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**Arab Open University**

**Summary of External Examiners Reports**

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| **Academic Year:** | **2024-2025** |
| **Semester:** | **Fall** |
| **Programme:** | **Master of Education in Instructional Technology** |
| **No. of External Examiners** | **1** |
| **No. of Externally Examined Courses** | **12** |

1. **Chief External Examiners response and Comments:**

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| **Please confirm that the assessment and standards set for the programme are consistent and appropriate, and that the processes for assessment and determination of awards are fair, reliable across the provision.** |
| The programme is well-structured and consistently delivered with fair assessment procedures across branches. Good practices, such as contextualized learning and research, continue to be reinforced. Candidate performance remains strong and uniform across locations, reflecting consistency in teaching and resources. Moderation procedures are transparent and reliable, ensuring equitable standards through CBM moderation support. |

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| **Please confirm that sufficient information and evidence of professional work and students’ assessment were -received by the programmes’ external examiners to enable them to t fulfill their role.** |
| Portfolios for all the modules offered in the 24-25 Fall term were provided. I received a comprehensive range of samples to moderate, and there was ample time to review the work ahead of the exam boards. The new structure for presenting the portfolios greatly facilitated the review process, offering a clear overview of the procedures followed and the modifications made to improve delivery and candidate performance. It was particularly helpful to have the detailed module/assessment portfolios and samples from across the full mark range. |

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| **Commendations:** |
| * The new portfolio structure made the review process easier by clearly showing procedures and improvements. Having detailed assessment portfolios and a full range of graded samples was especially useful. * There is continued evidence, both in documentation and discussions with staff, of research-informed teaching and strong engagement with emerging technologies. * The support, feedback, and supplementary materials provided by the teaching team remain effective in helping students meet learning outcomes while also offering valuable scaffolding for those who need additional assistance. * candidates demonstrate very good knowledge and technical awareness and effectively apply their skills. |

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| **Suggestions for Enhancement** |
| The assessments were not seen before circulation, presumed approved by the previous EE. I expect assessments for the new academic year will be sent before each term in the next round. |

1. **Extracts from External Examiners report form**

**External Examiner Name: Dr. Yasmine Arafa**

**Examined Modules: 12**

Please comment as appropriate on the following:

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| 1. The academic standards for the programme/module. |
| The standards continue to be appropriately set and are comparable to similar HE programmes in the UK. As mentioned in previous reports, the threshold academic standards set for the modules/award are well-informed by the subject benchmarks in Education studies and meet the expectations for master's degrees. The programme structure supports the development of a broad skill set in the subject area and integrates established and emerging technologies. Learning outcomes and assessments are designed to encourage candidates to research and apply these technologies in depth, fostering the ability to adapt and use them effectively in their future careers. |

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| 1. Performance of students in comparison to similar programmes |
| The quality of work and overall performance on the programme are consistent with expectations for postgraduate study and comparable to similar programmes I have reviewed. |

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| 1. The quality of students’ work, their knowledge and skills and achievement of learning outcomes |
| The samples generally reflect good synergy of theoretical knowledge and practical application. Candidates demonstrate a solid understanding of the core concepts and the applied use of educational technology. They are generally able to effectively apply them to practice-based scenarios. There continue to be some excellent examples of sector-focused practical work, appropriately contextualised within candidates’ subject-specific areas of expertise. The grades awarded suitably reflect the level of effort and technical proficiency demonstrated. |

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| 1. The strengths and weaknesses of the students |
| **Strengths:**  - As noted in previous reports, candidates demonstrate very good knowledge and technical awareness and effectively apply their skills. The development of practical and technical application skills builds well between the different modules on the programme. Most candidates can demonstrate an accomplished degree of technical application to educational material in their disciplines of expertise.  - Interest in further research. It is evident from the review that the faculty continues to go to great lengths to prepare candidates to think about their future careers and encourage research and practical application.  - Candidates consistently spoke positively about their experiences. They spoke highly about the support and approachability of the staff and voiced their appreciation for the clarity and depth of the teaching material. They also commended the flexibility of the programme and the teaching/learning structure overall.  **Weaknesses:**  - While there is evidence of improvement in some of the written work (given the new academic writing micro-credentials), the structural development and presentation of written work remain weak.  - Accurate referencing and use of justified resources in some of the written work has improved; nonetheless, their use in building a critical perspective, supporting the rigour of argument and substantiating assertions could do with more attention. |

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| 1. The Quality of Assessments (design, methods and making schemes) |
| The overall strong performance suggests that the curriculum, teaching, and resources are effective. Based on the reviewed samples and results, all candidates are able to demonstrate an understanding of the core module content and learning outcomes, regardless of the grades achieved. Even those who achieved lower marks showed clear evidence of learning, despite having struggled to consolidate their knowledge or extend it through independent study to reach higher levels of achievement. The micro-credential course and additional practice/support in research and critical/ academic writing agreed at the last visit were implemented. The samples reviewed show some improvement in written work, which is encouraging. Nonetheless, it may also be a reflection of the strengths of the current cohort. The long-term impact of the initiative will need to be evaluated through future performance data. There is continued evidence, both in documentation and discussions with staff, of research-informed teaching and strong engagement with emerging technologies. Revised June 2023 the support, feedback, and supplementary materials provided by the teaching team remain effective in helping students meet learning outcomes while also offering valuable scaffolding for those who need additional assistance. |

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| 1. Standards of Marking and grading students’ assessments |
| The marking process is appropriate and appears fair and equitable across branches. Marking standards are rigorous and demonstrably aligned with the programme's assessment criteria. The quality of work within the grade boundaries aligns with the expectations at master's level. While some of the grades appear to be on the generous side, I am satisfied that they are reasonable reflections of academic merit and are supported by moderation. The programme maintains relevant sector standards, with typical strengths and weaknesses observed. The inconsistencies in the rubrics noted in previous reports are now completely rectified. Cross-branch moderation confirms that rubrics are applied with both rigour and consistency across branches. The quality of feedback provided is commendable. The comments and recommendations notably offer supportive and feedforward guidance. Candidates’ testimonials consistently noted that the extensive formative feedback provided helped prepare them for the summative work. |