Chapter 9: Students

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Structures and Responsibilities

Academic Faculty

Executive Deans
The Executive Dean is responsible for monitoring student progression and graduation rates, and for taking appropriate action to ensure that students are progressing through their studies in a timely manner.

Program Chair
The Chair monitors the performance of at-risk students in consultation with the Academic Advisor and advises on their possible withdrawal from study.

Campus

Head Campus Operations (HCO)
The Head oversees academic services and advising at the campus and supervises the campus Academic and Student Services Department.

Academic and Student Services (ACS) Department
The ACS Department at each campus supports the campus to:

- Create and maintain a positive and safe learning environment
- Offer equitable opportunities to access student support services at the colleges
- Enhance students’ overall educational experience to achieve their academic and personal goals
- Establish and maintain active connections with HCT alumni
- Increase employment rates of HCT graduates
- Provide Career Guidance and Counselling
- Provide Personal Counselling services
- Provide professional support and accommodation to students with special needs

Academic Advisor
Academic Advisors have a duty of care to provide academic advice and support to students with the purpose of improving retention, progression and performance. Wherever possible a faculty member who teaches the student is assigned as the student’s Academic Advisor. If this is not possible a suitably qualified academic or non-academic staff will be assigned.

System Registrar’s Office, Student Services Department
The System Registrar is responsible for: ensuring the integrity and accuracy of the academic records of current and former students; student registration; the processes for transfer credits, graduation and certification.

The System Registrar’s Office also works closely with the Academic Services departments at campuses to ensure the provision of clear and accurate information to HCT students about academic and student policies, and regulations.
Institutional Research Unit, Organizational Excellence Department
The Unit publishes data related to student progression and graduation rates.

Student Council
Each campus has a Student Council elected by the student body to ensure student representation in campus management and governance.

Representatives from each of the campus Councils elect a system-wide HCT Student Council which:

- represents the wider HCT student body nationally and internationally at educational institutions, conferences and student forums;
- advocates students’ interests;
- participates in discussions of national and international issues related to students;
- promotes communication between students and management.

Processes
Admission
The HCT is funded by the Federal Government on a per student basis, and enrolment limits in its undergraduate programs are set by government’s guidelines.

Priority is given to current High School graduates, continuing students, internal transfers, returning students, and students whose admission or continuation was deferred solely due to National Service. Second priority is given to non-current High School graduate who has never been counted in the funding census at any federal higher education institution.

The HCT may also seek additional government grants to provide scholarships to students such as non-current high school graduates and those students who have previously discontinued their studies.

The Academic Council sets the academic admission standards based on academic and accreditation requirements.

Undergraduate Admission
The HCT admits only undergraduate students who:

- have completed the application procedure at National Admissions and Placement Office (NAPO);
- meet the HCT general admission and admission priority requirements;
- have been approved by the Chancellor of the HCT.

Graduate Admission
Graduate programs are cost recovery with tuition and other fees paid by students or sponsoring companies.

Recognition of Prior Learning
Advanced standing may be awarded to students transferring from other federal universities or from a university recognised by the Ministry of Higher Education. The decision to award advanced standing is an academic decision taken by the relevant Executive Dean and based on a review of the course, its learning outcomes, and the grade awarded by the other institution.
Graduation
To graduate with a HCT credential, a student must:

- successfully complete the required number of credits and courses required by the programme/major;
- achieve a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.0 for a Bachelor’s degree or a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 for a Master’s degree;
- complete a minimum of 50% of the programme credit requirements at the HCT.

Counselling
The ACS department at each campus ensures that students are provided with a range of counselling services including:

Academic Advising
Each student is assigned an Academic Advisor at the start of the academic year, wherever possible the advisor being one of the student’s teachers. The ratio of students to Advisors should not exceed 15:1.

The Advisor meets students assigned to him/her to review and document each student’s individual progress and advise on career goals at least once each semester. Comments on each student are recorded in the Student Record System to enable future Advisors to review their advisees’ academic profile and progress.

A student is classified ‘At-Risk’ if their academic standing falls below that of good standing as defined in the HCT Academic Standing Policy. At-Risk students should be identified by week eight of the semester. The Advisor then consults with relevant faculty and develops a learning support strategy for the student which may include: referral to a dedicated learning support faculty to undertake an individual learning contract (Foundations or Year 1 students only); additional one-to-one or small group instruction; peer tutoring; structured independent tasks.

An At-Risk student’s progress is reviewed twice during the remainder of the semester. If progress remains unsatisfactory the student may be counselled to withdraw.

Personal Counselling
Counsellors offer help to students with physical or emotional issues and with personal or family problems. Each Counsellor is responsible for tracking of their students to ensure consistency and effectiveness of the counselling process.

Counsellors develop and maintain a wide variety of resources such as brochures, magazines, self-developed materials, videos and software on numerous topics, which are made available to all students.

Counselling is also provided in the form of group outreach programmes targeting key issues for the student body. Outreach initiatives may include address issues such as stress management, interpersonal communication and life balance.

Special Needs Counselling
The Counsellor or Special Needs Support Staff assesses the level of accommodation needed including appropriate assistive technology such as specialized software, visual magnifiers and hearing aids. The Counsellor liaises with the campus and the Academic Faculty to ensure that students have a comparable experience at the HCT to students without special needs.
Career Counselling
Counsellors assist students by giving career information, advice and guidance in developing realistic career goals and maintaining a career planning materials. Counsellors:

- Conduct individual and group advising sessions
- Provide first year students with career planning workshops.
- Assist students in finding summer jobs, work placement and jobs on graduation.
- Coordinate and supervise Employer events, Career Fairs and Career Awareness days.

Academic Information
The HCT’s Intranet Portal provides students with access to a range of academic information and resources including: course information; the Learning Management System (Blackboard Learn); Library Services; academic policies and procedures. The Portal is managed by the central Information Systems and Technology Department.

Student Services Survey
Student satisfaction with student support services, including academic information, counselling, academic advising, career centres and special needs support are monitored annually through this survey. Results are included in annual reviews of support services.

Reports of the survey are available on the Institutional Effectiveness Management System (IEMS).

Recognition and Awards
To promote and provide recognition to students with outstanding performance, the following awards are available.

Graduation Awards
Students graduate with Distinction, Distinction with Honours or Distinction with Highest Honours, provided they meet the following criteria in their programme or major, maintained at the individual campuses:

- Distinction: a Cumulative GPA between 3.50 and 3.74;
- Distinction with Honours: a Cumulative GPA between 3.75 and 4.00;
- Distinction with Highest Honours: highest Cumulative GPA system-wide, provided the Cumulative GPA is between 3.75 and 4.00.

The achievement of ‘Distinction’, ‘Distinction with Honours’ and ‘Distinction with Highest Honours’ will be noted on the student’s credential and transcript.

The Executive Dean’s List
Students in good standing on programmes who achieve a Grade Point Average of 3.50 or above in any semester while taking at least 15 credit units of classes are placed on the Executive Dean’s List.

Records of the Executive Dean’s List are published and maintained on each campus.

Abu Dhabi Industry Awards
The Abu Dhabi Industry Awards are awarded to top HCT graduates. Nominees for this award are in the top 10% of the graduating class in each of the following aspects:

- graduation GPA (grade point average);
- grades in graduation project and work placement;
- attendance record in the final year of their programme;
- contributions to campus activities and community.

Company Awards
Graduates may also be eligible for a variety of other awards sponsored by specific companies.
Publications
The HCT publishes the following annually:

**Student Handbook** provides information regarding Student Support Services and relevant Policies and Procedures

**‘Methaq’ Student Code of Conduct** describes student rights and responsibilities of the students and the colleges’ expectations in order to help students achieve success during their studies.

Policy and Procedures

- **LP202 Admission Policy**
- **LP210 Attendance Policy**
- **LP213 Inter-Institution Student Transfers**
- **LP228 Equivalencies & Transfer Credit**
- **LP216 Misconduct, Non-Academic**
- **LP235 Student Complaints Policy**
- **LP209.3 Grade Appeal Procedure**
- **LP217 Special Needs Students, Accommodation**
- **LP218 Special Needs Students, Accommodation**
- **LP233 Graduate Admission**
- **LP234 Graduation Policy**
- **LP234.1 Graduation Procedure**
- **LP235 Student Complaints Policy**
- **LP236 Student Support Services Policy**
- **LP237 English Language Requirements**
- **LP249 Academic Advising Policy**