QS Stars Case Study: American University in the Emirates

The AUE was established in 2006 with accreditation from the Commission of Academic Accreditation (CAA) under the umbrella of the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research in the United Arab Emirates. The AUE has experienced increased student enrolments from 25 countries and follows the American model of higher education with a general-education program and credit-hour system.

The University boasts seven colleges—Media and Mass Communication, Business Administration, Law, Design, Computer Information Technology, Security and Global Studies, and Education—with programs that cater to current and future marketplace needs.

Why did you choose QS?
As an institution we wanted to take an introspective journey to understand our strengths and weaknesses and in comparison, with peer institutions, where do we stand in terms of the stipulated standards.

What challenges have you been able to overcome thanks to QS Stars?
While submitting the data for QS Stars on all the required eight standards, we realized lack of appropriate processes that could be integrated in our inhouse built learning management system. This was addressed immediately and thanks to QS that our LMS has now application to download such data and utilize for institutional research. Needless to state that the data submitted for QS Star also served as feedback for our continuous improvement model. In addition, we improvised the online advising and student admission process. We also improved the system utilized for data collection for research productivity (number of papers, citations, and awards). Furthermore, the key improvements were considering different assessments like student feedback, student faculty ratio, graduate employability, student alumni service, strengthening the international partnerships and collaboration.

What are the key benefits of using QS Stars?

- Understanding institutional strengths and weaknesses so that to work on it
- Indicate the university quality level in the higher educational measure.
- Gain insight into the university processes
- Understanding program strength
- Recognition from peers
- Keep the prestigious university services in a good standing record among other universities with motivation to increase more competitively.
What have you learnt by using QS Stars?

Being in the system, at times, we do not realize what is required in the continuous improvement process. Starting the entire process to apply for QS Stars was a learning in itself. The institution as a whole, was excited and collaborated to provide the required data for the application. The process of data collections, analysis and verification was intimidating but fruitful and productive at the end!

I recommend all institutions should go through this process every four to five years!

In line with our mission to be one of the leading higher educational institutions, QS Stars helped us stand out from many other institutions and provided branding opportunity to the institution.

Prof. Abhilasha Singh
Vice President for Academic Affairs
American University in the Emirates
QS Stars explained

QS Stars is a globally recognised rating system for higher education institutions. Ratings are achieved through an in-depth assessment across at least eight categories, resulting in an overall rating of 1 to 5+ Stars and a rating of 1 to 5 Stars for each category.

Following the assessment, QS provides a detailed report summarising the results in each category. This allows institutions to recognise their strengths, as well as weaker areas which may require attention and improvement.

The QS Stars package also includes a set of badges with the ratings achieved overall and in each category. Institutions may use these in their own marketing materials to show prospective students their strengths in areas that matter most, such as Teaching and Employability.

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