

Sector briefing

UAE Opportunities in the Education and Training Sector

Why UAE?

Education is high on the agenda of the UAE government, which is keen to meet international standards. The UAE Cabinet approved a federal budget of AED 41 billion (approx. GBP 6.8 billion) for 2011 with 46% allocated to education, health, pensions, social assistance, the Shaikh Housing Programme and the Marriage Fund. The Ministry of Education has been allocated a budget of AED 4.6 billion (approx. GBP 760 million). The funds are meant primarily for educational reforms at both school and university level which will include modernising curricula, building new facilities and upgrading existing establishments. The Government encourages private education providers to increase their presence in the region and has actively pursued partnership deals to encourage leading international universities to set up.

The Minister of Education, Humaid Mohammed Al Qutami has outlined the federal government strategy for 2011-2013 as “focusing on creating a high calibre educational system and a competitive knowledge-based economy by connecting education outputs to the job market requirements”.

A recent study in 2011 shows that 97% of teenagers intend to go on to higher education, illustrating the potential demand for business in the UAE.



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The Ministry of Education which is a federal body with offices in seven Emirates of the UAE **has announced a new education strategy 2010-2020 to provide the UAE with competent human capital.**

According to H.H. Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, UAE Prime Minister and Ruler of Dubai, the aim is to build a knowledge based society and enhance the standing of scholars and intellectuals in the Arab world. They have identified 10 strategic objectives which covers high quality curriculum, excellent teaching, developing primary and secondary education, excellent learning environment and tools, harmonised assessment on a federal level, extra and individualised attention for students with additional needs, affordable and high quality of public and private education, promoting national identity, encouraging parent's direct contribution and developing a future generation of Emirati teachers and principals. Dubai established the Knowledge and Human Development Authority (**KHDA**) as the key body to enhance the education sector in Dubai and to raise skill levels. KHDA are responsible for conducting school inspections throughout the Emirate of Dubai. This year, 6 out of 136 private schools in Dubai inspected by KHDA were ranked as outstanding. All of these followed the UK curriculum.

Sheikh Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, the Ruler of Dubai and Prime Minister of the UAE has also recently created a body called the **Dubai Healthcare City Authority (DHCA)**. It will be tasked with developing "top tier medical colleges and universities, nursing schools and a wide range of research, diagnostic, rehabilitation, nutrition and physiotherapy centres."

Abu Dhabi set up the Abu Dhabi Education Council (**ADEC**) to enhance the sector in Abu Dhabi. Similar education councils have been set up in the Northern Emirates of Sharjah, Fujairah, Ras Al Khaimah and Umm Al Quwain. They all work closely with the Ministry of Education.

The Abu Dhabi Education Council (ADEC) has invested in a ten year strategic plan to help raise the quality of Higher Education for students in Abu Dhabi on par with international

standards and to drive an innovation-based economy. This is expected to tie-in with the capital's Economic Vision 2030. Part of this plan includes special needs infrastructure in 10% of universities across the emirates.

Find general information on the UAE market conditions on [UKTI's website](#). [The Doing Business Guide for UAE](#) gives an overview of UAE's economy, business culture, potential opportunities and an introduction to other relevant issues.

Opportunities

- There is a **demand for new British curriculum schools** as the number of children seeking places in these schools outstrips supply, especially at the secondary level.
- Initiatives that are being encouraged in schools include **new ways of teaching, improving staff competencies, integration of technology in education, leadership skills for pupils, training programmes for nationals, building schools for the future , developing and implementing an IT support plan and latest innovations in education** such as virtual environments.
- **Design technology and ICT resources** in schools.
- Teachers are now required to undergo structured training to facilitate promotions, offering opportunities for **teacher training**.
- There are opportunities for **brand name Universities, school management firms and assessment outfits**.
- **Restructuring of Sports Education** and introducing global standards for school buildings maintenance (preventive maintenance) are included in the new Education Strategy.
- The Abu Dhabi Education Council (ADEC) is committed to **upgrading all Abu Dhabi public schools** by 2016.
- There is a **dearth of libraries** for students to conduct research at the secondary school and higher education levels.
- **Research continues to be high on the government's agenda**. A National Research Foundation was set up in 2008 to help promote research activity.
- The Emirate of Abu Dhabi is investing in **renewables and aerospace and training programmes** related to these will be useful.
- **The training and development of the Emirati workforce** is an integral part of UAE's strategic development plan known as Vision 2020. Besides conventional training, opportunities in institutes of higher education, industry based training is growing rapidly.
- **Good quality tailored executive education programmes and training courses that are linked to specific industries** and can demonstrate value in the present economic scenario are still being considered. The focus is on deliverables.

Please note that UKTI publishes international [business opportunities](#) gathered by our network of British Embassies, High Commissions and Consulates worldwide. These opportunities appear in the Opportunities portal on the relevant sector and country pages on the UKTI website. By setting up a profile you can be alerted by email when relevant new opportunities are published. New or updated **alert profiles** can be set in My Account on the website.

If you have any questions on the opportunities above, contact the UKTI contacts named in this report. Business opportunities aimed specifically at UK companies are added daily to UKTI's website. These leads are sourced by our staff overseas in British Embassies, High Commissions and Consulates, across all sectors and in over 100 markets.

You can be alerted to business opportunities on a regular basis by registering on the UKTI website. [Find out more on UKTI's business opportunities service on the UKTI website](#)

Major events and activities

Building Future Education MENA

Contact: matthew.robarts@ubm.com

Time: 25-26 October 2011

Gulf Educational Supplies Show (GESS) 2011

Contact: william@besa.org.uk

Time: 28 February - 1 March 2012

Find full details of all events in this country and sector on the UKTI website.

New export events are added daily to the site and [you can register to be alerted to them](#) on a daily, weekly or monthly basis

UKTI's Tradeshow Access Programme (TAP) provides grant support for eligible Small & Medium Sized Enterprises (SME's) to attend trade shows overseas. Find out more about [UKTI support](#) for attendance at overseas events.

UKTI contacts

Sunita Mirchandani

Trade & Investment Adviser

British Embassy Dubai

Tel: 00 9714 309 4239

Fax: 00 9714 309 4302

Email: sunita.mirchandani@fco.gov.uk

www.uktradeinvest.gov.uk

Robert Kelly

Trade & Investment Adviser

British Embassy Abu Dhabi

Tel: 00971 2 610 1100

Fax: 00971 2 610 1585

Email: robert.kelly@fco.gsi.gov.uk

www.uktradeinvest.gov.uk

Next steps - How UKTI can help

British companies wishing to develop their business in the UAE market are advised to undertake as much market research and planning as possible in the UK. UKTI's team in UAE, with its wide local knowledge and experience, can provide a range of services to British-based companies wishing to grow their business in global markets.

This can include:

- Provision of market information
- Validated lists of agents/distributors
- Key market players or potential customers in the UAE market
- Establishment of interest of such contacts in working with you
- Arranging appointments
- Organise seminars or other events for you to meet contacts and promote your company in the UAE market

This work is available via our [Overseas Market Introduction Service \(OMIS\)](#) a chargeable service which assists British-based companies wishing to enter or expand their business in overseas markets.

To find out more about commissioning this work, or accessing other UKTI services and specialist advice, please visit the UKTI website to find [contact details for your local UKTI office](#).

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