AQAS

AGENTUR FÜR
QUALITÄTSSICHERUNG DURCH
AKKREDITIERUNG VON
STUDIENGÄNGEN E.V.

FINAL REPORT

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES UNIVERSITY

CLUSTER LANGUAGES

LINGUISTICS (BACHELOR OF ARTS)

ENGLISH LITERATURE (BACHELOR OF ARTS)

TRANSLATION STUDIES (BACHELOR OF ARTS)

March 2025

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Content

DECISION OF THE AQAS STANDING COMMISSION

ON THE STUDY PROGRAMMES

▪ **"LINGUISTICS" (BACHELOR OF ARTS)**

▪ **"ENGLISH LITERATURE" (BACHELOR OF ARTS)**

▪ **"TRANSLATION STUDIES" (BACHELOR OF ARTS)**

OFFERED BY UNITED ARAB EMIRATES UNIVERSITY, AL AIN, UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

Based on the report of the expert panel, the comments by the university and the discussions of the AQAS Standing Commission in its 24th meeting on 24 February 2025, the AQAS Standing Commission decides:

1. The study programmes "**Linguistics**" (**Bachelor of Arts**), "**English Literature**" (**Bachelor of Arts**) and "**Translation Studies**" (**Bachelor of Arts**) offered by **United Arab Emirates University**, **UAE** are accredited according to the AQAS Criteria for Programme Accreditation (Bachelor/Master).

    The accreditations are conditional.

    The study programmes essentially comply with the requirements defined by the criteria and thus the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG) and the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) in their current version. The required adjustments can be implemented within a time period of twelve months.

2. The condition has to be fulfilled. The fulfilment of the condition has to be documented and reported to AQAS no later than **31 March 2026**.

3. The accreditation is given for the period of **six years** and is valid until **31 March 2031**, provided that the condition listed below is fully met. Otherwise, the accreditation may be withdrawn.

Condition:

For all study programmes:

1. The transparency on translation from the local credit hour (CH) system to ECTS has to be assured, and regulations have to be accessible for external stakeholders.

The following **recommendations** are given for further improvement of the programmes:

For all study programmes:

1. The faculty should consider implementing the tool of moderation / involvement of a second assessor prior or post the exam to increase consistency of student assessment.

2. The faculty should move ahead and develop even better ways to include students as relevant stakeholders in the QA structures and bodies of the faculty.

3. The faculty should intensify its structured and impact-oriented outreach to the labour market in order to involve its perspective in the continuous development of the programmes while at the same time aim at a higher level of employability of graduates.

4. The use of modern technology in teaching and learning should be improved beyond administrative elements. Using more of the potential of modern technologies in the classroom will also help students develop skills for the labour market.

5. The faculty should develop an internationalization approach that aligns with the local culture. Elements of virtual mobility, summer (or winter) schools could attract short term stays and thus increase international exchange of ideas.

6. The faculty should improve its publicly available information with increased attention for external stakeholders.

7. Complete admission requirements and procedures should be publicly available.

8. The faculty should consider delivering a complete diploma supplement document after graduation explaining details of the qualifications obtained.

For the study programme "Translation Studies":

9. The programme should aim at developing a better linguistic accuracy in both languages in its graduates.

10. The programme should incorporate more skills in machine translation.

11. The programme should critically reflect the constructive alignment between PLO and CLO and assure that the ILO are realistic, measurable and achievable. This critical reflection should also include the specific assessment methods in the courses.

For the study programme "Linguistics":

12. The programme should consider adding an internship to the curriculum.

13. There should be increased focus do develop (ethical) research skills of students and a course applied linguistics should be added.

14. The programme should assure that students take a more active role in the lab work and are actively included.

15. The programme should critically reflect the constructive alignment between PLO and CLO and assure that the ILO are realistic, measurable and achievable. This critical reflection should also include the specific assessment methods in the courses.

For the study programme "English Literature":

16. The programme should increase the visibility and further develop the key characteristics, namely its intercultural and comparative focus.

With regard to the reasons for this decision the Standing Commission refers to the attached experts' report.

EXPERTS' REPORT

ON THE STUDY PROGRAMMES

- **LINGUISTICS (BACHELOR OF ARTS)**

- **ENGLISH LITERATURE (BACHELOR OF ARTS)**

- **TRANSLATION STUDIES (BACHELOR OF ARTS)**

OFFERED BY UNITED ARAB EMIRATES UNIVERSITY, AL AIN, UAE

Visit to the university: 1-3 October 2024

Panel of experts:

Prof. Dr. Lamis Omar	Assistant Professor of Translation and ELT, Dhofar University, Oman
Prof. Dr. Gülşen Musayeva Vefalı	Professor of Applied Linguistics, Cyprus International University, North Cyprus
Prof. Dr. Roger Lüdeke	Professor of Modern English Literature, University of Düsseldorf, Germany
Dr. Anne Günther	Instructor of Business English, Business School "F und U–Schule Niedersachsen", Göttingen, Germany (representative of the labour market)
Janina Kofoet	Student of General Linguistics (M.A.), University of Hamburg, Germany (student expert)

Coordinator:
Ronny Heintze   AQAS, Cologne, Germany

I.   Preamble

AQAS – Agency for Quality Assurance through Accreditation of Study Programmes – is an independent non-profit organisation supported by more than 90 universities, universities of applied sciences, and academic associations. Since 2002, the agency has been recognised by the German Accreditation Council (GAC). It is, therefore, a notified body for the accreditation of higher education institutions and programmes in Germany.

AQAS is a full member of ENQA and also listed in the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR) which confirms that our procedures comply with the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG), on which all Bologna countries agreed as a basis for internal and external quality assurance.

AQAS is an institution founded by and working for higher education institutions and academic associations. The agency is devoted to quality assurance and quality development of academic studies and higher education institutions' teaching. In line with AQAS' mission statement, the official bodies in Germany and Europe (GAC and EQAR) approved that the activities of AQAS in accreditation are neither limited to specific academic disciplines or degrees nor a particular type of higher education institution.

II.   Accreditation procedure

This report results from the external review of the Bachelor of Arts programmes "Linguistics", "English Literature", and "Translation Studies" offered by United Arab Emirates University, Al Ain, UAE.

1.   Criteria

Each programme is assessed against a set of criteria for accreditation developed by AQAS: the AQAS Criteria for Programme Accreditation (Bachelor/Master). The criteria are based on the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG) 2015. To facilitate the review each criterion features a set of indicators that can be used to demonstrate the fulfilment of the criteria. However, if single indicators are not fulfilled this does not automatically mean that a criterion is not met. The indicators need to be discussed in the context of each programme since not all indicators can necessarily be applied to every programme.

2.   Approach and methodology

Initialisation

The university mandated AQAS to perform the accreditation procedure in June 2021. The university produced a Self-Evaluation Report (SER). In January 2023, the institution handed in a draft of the SER together with the relevant documentation on the programmes and an appendix. The appendix included e.g.:

- an overview of statistical data of the student body (e.g. number of applications, beginners, students, graduates, student dropouts),
- the CVs of the teaching staff/supervisors,
- information on student services,
- core information on the main library,
- as well as academic regulations.

AQAS checked the SER regarding completeness, comprehensibility, and transparency. The accreditation procedure was officially initialised by a decision of the AQAS Standing Commission on 27 February 2023. The final version of the SER was handed in in August 2024.

Nomination of the expert panel

The composition of the panel of experts follows the stakeholder principle. Consequently, representatives from the respective disciplines, the labour market, and students are involved. Furthermore, AQAS follows the principles for the selection of experts defined by the European Consortium for Accreditation (ECA). The Standing Commission nominated the aforementioned expert panel in June 2024. AQAS informed the university about the members of the expert panel and the university did not raise any concerns against the composition of the panel.

Preparation of the site visit

Prior to the site visit, the experts reviewed the SER and submitted a short preliminary statement including open questions and potential needs for additional information. AQAS forwarded these preliminary statements to the university and to all panel members in order to increase transparency in the process and the upcoming discussions during the site visit.

Site visit

After a review of the SER, a site visit to the university took place from 1-3 October 2024. On site, the experts interviewed different stakeholders, e.g. representatives of the management of the higher education institution, the programme management, of teaching and of other staff, as well as students and graduates, in separate discussion rounds and consulted additional documentation as well as student work. The visit concluded with the presentation of the preliminary findings of the group of experts to the university's representatives.

Reporting

After the site visit had taken place, the expert group drafted the following report, assessing the fulfilment of the AQAS Criteria. The report included a recommendation to the AQAS Standing Commission. The report was sent to the university for comments.

Decision

The report, together with the comments of the university, forms the basis for the AQAS Standing Commission to take a decision regarding the accreditation of the programmes. Based on these two documents, the AQAS Standing Commission took its decision on the accreditation on 24 February 2025. AQAS forwarded the decision to the university. The university had the right to appeal against the decision or any of the imposed conditions.

In March 2025, AQAS published the report, the result of the accreditation as well as the names of the panel members.

III.   General information on the university

The United Arab Emirates University (UAEU) is a public research university in Al Ain in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). The self-evaluation report outlines that the university is the oldest public university in the UAE, established by the country's founding father in 1976. As of 2023, the university enrols approximately 15,000 students from the UAE and abroad. The university's structure includes nine colleges:

- College of Business and Economics,
- College of Education,
- College of Engineering,
- College of Food and Agriculture,
- College of Humanities and Social Sciences,
- College of Information Technology,
- College of Law,
- College Medicine and Health Sciences, and the
- College of Science.

As stated in the SER, the three programmes under accreditation in this cluster are located at the College of Humanities and Social Sciences (CHSS). Having around 3,500 students, the CHSS is stated to be the largest of the colleges. Historically, the CHSS was established in 1977, together with three other founding colleges at UAEU. The SER describes that in 2019 the college underwent a restructuring process to become more competitive nationally and internationally. As a result, the CHSS now consists of eight departments, namely:

- Department of Arabic Language and Literature,
- Department of Cognitive Sciences,
- Department of Geography and Urban Sustainability,
- Department of Government and Society,
- Department of Languages and Literature,
- Department of Media and Creative Industries,
- Department of Social Wellbeing, and the
- Department of Tourism and Heritage Studies.

The programmes under accreditation are located at the Department of Cognitive Sciences (Bachelor's programme in linguistics) and the Department of Languages and Literature (Bachelor's programmes in "English literature" and "Translation studies").

The SER includes information on the mission and vision of the CHSS, which strives to become a recognised institution for advancing knowledge and preparing enterprising leaders while enhancing a prospective future for the upcoming generations. The mission of the College includes a student-centred approach and collaborative research plan which strives to fulfil the overarching aim of the university to promote UAE's heritage and its internationalisation strategy. The CHSS has linked its mission and vision to a strategic plan (the current version includes the business plan for 2021-2023) and provides an overview that includes the five goals of the UAEU's strategy and the consequent link for CHSS' strategy. These strategic goals include producing graduates that are ready for the future (Goal 1), developing the CHSS as a centre of excellence (Goal 2), promoting the College's role in their third mission activities for society (Goal 3), strengthening the collaborative activities with other higher education institutions (Goal 4), and the fostering of excellence and sustainability in all units of CHSS (Goal 5).

As of 2023, the college has 141 academic staff, differentiated into 16 full professors, 52 associated professors, 47 assistant professors, and 26 instructors. Regarding the academic provision with CHSS, there are currently

eleven Bachelor's programmes and five Master's programmes. The respective departments (Cognitive Sciences and Languages and Literature) offer two Bachelor's programmes, in the case of the Department of Cognitive Sciences, namely, "Linguistics" and "Psychology", and, in the case of the Department of Languages and Literature, a Bachelor's programme in "English literature" and "Translation studies".

The College's structure includes a dean (responsible for academic, financial, and administrative tasks for the entire college), a vice-dean supporting the day-to-day tasks of the dean, two assistant deans (one responsible for research and graduate studies, including research development and the management of graduate studies, and the other responsible for student affairs, e.g., student enrolment, academic advising, or internships). In addition, the CHSS has eight department chairs, who are responsible for the programmes offered at each department.

The SER outlines that the programmes have recently undergone a revision processes. The results of this process which aimed at better connecting UAEU to Western universities were submitted to the national accreditation body (CAA) in January 2024.

IV.   Assessment of the study programme

1.   Quality of the curriculum

The intended learning outcomes of the programme are defined and available in published form. They reflect both academic and labour-market requirements and are up-to-date with relation to the relevant field. The design of the programme supports achievement of the intended learning outcomes.

The academic level of graduates corresponds to the requirements of the appropriate level of the European Qualifications Framework.

The curriculum's design is readily available and transparently formulated.

[ESG 1.2]

1.1   General information on the curricula

The curricula under review are described to demonstrate a coherent and organized framework that supports the progressive development of knowledge and skills. Foundational courses lay the groundwork for advanced and specialized academic pursuits, ensuring a logical progression of learning.

Core courses form the backbone of the curricula, focusing on essential theories and methodologies relevant to each discipline. These are complemented by electives, allowing students to explore specialized topics while aligning with program objectives. Research methodology courses are integral, equipping students with tools for scholarly investigation and fostering critical thinking and analytical skills.

Experiential learning components, such as internships, project-based activities, and capstone projects, aim at bridging theoretical knowledge with practical application. These opportunities intend to facilitate direct engagement with professional contexts, helping students cultivate practical expertise.

Language proficiency and communication skills are emphasized through courses on writing, oral presentation, and interpersonal communication, enabling students to articulate ideas effectively. Intended interdisciplinary integration further enriches the curricula by incorporating perspectives from related fields, preparing students to address complex, multifaceted issues.

Institutional learning outcomes are explained to be a key element, emphasizing critical thinking, ethical awareness, and lifelong learning. These outcomes promote civic responsibility, cultural awareness, and sustainable development, ensuring students contribute meaningfully to societal and global contexts. This alignment is

supposed to be maintained through systematic curriculum reviews, involving diverse stakeholders to keep content and methodologies current and relevant.

Documentation

Concerning the documentation of the Bachelor's programmes, the SER provides a detailed study plan providing an overview of the courses to be taken by students in each semester. The overview shows that students are expected to take 15 CH each semester. In addition, the SER specifies that there is no programme-specific student handbook but provides information on the general academic handbook for students at UAEU. The SER includes summaries of short course descriptions for the courses in the programme. The annexes to the SER provide in-depth information on the courses (including intended learning outcomes on course level, teaching methods, examination methods, and alike).

1.2 Linguistics (Bachelor of Arts)

Description

The programme is designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to meet academic and professional standards. According to the SER, the programme's learning outcomes focus on the acquisition of theoretical knowledge and practical competencies relevant to the field of study.

The learning outcomes include a thorough understanding of the discipline, encompassing its principles, methodologies, and applications. The programme emphasizes the development of analytical and problem-solving abilities, enabling students to address complex issues in their field. It also includes training in effective communication, preparing students to convey ideas and arguments clearly in diverse contexts. Additionally, the programme includes objectives related to cultural and ethical awareness, preparing students for professional settings that require intercultural engagement and ethical decision-making. Research and innovation are also integral parts of the learning outcomes, equipping students to contribute to advancements in their respective areas of expertise. Finally, the programme fosters the skills necessary for lifelong learning, encouraging graduates to adapt and grow in their careers.

The programme spans four years, corresponding to eight semesters, and requires the successful completion of 120 credits. These credits are distributed across various categories, including foundational courses, specialized modules, practical experience, and capstone projects.

The curriculum is structured to support the achievement of these learning outcomes and includes both theoretical and practical components. Foundational courses provide an introduction to the discipline, ensuring that all students acquire a common understanding of key concepts. Examples of foundational courses include "Introduction to Linguistics" or "Introduction to Speech Language Disorder".

Specialized modules are designed to allow students to deepen their knowledge in specific areas of interest. These courses include "Cognitive Science" "Sociolinguistics," and "Psycholinguistics". The curriculum also integrates interdisciplinary studies, with courses such as "Computational Linguistics," which combine elements from linguistics and technology.

Practical experience is incorporated into the curriculum through internships, laboratory sessions, and project-based learning. For example, students participate in translation projects or language teaching practicums, which provide opportunities to apply their skills in real-world contexts. The capstone project is another significant component of the programme, requiring students to synthesize their learning and address practical or theoretical problems within their field.

Language and communication skills are addressed through dedicated courses enhancing the students' ability to engage effectively in written and oral communication across professional and academic domains. Cultural competency is developed through modules that focus on intercultural communication and ethics, ensuring that students are prepared to work in diverse environments.

In addition, students can study language and social communication (sociolinguistics), the historical development of languages (historical linguistics), and how language is stored and processed in the brain (psycholinguistics). Students are also introduced to key data gathering techniques and analytical procedures utilized in linguistic research. These components align with the objectives outlined in the SER, ensuring the curriculum remains comprehensive and relevant to the field.

Experts' evaluation

According to the UAEU Self-evaluation Report (SER), the Bachelor of Arts in Linguistics program is unique in that it is the only undergraduate Linguistics program in the country. The program under review has been designed, approved, implemented, revised and accredited in accordance with the federal laws and regulations for higher education as well as the institutional educational policies and by-laws. From the experts' point of view, the Linguistics programme at UAEU demonstrates many commendable strengths, including a well-structured curriculum, a dedicated faculty, and a clear commitment to academic excellence. These qualities provide a strong foundation for students pursuing studies in this field, equipping them with essential knowledge and skills.

The Program Goals and Learning Outcomes have been formulated in compliance with the National Qualifications Framework as well as the Institutional requirements; and the panel of experts confirms that they are available in published form. The Linguistics curriculum has been benchmarked against curricula of reputable regional and international tertiary institutions. Overall, the expert panel confirms that content and structure of the curriculum, the ratio of the Core Compulsory (17 courses, 51 credits) and Elective (6, 18 credits) courses to the Educational, College requirement and Free elective courses meet the established requirements for a contemporary BA program in Linguistics. The programme effectively presents its desired qualifications through clearly defined Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs). These ILOs comprehensively encompass both subject-specific and interdisciplinary elements, ensuring that students are equipped with a broad and versatile skill set. This alignment is a testament to the programme's dedication to producing graduates with a well-rounded academic and professional profile.

The Expert Panel's review of the SER's relevant sections on the Program Goals and Learning Outcomes as well as the site visit interview with the faculty, revealed, in general, alignment of the Programme Learning Outcomes with the Institutional Strategic Goals and Generic Learning Outcomes. However, regarding Program Goals, reference to "prerequisite" knowledge requirement in Program Goal 1 (SER, p. 14) does not correspond to "advanced knowledge of theories and principles" requirement of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF, Level 6, Bachelors), whereas reference to research "professional knowledge and expertise" in Program Goal 2 does not appear to be realistic which was also confirmed during the site visit interview by the Linguistics students' insights related to their research experiences. This was also evident in the Expert Panel's examination of the Senior Capstone (LNG 490) Research Project samples provided by the institution. Consequently, the expert panel recommends to critically observe how realistic these goals can be achieved by the programme and consider adapting the phrasings towards morae achievable goals.

Additionally, the programme is encouraged to undertake a critical review of the alignment between Programme Learning Outcomes (PLOs) and Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs). By ensuring that the Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs) are realistic, measurable, and achievable, the programme can better support students in achieving their educational goals. This review should also encompass the assessment methods used across

courses to verify their effectiveness in evaluating the attainment of ILOs. Based on the provided documents and also the discussions on site the constructive alignment between these elements is well present on some courses, while in other this relationship is not truly obvious. **(Finding 1)**.

Beyond this, the intended learning outcomes are well-reflected in the programme's dual focus on academic/scientific rigor and labour market relevance. By maintaining regular updates to the curriculum in response to current developments and industry trends, the programme ensures its graduates remain competitive and well-prepared for evolving professional demands. Feedback mechanisms, including graduate surveys and input from industry stakeholders, provide robust evidence of the appropriateness of these outcomes and their alignment with market needs.

The programme's academic degree aligns with the learning outcomes and adheres to the requirements of the appropriate level of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) and the national qualifications framework. This alignment is effectively demonstrated through capstone projects, final theses, and other summative assessments that showcase students' achievement of the programme objectives.

The curricular structure is well designed to support the achievement of intended learning outcomes and facilitate learners' progression. The sequence of courses provides a logical flow of knowledge and skills acquisition, ensuring students can build upon foundational concepts to reach advanced levels of understanding. This structure fosters both academic success and personal development throughout the programme.

Additionally, the curriculum successfully integrates subject-specific and cross-subject knowledge alongside methodological and general skills. Students are exposed to a range of topics and perspectives, enabling them to approach problems holistically and with a multidisciplinary outlook. This breadth and depth of coverage prepare students to excel in different contexts, both academically and professionally.

As the expert panel learned from the SER, the targeted graduate profiles are for Language Education, Health (Language Specialists), Legal Consultancy (Law) and Information Technology sectors. However, the interview with the faculty revealed that the program does not intend to prepare language educators/teachers which is also evident in the absence of teacher-training courses (e.g. Teaching Skills, Materials Development, Testing) in the curriculum. The panel believes that this discrepancy should be rectified and made clear to all stakeholders concerned. This appears to be indispensable since the expert panel learned during the interview that the faculty envisages introducing an internship to the curriculum. Therefore, the design of prospective Internship course (Objectives, Content, Assessment Methods, Intended Learning Outcomes) will need to reflect for which Graduate Profile(s) the program actually trains linguistics students for the labour market.

One potential area for enrichment also strongly supported by the panel of experts is the inclusion of an internship component in the curriculum. Integrating internships would offer students valuable opportunities to gain practical, real-world experience and strengthen the connection between theoretical learning and professional application **(Finding 2)**. Such an initiative would not only enhance employability but also align the programme with global best practices in linguistics education.

The programme already emphasizes research competencies, but there is room to expand its focus on the development of ethical research skills. Ensuring that students are thoroughly prepared to navigate the ethical dimensions of research would underscore the programme's commitment to producing responsible and conscientious scholars **(Finding 3)**. This enhancement could involve workshops or dedicated coursework tailored to ethical issues in linguistics and related disciplines. Furthermore, since problem-solving is one of the requirements of the EQF, the Expert Panel also encourages that a contemporary course on Applied Linguistics should be incorporated to the BA Linguistics program in order to contribute to its uniqueness as well as international competitiveness potential. Applied Linguistics addresses/deals with and ameliorates problems related to language use in classrooms, workplaces and other contexts of study/work in real life. Its course provision, especially prior to Internship, could therefore enhance Linguistics students' problem-solving skills and effectively prepare them for language practice upon graduation.

Lab work is another area where the programme could amplify its impact. Encouraging students to take more active roles in laboratory activities will provide them with hands-on experience, fostering a deeper understanding of experimental methods and strengthening their technical expertise **(Finding 4)**. This proactive approach would enhance the experiential learning component of the curriculum and further engage students in applied linguistics practices.

In summary, the Linguistics programme at UAEU is already distinguished by its academic foundation and dedicated faculty. By embracing these identified areas for future improvement and continuing to build upon its existing strengths, the programme can further strengthen its position as a leader in linguistics education and continue to provide students with an exceptional learning experience.

Conclusion

The criterion is fulfilled.

1.3   English literature (Bachelor of Arts)

The programme is structured to provide students with the necessary theoretical knowledge and practical skills required for their academic and professional development. According to the AQAS Self-Evaluation Report (SER), the learning outcomes of the programme are aligned with institutional goals and emphasize the acquisition of competencies that address both local and international contexts. These outcomes include mastery of disciplinary knowledge, research capabilities, communication skills, and ethical awareness.

The learning outcomes aim to ensure that graduates possess a comprehensive understanding of their field of study. This includes the ability to apply theoretical concepts to practical scenarios, engage in critical analysis, and effectively communicate findings. The SER specifies that these competencies are integrated into the programme to prepare students for professional environments that demand interdisciplinary knowledge and cultural sensitivity. Additionally, the learning outcomes highlight the importance of fostering lifelong learning skills, equipping graduates to continuously adapt to evolving challenges and advancements in their field.

The curriculum is explained to be designed to support these learning outcomes through a combination of foundational and advanced courses, as well as practical learning opportunities. Foundational courses establish a base in the core principles and methodologies of the discipline. Courses such as "Introduction to Literature" or "Survey of British Literature" provide students with a broad understanding of the fundamental concepts and tools necessary for more specialized study.

Advanced courses allow students to develop deeper expertise in specific areas of interest. According to the SER, these courses include "Romantic and Victorian Literature" "20th Century American Literature" and "Developing Ideas for Film" These modules are designed to enhance students' analytical and problem-solving skills, ensuring they can apply their knowledge in diverse contexts.

Practical components of the curriculum are emphasized to bridge the gap between theory and practice. For instance, students are required to complete internships or participate in collaborative projects that simulate real-world challenges. Capstone projects, as described in the SER, provide an opportunity for students to synthesize their learning by addressing complex issues in their discipline. Examples include projects focused on linguistic fieldwork, advanced literary analysis, or the application of translation technologies.

The curriculum also incorporates elements aimed at developing communication and intercultural skills. Courses such as "Academic Writing and Presentation Skills" and "Intercultural Communication" prepare

students to articulate ideas effectively and engage with diverse audiences. Research training is another significant aspect, with dedicated modules such as "Research Methods in Humanities" and "Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches," ensuring students are equipped to conduct independent investigations and contribute to their field of study.

Overall, the programme's curriculum is informed by both academic standards and stakeholder feedback. As outlined in the SER, it is periodically reviewed to ensure relevance and alignment with the dynamic needs of the discipline and broader societal expectations. The integration of theoretical knowledge, practical application, and interdisciplinary perspectives forms the foundation of the programme, supporting students in achieving the intended learning outcomes.

Experts' evaluation

The programme's learning outcomes are clearly differentiated and transparent, and the curricular structure is comprehensive, supporting students in achieving the desired qualifications. Interdisciplinary and practice-oriented courses, such as ENG310 "Writing for Research", FIL340 "Developing Ideas for Films", and LIT355 "Digital Humanities Basics", contribute to a well-rounded, future-oriented education.

The curriculum is enhanced by integrating literary works from diverse cultural contexts (such as Spanish and French) into the study of English literary history. Additionally, an elective in New World Literature allows for further exploration of global texts; it is recommended that this elective be made a core course in line with upcoming CAA (Commission for Academic Accreditation) requirements.

Beyond providing essential English language skills, the programme offers students additional language courses (e.g., German, Korean) that include social and cultural insights into the respective regions. This comparative and intercultural focus helps the programme stand out distinctly.

From the experts' point of view, the programme is highly student-centred: students are encouraged to share their interpretations in class and to choose authors for study, actively shaping the content in ways that develop their specific skills. Furthermore, student clubs and extracurricular activities—such as an active theatre group, a professionally designed student magazine, and field trips to book fairs and other events in Abu Dhabi and Dubai—enhance classroom learning.

The programme prepares students for diverse career paths. Graduates typically find positions requiring strong English proficiency across sectors like ministries, libraries, schools, banks, transport and agencies, with many progressing to high-level roles. A newer career trend is in the gaming industry, where storytelling abilities are essential—an area supported by the programme's inclusion of creative writing modules.

Alongside the university's alumni office, a robust unofficial network creates further career opportunities, especially as alumni enter high-level positions. With the recent establishment of a Master's programme, there are also now academic career pathways.

The degree awarded aligns with the programme's intended learning outcomes and meets the standards of both the European Qualifications Framework and the corresponding national qualifications framework. It is recommended that ECTS (European Credit Transfer System) credits be assigned to the undergraduate program courses (**see Finding 1**). This will ensure an accurate reflection of BA students' workload both inside and outside the classroom, while also enhancing transparency of qualifications and supporting (virtual) mobility opportunities for Literature students.

The programme has made great strides in promoting internationalisation, with students already benefiting from study opportunities in places like Marburg, Germany; Geneva, Switzerland; and Vichy, France. To build on this success, introducing two-week summer and winter schools could provide even more accessible options for students to gain international experience.

While the programme's strengths are evident, the expert group notes that its unique intercultural and comparative focus could be more prominently emphasized and systematically developed. This feature provides a distinctive academic depth and positions the programme as a strong contender for attracting also international students and fostering cross-cultural academic exchanges. Enhancing this aspect would not only strengthen the programme's identity but also expand its reach and appeal to a broader audience, including prospective exchange students and partner institutions. Consequently, the experts recommend that the programme increase the visibility and further develop its key characteristics, notably its intercultural and comparative focus **(Finding 5)**.

Conclusion

The criterion is fulfilled.

1.4   Translation studies (Bachelor of Arts)

The Bachelor of Arts in Translation Studies prepares students to become proficient and culturally aware translation professionals. As detailed in the SER, the programme is centred on fostering linguistic mastery, cultural literacy, and the application of translation principles in varied professional contexts. It aims to bridge theoretical frameworks with practical translation competencies, ensuring graduates can meet the demands of the modern translation industry.

The intended learning outcomes highlight the development of advanced language proficiency, enabling students to translate texts accurately while preserving contextual and cultural nuances. The programme also focuses on honing analytical and decision-making skills, which are essential for addressing translation challenges. Ethical considerations form another key component, equipping students to navigate the responsibilities associated with intercultural communication and translation practices.

The curriculum aims at integrating foundational knowledge with specialized skills, creating a progressive learning pathway. Foundational courses such as "Introduction to Translation" provide a base for understanding core concepts in translation studies. Such courses establish the theoretical and contextual frameworks necessary for exploring more complex aspects of the discipline.

Specialized modules build on this foundation, allowing students to engage with specific domains of translation. Examples include "Translating Journalistic Texts" "Translating Legal Texts" and "Translating Literary Texts." These modules are designed to expose students to diverse translation scenarios, equipping them with the flexibility to work across various fields and genres.

Practical application is a cornerstone of the programme. Through internships and field-based projects, students gain hands-on experience, applying their skills in real-world settings. Additional courses familiarize students with modern resources like machine translation software and computer-assisted translation systems. These practical components ensure that graduates are prepared for the technological advancements shaping the industry.

Capstone projects are described to be integral to the curriculum, providing an opportunity for students to synthesize their knowledge and skills. These projects often involve translating complex and multi-layered texts, reflecting on the translation process, and presenting a comprehensive analysis of their work. Such projects enable students to demonstrate their readiness for professional translation tasks.

The curriculum further emphasizes the enhancement of language abilities and intercultural understanding. Courses like " Contrastive Analysis of Arabic and English " and "Community Interpreting" are tailored to develop the competencies necessary for engaging effectively in multilingual and multicultural environments.

According to the SER, the programme's design reflects input from both academic and industry stakeholders, ensuring alignment with professional standards and labour market expectations. Regular updates and revisions maintain the curriculum's relevance, incorporating new trends and technologies in translation studies. This comprehensive approach ensures that graduates are well-equipped for diverse roles within the field, from freelance translators to specialists in technical and cultural translation.

Experts' evaluation

Overall, the program's design is informed by a clearly described and complementary structure which strikes a balance between subject-specific components and interdisciplinary components. From the expert's point of view the learning outcomes aim to ensure that graduates possess a comprehensive understanding of their field of study. Generally, Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs), Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) and Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs) complement one another in achieving the desired qualifications. All curricular components are clearly described and documented including specific, measurable and achievable Course Learning Outcomes as well as a clear and realistic course plan. The proposed curriculum design provides a clear description of core courses and elective courses and reflects gradual improvement in curriculum's quality. CLOs are mainly up-to-date, interdisciplinary and responsive to labour market needs.

Nonetheless, within this generally positive impression the program can benefit from an improvement in alignment between Institutional Learning Outcomes (ILOs) and Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) by highlighting critical thinking competencies in drafting certain PLOs (see for example, PLO 4 and PLO 6). Also, the CLOs of certain courses are quite generic and could benefit from better alignment with PLOs particularly in advanced courses such as (TRS400). It is suggested that further delineation of CLOs in such courses can provide a sharper understanding of the educational support rendered to students throughout the teaching process (for example, using action verbs such as 'apply, 'create' and 'utilize' in designing CLOs of advanced courses). Furthermore, in some courses, it is advisable to strike a balance between the number of CLOs and the number of assessments (either increase CLOs) or decrease the number of assessments to ensure the latter are relevant and manageable. Sometimes, it can be more beneficial to prioritize quality over quantity. Fewer, well-designed assessments that effectively measure the CLOs can be more beneficial than numerous assessments that may not provide clear insights into student learning particularly if the number of assessments becomes double the number of CLOs. The constructive alignment between these elements should be improved **(see Finding 1)**.

The curricular modifications that have been introduced in response to the requirements of the National Qualifications Framework contribute to remarkable improvement in the program quality following the increase in the total number of major core courses, although it seems to have weakened the content of available elective courses. The updated design of core courses offered provides a robust foundation for students to achieve the required levels of competence in essential disciplinary areas. For any future developments it is suggested that further amendments should further consider options to increase the number of elective courses to enable students to explore their interests, bridging gaps in certain competencies or specializing on particular fields.

While the panel of experts positively recognizes that the program provides a comprehensive coverage of subject-specific knowledge, there are a few gaps in cross-subject knowledge and general essential skills such as courses on lexicography and terminology, on the one hand, and Arabic language competencies, on the other hand. Competencies acquired in subject-specific courses can be better scaffolded by offering a few courses that address the existing gaps. The evidence generated from the evaluation of students and labour market representatives throughout the site visit consolidates the following suggestions:

Graduates show room for improvement when it comes to language skills both in English and Arabic. Consequently the curriculum should respond to this shortcoming and introduce elements to address this issue **(Finding 6)** Furthermore the panel of experts carefully discussed the current and future needs in the field of translation and identified that introducing specialized courses on terminology and lexicography, corpora in translation, localization, community interpreting, as well as integrating machine translation and CAT tools with translation courses would be very beneficial additions to the curriculum, while particularly highlighting the need in the field of machine translation **(Finding 7)**.

Beyond the above recommendations the panel of experts encourage the Department to consider enhancing students' problem solving and program management skills (soft skills such as working within a team and communication skills) when deciding on future adaptions to the curriculum or implementing new teaching /assessment methods.

Furthermore, while the overall program design supports the achievement of the intended learning outcomes and gradual learner's progression, reconsidering the sequencing of a few courses would enhance the curriculum's quality. For instance, reconsidering the code of TRS310 and TRS220 in a way that corresponds with course description and status for students' progression (a basic course versus an advanced course) would consolidate the existing structuring of core courses and make course sequencing more visible and effective .

Altogether the panel understands the provided recommendations as areas of improvement while not questioning that the curriculum in its current form leads to a qualification aligned with the Bachelor level of the EQF.

Conclusion

The criterion is fulfilled.

2. Procedures for quality assurance

> *The programme is subject to the higher education institution's policy and associated procedures for quality assurance, including procedures for the design, approval, monitoring, and revision of the programmes.*
>
> *A quality-oriented culture, focusing on continuous quality enhancement, is in place. This includes regular feedback mechanisms involving both internal and external stakeholders.*
>
> *The strategy, policies, and procedures have a formal status and are made available in published form to all those concerned. They also include roles for students and other stakeholders.*
>
> *Data is collected from relevant sources and stakeholders, analysed, and used for the effective management and continuous enhancement of the programme.*
>
> *[ESG 1.1, 1.7 & 1.9]*

Description

Curriculum development, national framework and benchmarking

The university states several processes are included in the curriculum development process for the programmes under accreditation, including the national framework in the United Arab Emirates and an international benchmarking for the programmes.

UAEU's quality of academic provision is established through an alignment with the National Qualifications Authority (NQA), accreditation by the Commission for Academic Accreditation (CAA), a college-level curriculum review, a benchmarking against national and international programs, and course and programme level assessment processes.

The Qualifications Framework for the Emirates (QF-Emirates) was established in 2010 by the National Qualifications Authority (NQA). It provides a clear framework and guidance for accreditation/awarding bodies and qualifications designers and developers at third-level institutions. It is aligned with international meta-frameworks, such as the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) and the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area (the Bologna Framework). It includes qualifications encompassing qualification types, profiles and related specifications used by accredited bodies in their respective processes and procedures.

The Ministry of Education Commission for Academic Accreditation (CAA) was established in 2013 to review and accredit academic programs at the three Federal Higher Education Institutions, including UAEU. It provides institutional licensure and individual programme accreditation services using contemporary and international best practice standards and efficient procedures. The CAA started the first accreditation review of UAEU academic programs in 2016, and BA programs in Linguistics, English Literature and Translation Studies were granted CAA accreditation in January 2019. The last CAA review took place in January 2024.

UAEU redesigned its internal periodic programme review process to include four performance profiles: Faculty, Research Productivity, Programme Viability, and Course Offering. A set of performance indicators are used to measure the performance in each profile, and the aggregated results are published at the end of the academic year. Department chairs are responsible for reviewing the published results and developing a performance improvement plan (PIP) that includes analysis remarks and recommends remedial actions for each performance profile. To enhance the effectiveness of the continuous improvement cycle, a campus-wide Learning Outcomes Management System (LOAMS) was implemented and deployed at UAEU in 2018. LOAMS provides administrators with detailed information regarding the execution of the assessment processes, as well as executive dashboards to track the submission of the assessment data and the associated analysis remarks on the progress in implementing the recommended remedial actions and the impact of the implemented actions.

The intended learning outcomes on the course level are assessed and analysed each time the course is offered according to the published assessment timeline. The programme might use the assessment results of the mastery CLOs as part of the evidence to assess the attainment of the PLOs. Programme leads ensure that assessment data are submitted on time and that the remedial actions are closed appropriately.

The three programs under review were benchmarked against comparable programs offered at reputable international institutions. The Linguistics programme was benchmarked against the Department of Classics, Modern Languages and Linguistics, Concordia University, Canada. The English Literature programme was compared to the Department of English and Comparative Literature, American University of Cairo, Egypt, and the Department of Literary Studies, University of Amsterdam, The Netherlands. The Translation Studies programme was compared against the Majeure en traduction, Université de Montréal, Canada, Honours BA with Specialization in French-English Translation, University of Ottawa, Canada and Specialisation in Traduction.

Course and programme level assessment

UAEU programmes engage in the routine programme review process based on the UAEU's Periodic Programme Review (PPR) process. Course and instructor evaluation forms are circulated to all students, and survey results are made available to individual faculty members. Students are encouraged to provide feedback to faculty and the programme coordinator during informal sessions.

Concerning the documentation, the College of Humanities and Social Sciences maintains course portfolios that align with CAA standards, including syllabus, teaching material, assessment instruments, model answers, quantitative analysis of student performance, graded samples, instructor review reports, and student feedback.

The SER outlines that the Office of Institutional Effectiveness (OIE) houses the Academic Quality Assurance Section and the Institutional Research Section, which work together to ensure the continuous improvement of

all academic programs and administrative units. These units report directly to the Vice Chancellor (CEO) of the University, and the Vice Chancellor's Office ensures that these organizational units have adequate resources to carry out their missions.

Another unit in that process is the Risk Management Office (RMO), which ensures that risk management activities are carried out in the University following policy and procedures. It also oversees administrative units' internal review process and an official website.

Experts' evaluation

The Expert Panel's review of the institutional documentation as well as the site visit interviews with various stakeholders indicate fostering of a Quality-oriented culture across the university. The UAEU Vision, Mission, Values and Generic Learning Outcomes, By-Laws, Policies, Rules and Regulations have a formal status and are available in published form. Importantly, the Institutional Mission and Values target Student-centeredness.

The tertiary institution ensures Governance through an efficient Organizational Structure. The University regularly develops an Institutional Strategic Plan with Goals, Objectives and Performance Indicators, subject to change, if required. UAEU established a comprehensive Quality Assurance System across various academic and administrative units on multiple levels. Specifically, it developed a Quality Assurance Framework complemented by a Quality Assurance Infrastructure. The university prepared a Quality Assurance Manual providing all stakeholders with a framework and guidance on QA procedures and processes. As part of its QA System, UAEU employs QA Cycles, based on 2 models, as well as Assessment Infrastructure, Principles, and Criteria for developing and monitoring Strategic Plans.

The university pays special attention to the collection and analysis of comprehensive feedback and data on its academic and administrative services from various stakeholders, hence its decision-making is intended to be data-driven. Importantly, Quality Assurance of both Academic and Administrative provision includes procedures for reviewing results and communicating related outcomes, as well as developing and periodic monitoring of improvement plans, progress and impact of action. For these purposes, UAEU developed Learning Outcomes Management System (LOAMS) with input from the Learning Management System (LMS), Curriculum Management System (CurricUNET) and Student Information System (SIS). Performance Indicator Data are annually collected and published. Program Improvement Plans (PIP) are developed and implemented within 2 academic years, with Progress Reports published in the interim. From an expert's point of view these are elements of an effective management system aiming for quality management.

UAEU envisages, within the Academic Quality Assurance Framework, improving Curriculum Management (Approving New Curriculum and Revising Existing Curriculum), Program Review (annual, complemented by Risk-based Program Review) and Accreditation (Program and Institutional), Learning Outcomes Assessment (Course, Program, Institutional) as well as Academic Personnel. Annual Review is based on 4 Performance Profiles such as Faculty, Research Productivity, Program Viability and Course Offering.

Quality Assurance of Programs includes multiple aspects such as Academic Program Review and Accreditation by the National Ministry of Education, specifically Commission for Academic Accreditation, Internal Periodic Program Review, Learning Outcomes Assessment, Internal Risk-based Program Review, as well as International Professional Accreditation of Academic Programs. This multi layered approach covers a wide range of elements and while clearly complex, they support continuous development and assure accountability.

Terms of Reference for Office of Institutional Effectiveness, Strategy and Future Department, Risk Management Office, Academic QA Section, LO Assessment Unit, University LOA Committee, Academic QA Officers, College and Department LO Assessment Committees have been specified and meet international standards.

Within this very well structured and multi layered approach the panel of experts found very little evidence for an active involvement of stakeholders, particularly labour market and students in the continuous development of the programmes. During interviews with students the panel was impressed with the reflectiveness and constructive dialogue with the students and found that indeed they are being heard in cases of problems, while the panel believes that the faculty loses great potential for by not including students more proactively. Within the cultural context of the institution the panel clearly encourages the faculty to identify ways to better and more actively include students in the internal QA structures **(Finding 8)**.

The situation with the involvement of the labour market is almost the same but has greater impact. During the site visit there where many debates about potential fields of employment and the panel found that there is no structured or regular exchange with the market beyond discussion and feedback on individual cases. This clearly leaves potentially impactful room for improvement and should be an area of development for the faculty in the future **(Finding 9)**.

The Bachelors programs under review comply with the university's educational policy and associated procedures for Quality Assurance. They were reviewed and accredited by the UAE Ministry of Education CAA in January 2019 and recently in 2024.

Conclusion

The criterion is fulfilled.

3.   Learning, teaching and assessment of students

> *The delivery of material encourages students to take an active role in the learning process.*
> *Students are assessed using accessible criteria, regulations, and procedures, which are made readily available to all participants, and which are applied consistently.*
> *Assessment procedures are designed to measure the achievement of the intended learning outcomes.*
> *[ESG 1.3]*

Description

Teaching & Learning

UAEU faculty members are expected to ensure that the atmosphere in their classes is welcoming and encouraging. Students are required to read the assigned material and participate in class discussions. It is said that technology enhances instructional materials and engages students in the learning process. Feedback on progress and performance is provided to students through well-defined statements of course and programme learning outcomes. Incentives for outstanding academic performance are embedded in the university's reward systems, such as undergraduate students who earn a GPA of 3.60 or higher qualifying for inclusion on the Dean's List for the College for that academic semester. Students who continue to maintain a high GPA at graduation are recognized with graduation honours.

Assessment

According to the SER, the faculty uses assessment tools to ensure students acquire the specified knowledge, skills and competencies and meet the course's learning outcomes. Assessment tools include midterm and final examinations, quizzes, projects, extended papers, and in-class presentations. The weighting of each component is clearly stated in the course syllabi, and the examination type should concur with the course learning outcome (CLO) assessment schema. The rules for the conduct of examinations are laid down in the University Bylaws. The SER includes a link to the examination regulations.

Following the information in the SER, faculty members are encouraged to resolve complaints regarding grades individually, but if an issue cannot be resolved, a student may make a formal complaint to have their grade reconsidered. The Student Academic Grievances and Appeals Committee (SAGAC) is appointed by the Vice-Chancellor and has jurisdiction over all student academic grievances and appeals, both undergraduate and graduate. The Dean of the College has responsibility for final decisions, including curricular requirements. The work of the Committee is conducted in a manner that ensures confidentiality and decisions are rendered in a timely way.

Workload calculation (UAEU system)

The UAEU policy outlines the course credit system for undergraduate courses. Students will be awarded credit for a unit of study when they have demonstrated achievement of the learning outcomes defined for that unit within an acceptable performance range. Notional Learning hours are a guide to how long it will take a typical student to achieve the learning outcomes for the unit of study and differ according to the type of unit:

- For a 15-week semester, a one-credit-hour unit of study in a classroom or lecture course will require the completion of 37.5 notional learning hours, including approximately 750 minutes of timetabled instruction and a minimum of a further 1500 minutes of independent study.
- For an internship course, the student will need to complete 45 notional or 3 hours of internship-related assignments for 15 weeks.

The University policy states that the minimum registration load for undergraduate students is 12 credit hours while the maximum registration is 19 credit hours. Exceptionally, undergraduate students who have completed the foundation requirements and are in good academic standing may register to a maximum of 22 credit hours, subject to one of the following conditions: 22 credit hours or less remain for degree completion; the student has earned a minimum of 36 credit hours with a Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA) of 3.6 or higher; and a load of more than 19 credit hours requires the approval of the Dean of the College in which the student is enrolled.

Learning platform (LMS)

Higher education is inherently dynamic, and at UAEU, this is reflected in integrating scientific advancements into learning resources, adopting digital tools, and engaging with Artificial Intelligence. The university provides students with access to Blackboard, a Learning Management System (LMS) that serves as a centralised platform for course management. Through Blackboard, instructors can easily share and further develop course materials such as PDFs and PowerPoint presentations, course syllabi, assignment details, quizzes, assessments, and feedback, ensuring students have streamlined access to all essential resources.

Experts' evaluation

According to the UAEU Self-Evaluation Report, students are provided with academic services in a classroom environment designed to foster idea-sharing, peer and instructor interaction, active participation in discussions, presentations, and problem-solving activities. Faculty strive to provide students with both learning and practical opportunities, enabling hands-on experiences, application of disciplinary knowledge, and development of acquired skills. At the beginning of each course, students are expected to be introduced to the Course Outline, which includes details on Course Objectives, Scope, Instructional Methods, Assessment Criteria, and Intended Learning Outcomes.

Efforts in this regard were confirmed during the site visit interviews with the Faculty of the BA programs under review as well as with the student representatives. College management also stressed in their interview with the expert panel that student-centeredness is part of the College Mission and that every effort is made on the

college, department, program and course level to provide students with quality education, to promote their motivation and deal with their problems.

During the site visit interview, the Student Representatives from the programs under review shared that they are encouraged by their teachers to actively participate in class and collaborate with their peers. The undergraduate students are provided with opportunities, especially in junior and senior years, not only to analyse and evaluate, but also critique and create in their academic studies in and outside the classroom (e.g. Drama experiences of the BA English Literature students, Research and Linguistics Day experiences of the BA Linguistics students). The expert panel commends these efforts.

As the panel could confirm during the site visit, Learning, Teaching and Assessment at the Bachelors level have been continuously monitored and conducted in accordance with the institutional requirements available in published form and students' progress and oral/written performance is assessed in compliance with the institutional regulations, procedures and criteria, which are accessible. Assessment comprises a variety of summative and formative methods.

However, in this overall positive picture the panel of experts encourages the faculty to carefully look at assessment methods as well as assessment and grading practice. While e.g. in Linguistics ILO 5 and ILO 6 require assessment through reflective essays, the provided evidence base for this was rather weak. Consequently, when reenforcing the constructive alignment from ILO to teaching there should also be a focus on the respective type of assessment. An equally critical reflection is required when it comes to consistency of grading, particularly in Senior Capstone projects. E.g. for LNG 490 the panel could identify relatively high grades to both adequate and clearly less adequate research projects. The faculty should consider measures such as moderation to assure a better consistency **(Finding 10)**.

Regarding students' complaints and grievances, the Institutional documentation as well as the site visit interviews with various stakeholders indicate that these are dealt with, in accordance with the established procedures and processes, by the University Committee, if need be, by the Dean's Office or Department themselves.

At the Department of Languages and Literature, Blackboard is used for course content and to extend class discussions and analyses beyond the classroom. However, the panel concluded that despite the extensive capabilities of Blackboard, many of its functions have not yet been fully utilised across the three programmes under review and learning management systems are mainly used to support without using the interactive opportunities they bring to the process. The panel believes that the faculty should not restrict itself to the basic functions of modern technology for the teaching process. Using the potential of advanced tools and technologies in the classroom will also help students develop skills for the labour market **(Finding 11)**.

Students reported that Artificial Intelligence plays a significant role in their education as a topic of study (meta-level) and as a tool for in-class activities and homework. Although they did not recall the specific names of AI tools, students recognised that AI is used at UAEU to support skill development. This openness was also strongly supported during the interview with the senior management of UAEU, who are particularly enthusiastic about AI, showcasing its potential and limitations to help students understand where AI may fall short.

From the lecturers' perspective, AI is a valuable tool, particularly for assignments, as it helps identify potential issues. However, they stress that students must continue to rely on their critical thinking skills. Students also receive guidance on effectively using AI tools like Google Translate, including training in pre- and post-editing techniques, comparing translations, and understanding where tools like ChatGPT may overlook cultural nuances. Lecturers encourage students to engage with AI critically and are working to formalise this approach. One lecturer even mentioned the potential for developing a dedicated course on AI in the future.

Training sessions in Artificial Intelligence have proven beneficial for students, offering them essential skill-building opportunities that support their academic growth. It is recommended that students complete these

training programs, concluding with a self-reflective report where they assess the skills they need to develop further. This reflective process allows students to identify and acknowledge gaps in their abilities, promoting a proactive approach to personal growth.

While these efforts are commendable and show significant progress, employability rates remain modest, especially among female students. Cultural factors, such as a preference for homemaking, impact job-seeking behaviors. Graduates who do enter the workforce typically find roles in government, administration, banking, libraries, and education, with teaching being a common career path. Informal networks are the primary source of job opportunities, highlighting the importance of networking. Employers stress the need for students to gain industry-specific technical skills and research competencies, particularly through AI tools. Extending internships is also recommended to enhance hands-on experience (**see Finding 2**).

From the panel's point of view, in integrating scientific advancements, digital tools, and AI, UAEU exemplifies a forward-thinking approach to education, positioning itself as a dynamic force within higher education. However, while these tools lay a robust foundation for innovation and student engagement, further alignment of technology usage across departments, along with the promotion of AI skills relevant to the job market, would enhance UAEU's impact on both academic and career readiness. By addressing these areas, the university can strengthen its educational coherence, industry relevance, and commitment to lifelong learning.

Conclusion

The criterion is fulfilled.

4. Student admission, progression, recognition and certification

> *Consistently applied, pre-defined, and published regulations are in place which cover student admission, progression, recognition, and certification.*
>
> *[ESG 1.4]*

Description

Admission

Student admission to the United Arab Emirates University (UAEU) is a process that involves recruitment, selection procedures, and admission requirements. The Undergraduate Student Handbook lays out the general undergraduate admission requirements, and students are admitted based on their present academic qualifications and the instructional capacities of academic programs. The advising unit and the undergraduate studies office at the level of the college closely monitor student progress. Degree Works is a web-based, degree-auditing and tracking tool that enables students and advisors to evaluate academic progress towards graduation following major requirements outlined in the College Catalogue. Documentation after graduation is undertaken at the University level, where documents and Graduation Certificates are secured and archived. The University uploads the graduates' personal information on the Ministry of Education's website to confirm the authenticity of the documents and facilitate the attestation of their degree certificates if/when necessary.

A) Linguistics (Bachelor of Arts)

Prospective students must have a minimum GPA of 2.5 and an IELTS score of 5.5 to be admitted to the Linguistics program. Faculty members conduct interviews before admission. According to the information in the SER, enrolment in the Linguistics programme has been low over the last few years, leading to an action plan to address this issue. This includes developing new academic programs that are closely aligned with

emerging employment trends, including a BSc in Cognitive Sciences and Artificial Intelligence and a graduate-level (MA or MSc) programme in Applied Language Science and Technology. Renewed marketing initiatives, such as recruitment presentations to local high schools by faculty and successful alumni, increased the volume of positive testimonials from former Linguistics students on UAEU media platforms, broadcast presentation of career opportunities for Linguistics majors on CHSS website, increased marketing of Linguistics programs through social media and various online platforms, development of an advertising campaign specifically targeted at male students, and expansion of the General Education curriculum to attract more students to Linguistics. At the time of writing (November 2022), the number of students registered as Linguistics major stands at 26. The number of students who enrolled in selected Linguistics courses has significantly increased due to the establishment of the new programme of Speech and Language Pathology (SLP).

B)   English literature (Bachelor of Arts)

Students seeking admission to the English Literature programme must have a minimum GPA of 2.5 and an IELTS score of 6.0 or an EMSAT score of 1400 and attend an interview conducted by faculty members before admission is granted. The SER provide information that especially the enrolment of female students in the BA in English Literature programme has been low over the last few years, and no male students have been enrolled during this period. Enrolment was significantly affected by the decision to raise the required entry IELTS score from 5.0 to 6.0. Faculty have taken measures to increase enrolment, such as opening the programme to male students, delivering recruitment presentations to local high schools, presenting career opportunities to incoming UAEU students, advertising English Literature programs and events, and including positive testimonials from alumni on UAEU media outlets. Enrolment in the since abolished minor programmes is significantly higher, with 59 students in the English Language and Literacy minor, 96 students in the Film Studies minor, and 174 students in the Drama minor.

C)   Translation studies (Bachelor of Arts)

Following an initial gap in the documentation, the panel learned during the interviews that admission to the programme Translation Studies requires a GPA of 2.5 and an IELTS score of 6.0.

Progression

It is stated that the advising unit and the undergraduate studies office at the college closely monitor student progress. Each student is assigned an academic advisor who monitors their progress and ensures they take the appropriate number of courses each semester. Degree Works, a web-based, degree-auditing and tracking tool, enables students and advisors to evaluate academic progress towards graduation following major requirements outlined in the College Catalogue. Degree Works can also be used to perform a "what-if" analysis to determine how current coursework on a student transcript would be used if a different major was selected.

The SER includes data on the retention rates, graduation rates and graduate's employability of the three programmes for the 2017-2021.

A)   Linguistics (Bachelor of Arts)

For the Bachelor's programme "Linguistics", the retention rates are above those for the College, indicating that students are generally satisfied with its quality. Data on student satisfaction with the programme support this overall, with the faculty, with the curriculum, and with the resources offered. However, the SER outlines that the number of students graduating is low, but the median time to graduation is consistent with the College. It is stated that the employment rate for graduates is a cause for concern, although it has increased in recent years and is broadly comparable with that of the College as a whole. The programme suffers from the same factors that affect the employability rate of CHSS students more generally, as it sometimes has to accept less academically able students from other colleges. To address this, the programme has adopted a forward-

looking approach to curriculum development, identifying three sectors in the industry that are predicted to absorb employees in the country and the broader MENA region: Informational Technology, Language Specialists and Language Education, and Legal Consultancy. Additionally, efforts have been made to identify the innovation priority sectors included in the UAE National Innovation Strategy, which aims to stimulate innovation in a total of seven sectors. An MA/MSc in Applied Language Science and Technology is also being discussed. It is anticipated that the restructured BA programme and the Master's programme will have a significant positive impact both on student enrolment and, subsequently, on employment rates.

B)   English literature (Bachelor of Arts)

The SER states that the progression of students in the Bachelor's programme "English literature" has been successful for several years due to the increased minimum IELTS entry score, which ensures students have the necessary language skills to succeed in the major. However, the number of students graduating from the programme has been lower in recent years, and the median time to graduation is comparable with the College as a whole. According to the SER and the data provided, the employment rate for graduates of the BA in English Literature programme has declined in recent years due to decreased enrolment and female students. To increase students' marketability for jobs after graduation, the programme has added two courses to develop job-oriented skills, LIT 355 Digital Humanities Basics and LIT 490 Internship. Additionally, a PhD in English Literature and Criticism was approved for student enrolment in Spring 2022, and an MA in English and Cultural Studies has been approved by the University Council and awarded accreditation by the Commission for Academic Accreditation (CAA). These new graduate-level programs will increase enrolment in the English Literature Programme and further assist students with finding employment.

C)   Translation studies (Bachelor of Arts)

The SER outlines that the retention rates are high, indicating that students are generally satisfied with the programme's quality. This is supported by data on student satisfaction with the programme overall, faculty, curriculum, and resources. The SER provides data on graduation rates for the period 2017-2021, the latest period for which data is available. The number of students graduating from the programme is low compared to the College as a whole, but the median time to graduation is consistent with the College.

Recognition

Credit transfer policies allow students from other accredited institutions to integrate into the reviewed programs by evaluating the equivalency of their completed courses. This process involves careful assessment to ensure alignment with the curriculum's academic standards and program objectives, facilitating a seamless continuation of their education.

In addition to credit transfers, the recognition of prior learning acknowledges students' previous academic or professional accomplishments. Institutional policies guide this process, which may require students to demonstrate how their prior experiences meet the program's intended learning outcomes. Assessments are conducted to validate that the knowledge and skills gained align with the competencies required for progression within the program.

Certification

Documentation after graduation is undertaken at the University level, with documents and certificates secured and archived, and personal information uploaded to the Ministry of Education's website to confirm authenticity and facilitate attestation.

Experts' evaluation

The formal requirements for admission in general are clearly defined and can be found within the student handbook. Priority for admission to the UAEU is given to Emirati citizens. International students can be

admitted when capacity has not yet been reached. The prerequisites for the individual study programmes cannot be found on the website of the UAEU or within the student handbook. However, in the SER they are clearly defined for Linguistics and English Literature and during the interviews they could also be clarified for Translation Studies:

- Students who want to study Linguistics need to have a good GPA of 2.5 or higher and must have an IELTS score of 6.0 or higher. In addition, an interview is also required before admission into the study programme is finalised.
- Students who want to study English Literature also need to have a good GPA of 2.5 or higher and must also provide an IELTS score of 6.0 or higher or an EMSAT score of 1400. They are also required to attend an interview before admission into the programme is granted.
- Students who want to study Translation Studies require a GPA of 2.5 and an IELTS score of 6.0.

The panel found that these requirements were well known to those who were interviewed and involved, however, in light of future developments and potential increased international exchange then panel wonders how people outside the closer surroundings should learn about all these details. Consequently, the panel encourages to publish admission requirements and prerequisites in a way that they are readily accessible to potential students and the interested public. This should include all required steps students need to take before they are officially admitted into the study programme **(Finding 12)**.

The prerequisites for the study programmes (good GPA, English skills) are necessary for the programmes. Within the programmes students will be confronted with academic texts in the English language, as English is one of the main languages in academia. In English Literature, they will also be required to read excerpts of English literary works for which they will also need good English skills to understand, analyse and interpret them. In addition to that, if students want to pursue a career in academia, they will also need good English skills.

As for the Translation Studies programme, the students will learn how to translate between English and Arabic. The published requirement of language skills in both of these languages would be a helpful enhancement for the programme information to ensure that students will be able to achieve the programme learning outcomes.

Data is collected on enrolment trends and on the retention rates within the programmes.

The expert panel carefully analysed the Admission and Registration Policies Manual with policies in place for the recognition of credits:

- Courses can only be recognised for credits at UAEU if they have been approved by the Ministry of Education.
- Students transferring from other institutions must complete at least 75 % of the total credit hours for the degree as well as all senior level courses at UAEU.
- Only courses with a degree better than C- will be considered for transfer.
- The final decision on whether a course will be accepted for credit transfer lays with the Dean of the College.

Students within the programmes very rarely go abroad to study, which is due to cultural reasons. The university does offer students with a very good GPA to pursue a funded Master's degree abroad if they work as faculty for the university after graduation. The programme English Literature within the Department of Languages and Literature has also gone abroad with groups of their students to attend classes at European universities.

An area of development for the faculty is transparency in how their courses would reflect in the ECTS. The panel fully accepts the implementation of the local credit hour system and heard with interest and satisfaction that the question of student workload is part of the discussion with students. However, the information on how the local credit hour system transfers into ESTS was rather vague to contradictory. While the panel is not surprised to learn that, it should also be understood that mobility and international exchange also requires

institutional preparation. At this time the low cases of international exchange and mobility always require a highly individualized information exchange. With an increase in internationalization efforts to showcase UAEU excellence to the broader academic community beyond the region this highly individualized process would no longer be sustainable. Hence defining and creating transparency (internal and external) on how the local credit hour system relates to the ECTS is necessary to increase international exchange and mobility **(Finding 13)**.

At this point students do not receive a diploma supplement. Transcripts of records or a diploma supplement which state the qualification gained, the learning outcomes etc. would open more possibilities for students of UAEU to study or work abroad. Consequently, the Faculty, probably UAEU together, should consider adding a supplement to its diploma explaining the details of the gained qualification in the national context. This will help increase the international competitiveness of its graduates **(Finding 14)**.

Conclusion

The criterion is partially fulfilled.

5. Teaching staff

The composition (quantity, qualifications, professional and international experience, etc.) of the staff is appropriate for the achievement of the intended learning outcomes.
Staff involved with teaching is qualified and competent to do so.
Transparent procedures are in place for the recruitment and development of staff.
[ESG 1.5]

Description

5.1 Staff hiring & Staff support

Staff hiring

UAEU has established procedures for recruiting teaching staff at the faculty and instructor levels. The HR Department is responsible for opening new positions or confirming existing positions on request by the College and is subject to budget availability. Creation of a new position requires the approval of the Vice-Chancellor and upon its presentation to the Chancellor. The selection of candidates is based on recommendations from the academic department and the dean, with approval according to the signatory authority. When a candidate signs the employment offer, the HR Department will issue the Employment Contract for signature by the respective authority and the candidate. The hiring department will coordinate with the HR Department to determine the commencement date of employment of the new faculty/instructor based on the academic calendar.

Staff support

The Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL) supports the University's strategic vision and mission by offering faculty and instructors at the UAEU a wide range of opportunities to develop and enhance their performance as teaching professionals. The vision of CETL is to enable and support UAEU teaching community to innovate and excel, thereby providing a teaching environment that will facilitate effective student lifelong learning and success. CETL is committed to introducing, endorsing, and implementing innovative, efficient and effective teaching practices via workshops, seminars, discussion panels, showcasing and symposiums. Through its Communities of Practice (BlackBoardians, Blended Teaching and Learning, and Faculty Fellows), CETL provides support for faculty to run panel discussions, deliver seminars and workshops, provide one-to-one mentoring and support, and share and disseminate best practices among UAEU faculty and

instructors. Additionally, CETL comprises four distinct units: Instructional Design Unit, Teaching, Scholarship and Assessment Unit, Faculty Professional Development Unit, and PhD Students Teaching Academy.

The Instructional Design Unit provides design and development support for faculty and instructors who wish to transform their course(s) into a digital format. The Scholarship of Teaching & Learning (SoTL) unit promotes research about best teaching practices and how UAEU faculty teach. The Faculty Professional Development Unit plans, develops, and manages the delivery of workshops, seminars, discussion panels, and forums to promote excellence in the UAEU teaching community. The PhD Students Teaching Academy is run jointly with the College of Graduate Studies and has successfully run six cohorts and had 112 students graduate. The programme consists of four modules spread over two semesters.

Research

The Office of Associate Provost for Research (APR) is committed to improving UAEU's status as the leading research-intensive university in the UAE. It coordinates two major, internally-funded, university-wide grant competitions and has established partnerships with institutions, organizations and companies in public as well as the private sector. The office provides financial support for both new and established faculty via start-up grants, the UAEU strategic research program, the UAE programme for advanced research, collaboration team research grants, joint research grants between deferral and international universities and post-doctoral grants. All faculty are eligible to receive financial support from the College to attend one international conference every year if they have an accepted paper in an event related to their discipline. Faculty are encouraged to attend and present papers at pedagogical conferences as part of their scholarship in teaching and learning.

Evaluation of staff

The performance of all faculty contributing to the three programs under review is reviewed on a regular basis based on the academic values of collegiality, peer review, and collective critique. An online system has been developed to facilitate the review process, and faculty teaching is evaluated by students and by the College's Peer Evaluation of Teaching Committee. The outcomes of the performance review process feed into the faculty promotion system, which provides a standard mechanism to evaluate the professional development of faculty members and their achievements in teaching, scholarship and service. The UAEU has established the National Faculty Recruitment and Development Office, which provides scholarships to exceptional national candidates who have a desire to pursue higher education and work in academia. The National Faculty Support Programme (NFSP) was developed to provide an additional opportunity for national faculty members to enhance their professional development within the United Arab Emirates University (UAEU). Applicants should be UAE nationals, graduates of an accredited university, with a major and overall GPA of 3.5, and have IELTS with a score 7 or TOEFL IBT 95.

5.2 Linguistics (Bachelor of Arts)

The Bachelor's programme "Linguistics" is taught by five full-time faculty members (two full professors, one associate professor and two instructors), all of whom hold PhD degrees. According to the SER, their qualifications comply with the Commission for Academic Accreditation (CAA) Standards for Institutional Licensure and Programme Accreditation (2019), which requires the institution to demonstrate that it has appropriately qualified faculty of a sufficient number to meet all requirements of its programs, services, and activities and to achieve its mission.

In addition, Linguistics faculty members are expected to produce scholarships of a standard commensurate with research-intensive universities, publish in peer-reviewed journals of international repute, and attract external research funds. In recent years, faculty have been particularly active in establishing research collaborations with international partners.

5.3 English literature (Bachelor of Arts)

As of 2023, the Bachelor's programme "English literature" currently has two full professors, two associate professors, two assistant professors, and six full-time instructors. The faculty members represent five different national origins, all holding PhD degrees from North American- or European-accredited universities. All instructors hold Master's degrees and benefit from many years of teaching experience in different countries. Their qualifications comply with the Commission for Academic Accreditation (CAA) Standards for Institutional Licensure and Programme Accreditation (2019). The institution must demonstrate that it has appropriately qualified faculty of a sufficient number to meet all requirements of its programs, services, and activities and to achieve its mission.

It is said that faculty members of the programme are actively engaged in research activities, such as publishing research journal articles and book chapters, collaborating with international scholars, and maintaining accounts with Google Scholar and SciVal. They also present at national and international conferences.

5.4 Translation studies (Bachelor of Arts)

According to the SER, the Bachelor's programme "Translation studies" is taught by seven full-time faculty members, all of whom hold PhD degrees from reputable universities. Their qualifications comply with the Commission for Academic Accreditation (CAA) Standards for Institutional Licensure and Programme Accreditation (2019).

It is stated that all faculty members are expected to achieve scholarships of a standard commensurate with research-intensive universities, publish in peer-reviewed journals, and attract external research funds.

Experts' evaluation

The academic staff in all three programs are distinguished by their high levels of expertise and commitment to fostering a supportive and intellectually stimulating environment. As the panel of experts could find in the provided documents and also learn during the interviews, faculty members bring a blend of academic credentials and practical experience, which enriches the learning experience for students. Their active involvement in research and professional activities ensures the currency and relevance of the curriculum.

The university has implemented transparent and well-defined recruitment procedures, which emphasize teaching experience, research output, and diversity. Faculty employment policies, including the four-year renewable contract mechanism, provide stability and contribute to the continuous improvement of academic programs. Staff development opportunities are supported through the Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning, which offers professional growth activities in various areas. Enhancing the publicity of these opportunities could further encourage active participation.

The existing resources in the Translation Studies program are appropriate and adequate compared to the size of the student body. The academic staff in this program are commended for their qualifications, workload balance, and responsiveness to the program's teaching, research, and administrative needs. Their professional expertise in translation and interpretation ensures that students receive practical, industry-relevant insights.

From the experts' point of view, the long-term contracting mechanism for faculty ensures stability and supports ongoing improvements in program quality. The described recruitment procedures are transparent, and the staff benefits from clearly communicated development opportunities through the Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning. As mentioned above, publicizing these opportunities further would enhance participation and contribute to professional growth in areas such as program benchmarking, curriculum alignment, and effective teaching practices.

The Linguistics program's faculty are well recognized by the panel of experts for their strong academic credentials, enthusiasm, and engagement with students. The programme currently has a sufficient number of faculty members to meet its needs. Currently, there are no plans to hire a new faculty member to teach on the linguistics program.

The expert panel could also confirm that faculty members have actively participated in professional development workshops and use feedback from student evaluations to improve their teaching and course offerings. Their interdisciplinary research and commitment to fostering a collaborative learning environment have earned them praise from both students and the expert panel.

The faculty in the English Literature program are well-qualified and bring international expertise to their teaching roles. As in the other departments the recruitment processes are multi-staged, transparent, and emphasize both academic and practical qualifications. The panel of experts found good practice in senior staff mentor junior colleagues, fostering a supportive and growth-oriented environment.

During the site visit, faculty members displayed professional enthusiasm and dedication, which was echoed by students' positive feedback on their instructors' supportive approach. The expert panel recommends continued efforts to provide professional development opportunities and mentorship to further strengthen faculty contributions to the program.

Conclusion

The criterion is fulfilled.

6. Learning resources and student support

Appropriate facilities and resources are available for learning and teaching activities.

Guidance and support is available for students which includes advice on achieving a successful completion of their studies.

[ESG 1.6]

Description

Learning resources

According to the SER, all UAEU classrooms have state-of-the-art technology, including desktops, laptops, interactive smart boards, and AV systems. University IT Support Services provide a user-friendly environment which fosters the daily use of information technology to facilitate teaching, learning and research better. The IT Help Desk is the University's single point of contact to request 'live' assistance to help address all classroom and other technology-related issues. The BA in English Literature relies on the English Lab for skills classes, as well as classes in film studies. Students in the BA in Translation Studies programme have access to a modern interpreting lab for training and research purposes.

The library has a range of electronic services available to users, who can ask questions online and promptly get answers. Faculty members can electronically arrange library instruction sessions for their students, and students and faculty can also request purchases of books.

Student support

The SER describes seven tools to support the students during their studies at UAEU, namely the University Foundation Programme (UFP), the Student Success Unit (SSU), the academic advisors, extra-curricular

support, the Student Counselling Centre, support for equal opportunities, and support for students with special needs.

All new students to UAEU are given access to the UFP, which is run by the Developmental Teaching Unit (DIU). The UFP's goal is to ease students' transition from high school to college by giving them a chance to improve their communication abilities. For students who will be in 2020 and beyond to fulfil their University and/or College requirements, the DIU also provides admission tests. The unit offers online lectures and instructor-led exam preparation workshops to help students get ready for the admissions examinations. A number of General Education courses, including Academic English Writing, Emirati Studies, and Fourth Industrial Revolution, are offered by the DIU, which also manages all programme activities.

From the time students enrol at UAEU until the postgraduate level, the Student Success Unit (SSU) offers academic help. The Undergraduate Student Research Conference and the Academic Olympics are two yearly activities that help to promote student achievement. The SSU also gives students a chance to participate in campus life and develop meaningful relationships with people and groups outside of their academic fields, which promotes a feeling of community and belonging.

Each student is given an academic adviser when they are accepted into an academic program. Every semester, the department urges advisors to make sure major students have a plan in place to complete all of their taught courses in the proper order, as well as the key registration regulations. The online Degree Works application keeps track of and enforces degree requirements. This makes it possible for instructors and students to keep track of the courses that each student has finished as well as the remaining prerequisites. The faculty adviser works with the students to develop a study plan for each semester. To allow enrolment for the chosen courses, the advisor must review, approve, and lock this plan.

UAEU offers a range of activities to help students pursue their interests outside the classroom. These include students' clubs, health clubs, and extra-curricular programs and activities that promote the development of the students' academic experience. These include leadership and student organizations, cultural and heritage activities, arts and music activities, activities of residential units, and sports and health activities.

The Student Counselling Center provides specialized counselling services to help students achieve a greater psychological, social and academic balance.

Administrators strive to promote and support equal opportunities for all students and faculty through a number of procedures. These include creating a culture of fairness and inclusion, offering staff appropriate diversity and inclusion training, identifying and preventing unconscious biases, making sure everyone is compliant with rules and regulations, raising awareness of indirect discrimination, and ensuring that the recruitment process respects/involves diversity and equality. The Student Services Department (SSD) provides comprehensive support services to ensure the continued growth and development of students across the board, including support for students of determination, health services, counselling services, international student services, financial aid services.

UAEU provides academic support and assistive technology support for students with special needs through the Special Needs Section (SNS). Services include lectures, extra time, contact with instruction, alternative exams, early class registration, and Braille Sense, Book Sense, Fair View, ClearView, Eye Pal Solo, ClearNote, and Ibsar Software.

Experts' evaluation

The UAEU uses a learning management system where students can find all relevant information on their course/module descriptions, their intended learning outcomes, methods of learning and teaching, form of assessment and also the expected workload. In general, this information is also published on the syllabus of

each course which will be given to the students at the beginning of the semester. The available courses and course learning outcomes can also be found on the university website, where a short overview of the course content, course learning outcomes and the information on the credit hours is given. However, this does not replace the actual syllabi which are given to the students at the start of the semester. The panel of experts believes that to be an acceptable practice.

While the organisation of the courses was not explicitly discussed during the site visit, overlap was also never mentioned as a problem by the students or the faculty. Students are also in close contact with their advisors which help them choose appropriate courses based on their interests as well as their course requirements.

As the programs are currently only studied by female students, the resources, such as labs and seminar rooms, can only be found on the female side of the campus. This is not currently a problem; however, it limits the range of students that can study the three study programs as male students would not be able to study Linguistics, Translation studies or English Literature at this point in time. As male students should also be able to study these programs at UAEU, the faculty should also continue its efforts to enable male students to enrol in the programmes. The panel highlight that the situation is not a result of any regulation preventing man to study the programmes, but as a practical result of gender segregation it requires a critical mass of male students to enrol at the same time to open a cohort. As there is also a need for male translators, linguists and language experts in the region, the panel believes that on the long run this de facto limitation should not be taken as a given fact but encourages the university to elaborate ways to also enable male students to enter the respective careers.

As the experts can confirm, the labs for Linguistics and Translation studies are state-of-the-art. They include valuable technology, such as computers, EKGs, eye-trackers and translation programs. While the translation lab is used heavily by students during seminars, the equipment in the linguistics lab is mainly used by trained faculty. As being able to work with EKGs, eye-trackers and other equipment is a valuable skill in the field of experimental linguistics, students should be encouraged to work with it **(see Finding 4)**. It might also be possible to implement introductory lessons in the linguistics lab to teach students the basic skills necessary to use them for small experiments.

The English Literature department also has a separate seminar room which allows students to create small plays themselves and to get creative. This is a valuable addition to the learning experience for students.

The facilities are large enough to technically accommodate larger amounts of students than the programs currently do. However, the panel positively recognizes that there is a maximum number of students allowed in a room (around 22 students/seminar room) to allow for smaller seminar groups and better teaching quality.

The library contains a good number of physical books and a large repository of digital resources. The opening times are appropriate when considering that students typically travel home during the weekend. There are study spaces available in the library which allow for group work as well as individual work.

It is highly commendable to look at the different advisory services available: students are matched with an academic advisor from their first semester. Not only are they able to discuss problems and ideas with them, but they can also go to office hours from other faculty members if problems arise. The university also offers extensive student support services which range from psychological help, financial aid to an international student office. Contact information and opening hours of each of the services offered by the university can be found online on the UAEU website.

The university offers a student orientation week at the beginning of the semester and also allocates advisors during this time. It is seen as a good practice that the departments also go to schools to advertise their programs. Furthermore, an international student office which helps incoming and outgoing students as well as a student exchange unit. At this point, the study programs don't have many outgoing students, which can be

traced back to local culture which is respected by the panel of experts. At the same time the current level of internationalization might also be seen as a limitation to the academic experience for students. Hence the faculty should develop an internationalization approach that aligns with the local culture. Elements of virtual mobility, summer (or winter) schools could attract short term incoming stays and thus increase international exchange of ideas **(Finding 15)**.

During classes, the lecturers make use of different teaching methods to make sure that the students in class are able to follow. Assignments are also designed in a way to help foster the skills and theories the students are supposed to learn. Student-centeredness, while not explicitly explained in the SER, does play a big role in how the lecturers design their lessons and offer their support to the students so it is part of the implemented practice which is highly commended by the panel of experts.

For Emirati students, studying at UAEU is free. International students can apply for scholarships to be granted tuition fee waivers. Information on this can be found on the UAEU website. Each semester, students can also apply for a payment plan. Information on this can also be found online.

Conclusion

The criterion is fulfilled.

7. Information

> *Impartial and objective, up-to-date information regarding the programme and its qualifications is published regularly. This published information is appropriate for and available to relevant stakeholders.*
> *[ESG 1.8]*

Description

The SER lists several links for social media activities, programme-specific websites, and faculty information. Details on the update and approach towards public information were discussed during the site visit.

At UAEU, information shared at the university level is closely integrated with its Colleges and Departments. The Self-Evaluation Report (SER) lists the central public information sources for the three study programs, including links to department websites, course details, study plans, and program learning outcomes.

For the Linguistics Program, the department website is currently inaccessible (Error 404), though course information, the study plan, and learning outcomes remain accessible. Similarly, the BA in English Literature program website returns an Error 404, but other relevant details are available. In the BA Translation Studies program, the links for the program website, courses, study plan, and learning outcomes are identical (with the website link itself needing to be corrected).

The websites of the relevant departments also provide links to the colleges and details on programs, research activities, and student life. These include information on college clubs, news, and events (with photos). However, the issues of the "Voices" magazine in the publications section are outdated, with content only from 2020 and 2021. The faculty directory is incomplete, displaying the same faculty photos and names across all three programs. A comprehensive contact section is available.

The University's internal platforms, accessible via links on these sites, include the UAEU portal for schedules and groups, password management services, Webmail, the LMS Blackboard, and the Internship System. The Internship System offers important information for interns, field supervisors, academic advisors, and administrative coordinators.

Departments also distribute brochures and promote current events through posters and flyers. Employers in the labour market can easily access necessary information, including contact e-mail addresses and phone numbers; national communication often seems to take place by phone. The labour market has recommended that students join relevant professional associations to improve information sharing, and additional website links would further support this goal.

Experts' evaluation

As the experts learned during the interviews on site, maintaining updated websites for a large public institution like UAEU is an ongoing challenge, especially from a user-centred perspective. However, consistent updates and stakeholder feedback are essential to ensure the site meets public expectations and user needs.

The websites for UAEU's three study programs under review offer well-organised and comprehensive information, including course details, model study plans, program objectives, degree requirements, and relevant information on General Education electives. Yet, the expert panel learned from the point of view of the labour market there is room for improvement as the market does not always find what they are interested in. The panel believes that implementing a systematic feedback mechanism from employers would enhance the relevance and responsiveness of the programme sites **(see Finding 9)**.

Whether these programme websites operate independently or are integrated into the main UAEU site via hyperlinks, the main UAEU website is accessible through each program's sub-site via the menu in the top-right corner (English version). Despite the breadth of up-to-date information available, specific technical issues require attention. For example, programme learning outcomes (PLOs and ILOs) in areas like Translation Studies need updating, and some of the "back" buttons are non-functional, generating "Javascript void" errors.

Some event listings are also outdated, with the most recent entries from March and May 2024. Much of the event information is instead shared informally via email, personal networks, the student information platform, and bulletin boards in high-traffic areas like the food court and IT building. In the Literature Department, most announcements are relayed directly by lecturers. The panel believes that these are good ways to communicate with internal stakeholders and serve the needs of those who are directly involved and affected.

Another helpful potential addition to the publicly available information would be a visual organigram of the institutional structure, as interviewees asked for during the site visit. This would clarify the organisational hierarchy within UAEU's college, making it easier for users to identify appropriate contacts for specific questions and support needs.

The experts were positively impressed when learning that UAEU adopts a specific theme each year, with 2024 focusing on sustainability. Including more details on the theme and prominently displaying the mission statements of individual colleges on the program websites would reinforce UAEU's commitment to these initiatives and help increase visibility.

In particular, the Literature Department could benefit from additional self-promotion on the site. Highlighting the department's strengths and unique "selling points" could increase visibility and attract greater interest. The website also allows users to adjust accessibility settings through a gear icon, offering options like font size adjustments, audio support via the Read Speaker AI tool, a night mode, and integrated Google Translate functionality. The panel believes that these features are well-implemented and effectively address the diverse needs of various user groups, ensuring better accessibility and inclusivity.

Since most programmes prioritise student-centred learning, this emphasis on accessibility and student engagement could be highlighted more prominently on the site. Furthermore, information on the relationship between the local credit hour system and the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) would clarify the relationship between UAEU's credit hours and ECTS. As trends toward internationalization

continue, such transparency could provide a competitive advantage and support the international visibility of the programmes **(Finding 16)**.

Overall, the panel concludes that many positive aspects of the programs under review are not adequately highlighted to an external audience, as they primarily emerge through direct, people-centered communication. This creates a gap for individuals who are not actively engaged with the faculty and are seeking clear, up-to-date information from outside or abroad. Therefore, the faculty is encouraged to enhance its public communication by placing greater emphasis on the needs of external stakeholders (**Finding 15**).

From the expert's point of view the points for improvement highlighted in this section of the report are manageable and can be effectively addressed with relative ease.

Conclusion

The criterion is fulfilled.

V.   Recommendation of the panel of experts

The panel of experts recommends accrediting the study programmes "**Linguistics (Bachelor of Arts), English Literature (Bachelor of Arts), and Translation Studies (Bachelor of Arts)**" offered by **United Arab Emirates University**, UAE, with conditions.

Commendations:

The panel commends the excellent quality of staff and the resulting student centeredness in the teaching process leading to commendable student support. Furthermore, the expert panel highlights the excellent resource equipment enabling students a positive learning experience in an academically inspiring surrounding.

Findings:

1. The Linguistics programme as well as the Translation Studies programme should critically reflect the constructive alignment between PLO and CLO and assure that the ILO are realistic and also measurable and achievable. This critical reflection should also include the specific assessment methods in the courses.
2. The Linguistics programme should consider adding an internship to the curriculum.
3. In the Linguistics programme there should be an increased focus to develop (ethical) research skills of students as well as applied linguistics.
4. The Linguistics programme should assure that students take a more actively role in the lab work and are actively included.
5. The English Literature programme should Increase the visibility and further develop the key characteristics, namely its intercultural and comparative focus (also increases attractiveness for exchange)
6. The Translation Studies programme should aim at developing a better linguistic accuracy in both languages.
7. The Translation Studies programme should incorporate more skills in machine translation.
8. The faculty should move ahead and develop even better ways to include students as relevant stakeholders in the QA structures and bodies of the faculty.

9. The faculty should intensify its structured and impact-oriented outreach to the labour market in order to involve its perspective in the continuous development of the programmes while at the same time aim at a higher level of employability of graduates.
10. Regarding student assessment the faculty should consider implementing moderation as a tool to increase consistency.
11. The use of modern technology in teaching and learning should be improved beyond administrative elements. Using more of the potential of modern technologies in the classroom will also help students develop skills for the labour market.
12. Complete admission requirements and procedures should be publicly available.
13. The faculty should develop an internationalization approach that aligns with the local culture. Elements of virtual mobility, summer (or winter) schools could attract short term stays and thus increase international exchange of ideas.
14. The faculty should consider delivering a diploma supplement document after graduation explaining details of the qualifications obtained.
15. The faculty should improve its public information with increased attention for external stakeholders. There might be a broader audience interested in the quality of teaching and research provided by UAEU.
16. The transparency on translation from the local credit hour system (CH) to ECTS has to be assured, and regulations have to be accessible not only to internal stakeholders