PRESENTATION ABSTRACT

Sub-Theme 2: Different Approaches to Quality Assurance and Their Impact on Efficiency, Effectiveness, and Sustainability

Title: Challenges in Implementation of Standards for Licensure and Accreditation in the UAE

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ABSTRACT

The United Arab Emirates has seen rapid growth in the non-federal sector of higher education over the past decade, with 57 institutions now under the purview of the Commission for Academic Accreditation (CAA), within the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research. The institutions range from branch campuses of overseas universities and colleges, claiming a high reputation for academic quality, through to *de novo* autonomous institutions yet to establish their credentials for good quality and academic standards. It is in this educational context that the CAA has, over the past nine years, developed and implemented its *Standards for Licensure and Accreditation (2007 publication available on website www.caa.ae)* to ensure that threshold standards are evident, and evidenced from the outset in any program recognized by the UAE's Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research. This paper is an opportunity for the CAA to share its experiences in applying its *Standards,* through identification of the particular circumstances and issues raised in the Gulf region, within a rapidly expanding economy offering a free-market for higher education initiatives**.** Issues covered in the paper include - the establishment of a quality culture in institutions, mission and governance, operation of institutional effectiveness systems in relation to planning, best practice in curriculum development, outcomes based assessment, and collaborative agreements. With a number of newly established Accreditation Boards in the region it is hoped that sharing this experience will inform on, and perhaps pre-empt, some potential pitfalls and identify common challenges that we all face now and are likely to encounter in the future.