “Accreditation Day” on Thursday 18 January 2018 at the Dome Hall.



The objective of the workshop was to review the entirety of the SER (Self-Evaluation Report) for the institutional accreditation that has been drafted by the University and polished by the University’s external consultant.

The review exercise was focused on the 8 Areas of the institutional accreditation, so there were 8 round tables bringing together various teams from the different Colleges, Deanships, Departments and Directorates of the University. Over 40 staff members participated at the workshop which started at 9 am and concluded at 3:30 pm with a lunch break in-between.

“It was a fantastic day and demonstrated that the University has a very strong team spirit and all our colleagues are committed to contribute when needed.” Said Professor Ghassan of the event.

At the end of the workshop, the entirety of the 33 standards making up the SER were reviewed by the various teams assigned to them respectively, and the feedback was gathered shortly after on Word Documents with track change in order to share them with the consultant and all the concerned colleagues.

Once all these changes are incorporated in the final draft of the SER by the external consultant, the President will organize a second “Accreditation Day” to proofread the Report one final time before submission.

It is worth noting also that the review exercise resulted in the identification of a number of additional evidences / SMs (Supplementary Materials) that will be gathered throughout the week to further endorse the SER.

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

“Disciplining yourself to do what you know is right and important, although difficult, is the highroad to pride, self-esteem, and personal satisfaction.”

Margaret Thatcher

 *Happy Reading!* 