



الجامعة الأهلية

AHLIA UNIVERSITY

International Education . locally

# ***ANNUAL REPORT***

2013 / 14





**His Royal Highness  
Prince Khalifa Bin Salman Al Khalifa**

The Prime Minister  
of the Kingdom of Bahrain



**His Majesty  
King Hamad Bin Isa Al Khalifa**

The King  
of the Kingdom of Bahrain



**His Royal Highness  
Prince Salman Bin Hamad Al Khalifa**

Crown Prince  
Deputy Supreme Commander  
and First Deputy Prime Minister

## DEDICATION

I am delighted to write a dedication for this first Annual Report published by Ahlia University, a publication which also marks the completion of the University's first decade.

The vision of establishing a new private university in Bahrain was first dreamed of in the early 1990s. Ten years later, following the publication of the National Action Charter and the Reform Project of His Majesty the King, the Arab Academy for Research & Studies (AARS) was formed by a number of individuals with similar goals and ideals who came together to progress this ambitious dream.

Since that time, our dream has become a reality and from small beginnings Ahlia has grown to be a high quality and well respected university, with an excellent standing in our beloved Kingdom and a growing reputation across the world.

As the current Chairman of the AARS Board, I commend the University on its progress and congratulate it on achieving ten years of remarkable growth and development. I am confident that future achievements will be equally impressive and that Ahlia University will continue to make a significant contribution to society.



**Mr Farouk Almoayyed**

Chairman of Board of Directors  
Arab Academy for Research & Studies

## FOREWORD

Ahlia University's vision is to be an outstanding regional and international university and to serve its community through excellence in education and research.

A leader in the region, Ahlia offers programmes at undergraduate, postgraduate and doctoral levels collaborates with internationally-renowned universities; and has excellent quality rankings which make it the top private university in Bahrain.

The University's achievements are the result of the efforts of its leadership, faculty, administration and students. These achievements are all the more special because Ahlia is such a young university, having admitted its first students in February 2003.

On behalf of all the Board members, I applaud the university for its achievements so far and pledge continuing support to its noble goals.

I am pleased that the University is now, through this Annual Report, able to share its story more widely.



**Dr Marwan Al-Kamal**

Acting Chairman of Board of Trustees  
Ahlia University

<b>President's Introduction</b>	<b>08</b>
<b>University Governance</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Our First Decade . . .</b>	
. . . Perspective	18
. . . Achievements	20
. . . Statistics	22
<b>Highlights of 2013 / 14</b>	
Programmes and Partnerships	26
Research and Scholarship	28
Students and Activities	30
University and Community	32
<b>Annual Reports 2013 / 14</b>	
President's Overview	36
College of Arts, Science and Education	39
College of Business and Finance	41
College of Engineering	43
College of Information Technology	45
College of Medical and Health Sciences	47
College of Graduate Studies and Research	49
Deanship of Student Affairs	51
Quality & Excellence	53
Administration	55
<b>International Education . . . Locally</b>	<b>57</b>
<b>Into the Future</b>	<b>59</b>
<b>Acknowledgements</b>	<b>61</b>

# PRESIDENT'S INTRODUCTION



Welcome to Ahlia University's Annual Report for the academic year 2013/14.

As we started this year, we passed a significant milestone in our history: the completion of ten full academic years since our first intake of students. To mark this achievement, this first Annual Report includes a review of the year and an overview of our first decade.

Ahlia was the first private university to be licensed by the Bahrain Government and we enrolled our first students in February 2003. In the ten full academic years since then we have grown in all aspects: more students, more courses, more international collaborations – while at the same time maintaining our reputation for high quality higher education.

I therefore feel a great sense of pride in the achievements of Ahlia's students and staff as I write this Introduction and I look forward to giving you a brief picture of life at Ahlia: our story so far, our achievements in the past year and a glimpse of our future plans.

Academic year 2013/14 has been full of excitement and challenges. Our academic achievements and community engagement demonstrate the lasting contribution that Ahlia is making to higher education and the wider community in Bahrain.

The excellent quality of our programmes received another clear endorsement, demonstrated by the "Full Confidence" judgements awarded to all three undergraduate and postgraduate programmes in the College of Information

Technology when they were reviewed by Bahrain's National Authority for Qualifications and Quality Assurance of Education and Training (mandated by the Bahraini Government to evaluate the Kingdom's academic programmes). We are proud to note that Ahlia is the first and only private university in Bahrain to receive such recognition.

Our students have achieved academically and participated actively in community events. Our faculty have gained recognition in academic and professional fields. In addition, we have made major progress with the plans for our new campus.

Ahlia's success derives from the contribution of its staff, the involvement of its stakeholders, the support of the Government of the Kingdom of Bahrain and the guidance of our Board of Trustees and our founding body, the Arab Academy for Research & Studies. To all of these, I offer our sincere thanks.

While it is of course a snapshot, this Annual Report will provide a good overview of the progress and achievements of the past year and the past decade. It will also set out some of the milestones on our future journey as Ahlia University continues in its vision of being an outstanding regional and international university which expands the frontiers of knowledge and enriches and elevates our society.

We look forward to sharing our journey with you.

**Professor Abdulla AlHawaj**

President  
Ahlia University



**UNIVERSITY  
GOVERNANCE**





## FOUNDING BODY

Ahlia University was founded by the Arab Academy for Research & Studies (AARS). Comprising a number of high-profile educators and business people in Bahrain and across the GCC, AARS acts as the University's financial guarantor.

### Board of Directors - Arab Academy for Research & Studies

Mr Farouk Almoayyed, Chairman

- ◆ Dr Ali Jaffar AlAradi
- ◆ Prof Abdulla AlHawaj
- ◆ Mr Saud AlAshqar
- ◆ Dr Jaffar AlTarif
- ◆ Dr Zamil AlMokrin
- ◆ Mrs Layla AlAraifi
- ◆ Mr Khalid Janahi
- ◆ Mr Hameed Salman
- ◆ Mr Mohammed AlNaki
- ◆ Mrs Fawzia Zainal

## BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Ahlia University is a legally separate division of AARS and has its own Board of Trustees, clearly distinct and separate from the AARS Board, in order to ensure effective governance and management through external oversight of activities. The University Trustees ensure that Ahlia determines its own strategic direction, with an appropriate balance between financial self-reliance and academic excellence.



**Prof Marwan AlKamal**  
Acting Chairman



**Mr Saud AlAshqar**  
Member



**Prof Abdulla AlHawaj**  
Member



**Dr Zamil AlMokrin**  
Member



**Dr Anwar AlNaki**  
Member



**Prof Zahir Irani**  
Member



**Prof Ali Abdul Rahman**  
Member

## VISION, MISSION & CORE VALUES

### VISION

Ahlia University aspires to become an outstanding regional and international academic institution by promoting the highest level of integrity in the achievement of excellence in education and research and within a broad range of high quality professional services to the community.

### MISSION

As a leading institution for higher education, Ahlia University's Mission is to move forward the frontiers of human knowledge and elevate social and living standards of society. In support of this mission, the University is committed to :

- ◆ Produce graduates who are distinguished by their professional competence, humanistic outlook and uncompromising ethics
- ◆ Provide the facilities and support for its staff to pursue innovative research
- ◆ Establish AU as an acknowledged centre of excellence in different fields of knowledge

### CORE VALUES

Our vision and mission are based on our Core Values. Together these form the framework for formulating our strategic objectives and performance indicators. Our Core Values are :

- ◆ Academic Excellence
- ◆ Educational Opportunity
- ◆ Personal Growth
- ◆ Social Responsibility
- ◆ Respect
- ◆ High Ethical and Moral Standards
- ◆ Integrity
- ◆ Supporting Research and Development
- ◆ Transparency
- ◆ Providing Service of High Quality

# UNIVERSITY COUNCIL

# COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

Within the university, the senior body is the University Council which comprises the Vice Presidents, the Deans and representatives of faculty.

Reporting to the University Council are the central committees for academic and operational governance and the College Councils.



**Prof Abdulla Y. AlHawaj**  
President



**Prof Bakr A Hassan**  
Vice President  
Academic Affairs



**Prof Wajeeh Elali**  
Vice President  
Admin and Finance



**Prof Mansoor Al A'ali**  
Dean of  
Student Affairs



**Dr Husain Dhaif**  
Dean, College of  
Arts, Science & Education



**Prof Amer Al Roubaie**  
Dean, College of  
Business & Finance



**Dr Madina Hamaine**  
Dean, College of  
Engineering



**Prof Kailash C Madan**  
Acting Dean, College of  
Information Technology



**Prof Shawqi Al Dallal**  
Dean, College of  
Graduate Studies & Research



**Dr Ebrahim Malalla**  
Associate Dean, College of  
Graduate Studies & Research



**Prof Nabil Moussa**  
Adviser to the President  
for Faculty Development



**Prof Vizaya Kumar**  
Representative of  
Professors



**Dr Samia Costandi**  
Representative of  
Associate Professors



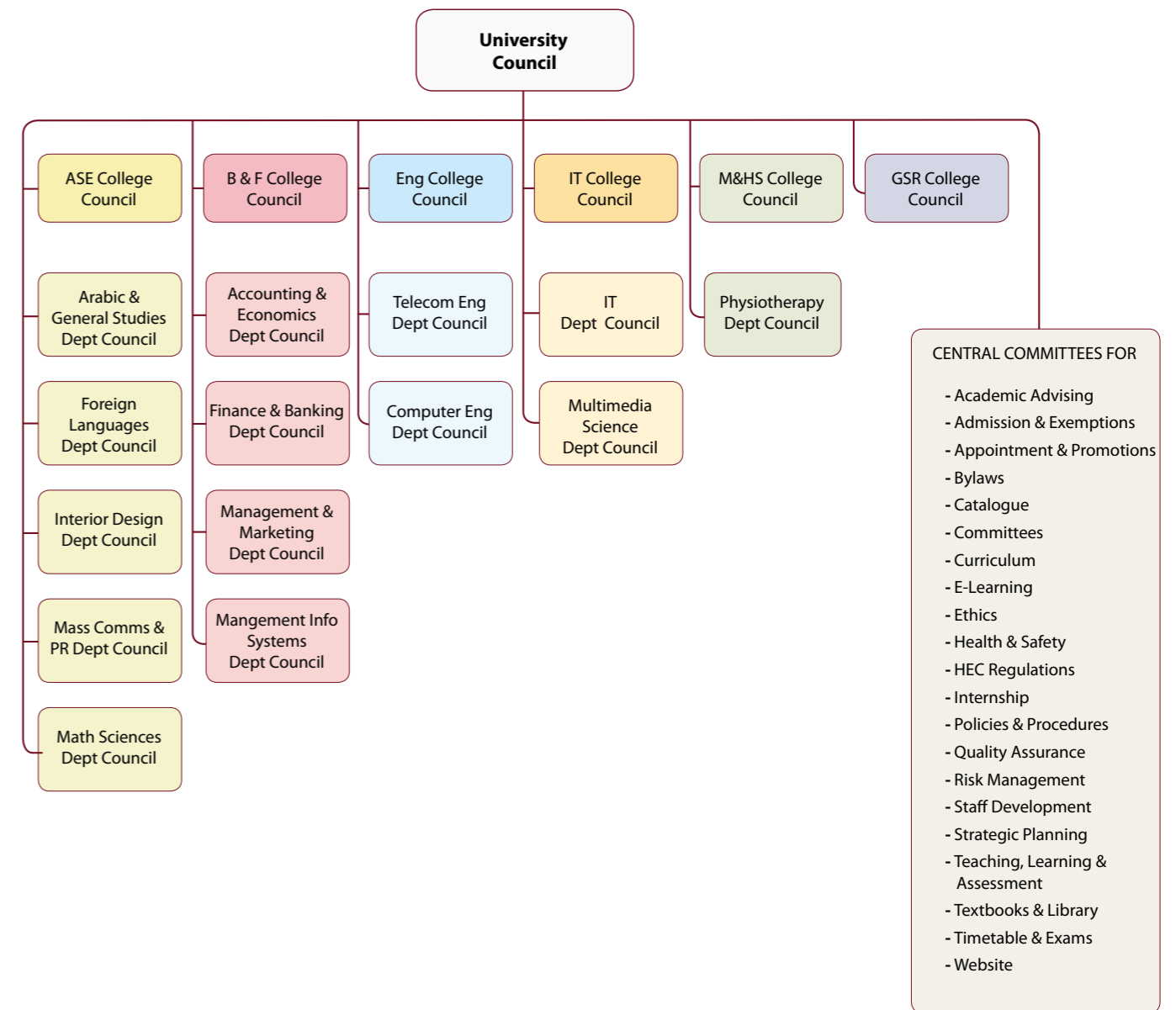
**Dr Ebrahim Rajab**  
Representative of  
Assistant Professors



**Dr A monem AlShirawi**  
Representative of  
Lecturers

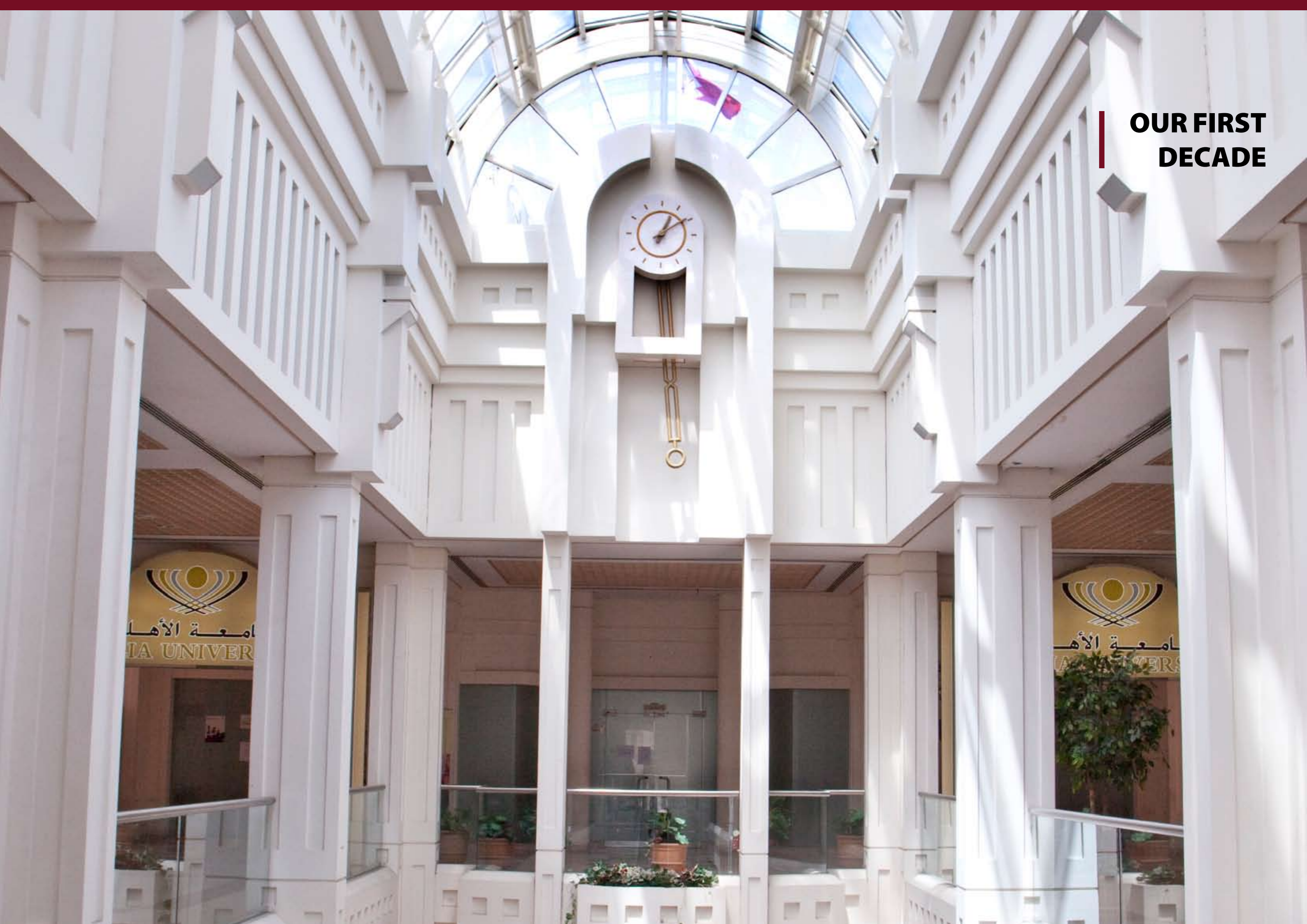


**Dr Ahlam Hassan**  
President's Assistant for  
Quality Assurance





**OUR FIRST  
DECADE**



امعة الأها  
IA UNIVER

امعة الأها  
A UNIVER



## A DECADE IN PERSPECTIVE



2003: Ahlia signage goes up



2003: The first group photo of Ahlia staff



2003: Ahlia's President with staff and students on the first day – 22 February 2003

Since our first students enrolled in February 2003, Ahlia University has developed from a small, local university into one with a global reach.

Our name 'Ahlia' means 'family' or 'community' – this spirit was key to our foundation and runs through everything we do: from our goal of providing the best quality education for our students, to our belief that university life should be well-rounded and include study, out-of-class activities and engagement with our community.

Ahlia University was the first private university to be licensed by the Bahrain Government (in 2001). The vision of our founders was of a university which would make a major contribution to higher education in Bahrain and beyond, through progressive pedagogy underpinned by careful management. Ahlia's ethos is one of life-long learning through interactive teaching and learning, critical and innovative thinking, and engaging students in academic and community activities; all of which lead to a long-term investment in the young people of the Kingdom and the region.

As a non-profit-making university which is part of the wider educational grouping of the Arab Academy for Research & Studies, Ahlia University has excelled in challenging times. Our commitment to distinguished academic achievement, cultural and intellectual diversity, social responsibility, community service, innovation and life-long learning is unwavering.

Ahlia University began to offer eight academic programmes in February 2003, with 50 students. In our first full academic year (2003/04) we had fewer than 200 students on eleven programmes and thirteen full-time teaching staff. Our first students graduated in 2006.

From our small-scale beginnings, we have developed into a major player in higher education in Bahrain and the region.

All Ahlia degree programmes which have been reviewed by the National Authority for Qualifications and Quality Assurance of Education & Training (QQA) have received the top "Confidence" judgement and we are the only private university in Bahrain to have achieved this.

In addition, we received excellent judgements in the first cycle of Institutional Reviews conducted by QQA and we were the only university (public or private) that was judged to have made "good" progress in the IR follow-up.

Today, Ahlia has around 2,500 students grouped into six academic colleges. Our eighteen programmes allow our students to choose from almost 350 core and elective courses, ranging from A (Accounting) to V (Video Production) across over thirty subject areas.

All of these aspects have combined to make Ahlia an institution of research and learning with active and effective links to the economic, cultural, scientific and industrial sectors of our society.

Our first decade has seen our transformation from a small university family to being a key part of the wider vibrant family of Bahrain. Our high standing locally, nationally and globally is the result of staff and students acting together.

Ahlia University is a joint enterprise where everyone is proud to be a part of a university family with a great reputation and proud to be an active part of building the reputation of the Ahlia University family.



2004: Signing the Memorandum of Understanding with Brunel University, UK



2006: The first Ahlia University graduates

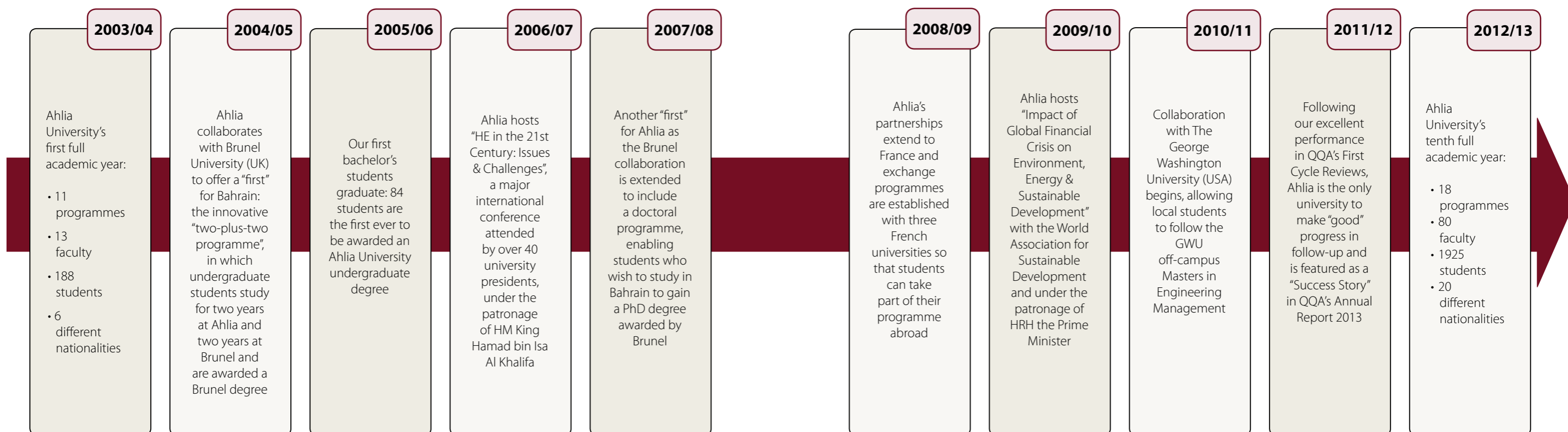


2007: Ahlia hosts "HE Education in the 21st Century"

# A DECADE OF ACHIEVEMENTS

Ahlia University's first students enrolled in February 2003. At that time, there were only 50 students following eight programmes.

In the ten full academic years since then we have grown in all aspects: more students, more programmes, more international collaborations – while at the same time maintaining our reputation for the highest quality education.

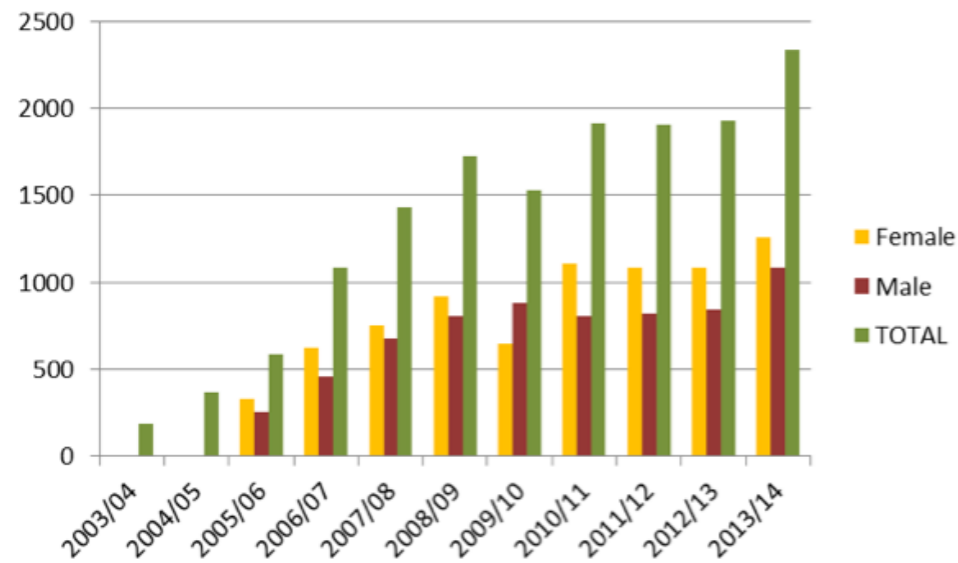




# A DECADE IN STATISTICS

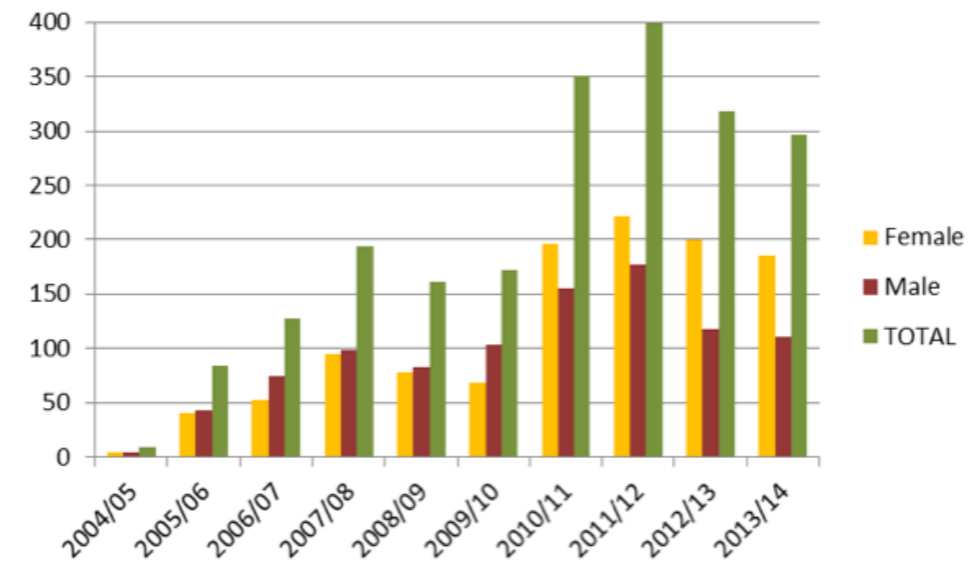
The tables and graphs below give an overview of how we have changed since we started in 2003. In recent years we have been increasing our use of data-mining to support better planning and decision-making.

## Students



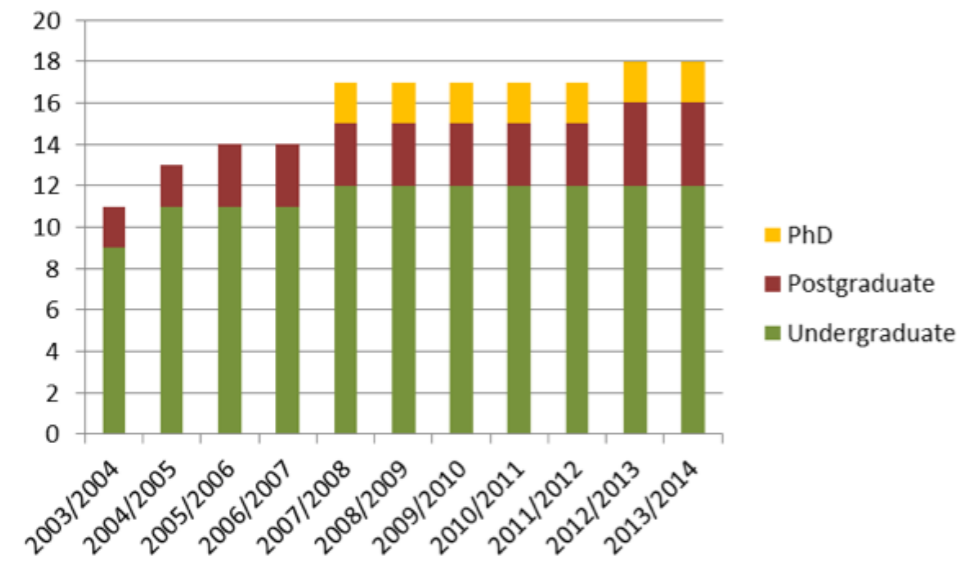
Over the years, the number of students studying on our programmes has increased steadily

## Graduates



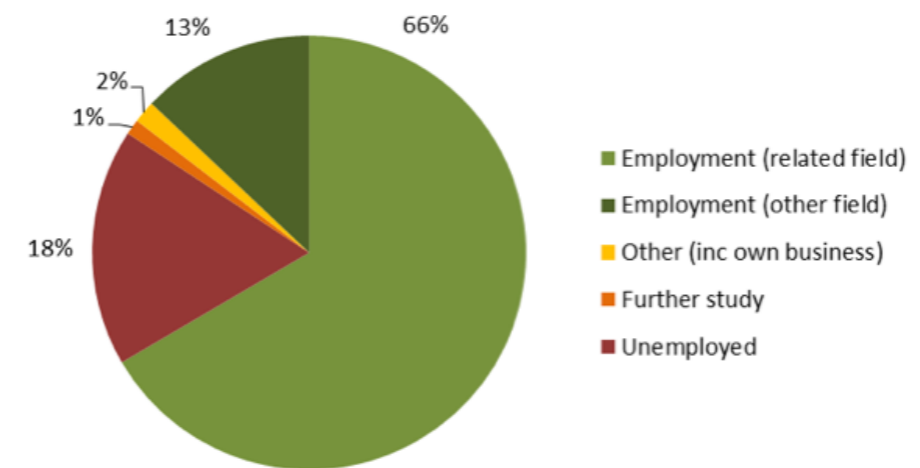
Students can choose how quickly they complete their programme (within defined rules), due to our flexible programme structures

## Programmes



To address market and stakeholder needs, we have also expanded our range of programmes

## Employment



Ahlia students acquire valuable knowledge and skills – surveys indicate that over 80% of our graduates are in employment.





**HIGHLIGHTS**  
**2013 / 14**



# PROGRAMMES, & PARTNERSHIPS

Ahlia's vision statement emphasises our aim to be an outstanding international university. In the pursuit of academic excellence, we introduce and enhance quality programmes and form partnerships with other well-reputed institutions across the world. We made significant steps in this regard in 2013/14.



French exchange students 2013/14



First cohort of graduates from the George Washington University Masters in Engineering Management



Visit of the Vice Chancellor of Brunel University UK

- ◆ The 10th anniversary of Ahlia's first intake of students was celebrated in 2013 by an event at the Gulf Hotel
- ◆ Judgements of "Full Confidence" were received when the QQA reviewed for the three programmes in the College of IT (MSc IT & Computer Science, BSc Information Technology and BSc Distributed Systems & Multimedia)
- ◆ New academic cooperation agreements were signed with Brunel University (UK), strengthening the existing relationship and extending it to cover faculty and student exchanges and academic research
- ◆ Potential academic collaborations between Ahlia and the European Centre for Nuclear Research (CERN) were discussed with CERN's senior physicist Professor Albert de Roeck when he visited Ahlia to deliver a guest lecture
- ◆ The Exchange Programme agreements with our French university partners continued to grow, bringing 18 students to study at Ahlia this year

- ◆ The first group of 28 students graduated from the Masters in Engineering Management hosted in collaboration with The George Washington University (USA)
- ◆ Ahlia continued to be an active membership of the Association of Private Universities in the GCC (APUGCC) and the Association of Arab Private Institutes of Higher Education (AAPIHE); in 2013/14 both the APUGCC Board and the AAPIHE Executive Committee were chaired by Ahlia's President, Professor Abdulla Al Hawaj
- ◆ Professional body examination exemptions for Ahlia's Bachelor's Degree in Accounting and Finance students were approved in an agreement with the UK's Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA)
- ◆ The first group of business mentors graduated from the programme jointly-run by Ahlia University and the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO), which is designed to support business entrepreneurs and help boost Bahrain's economy.



HRH Prince Andrew discusses the Ahlia-Brunel PhD with Professor Abdulla Al Hawaj and Professor Zahir Irani



Ahlia University's President chairs the 2014 meeting of the Association of Arab Private Institutions of Higher Education (AAPIHE)



At the Awards Day for the UNIDO-Ahlia training programme for business mentors

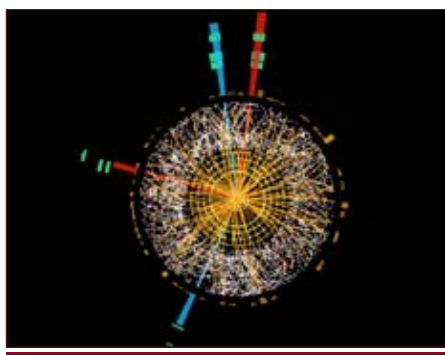


# RESEARCH & SCHOLARSHIP

As a high-quality and aspirational university, Ahlia emphasises the importance of academic enquiry, scholarly activities, collaboration on research projects and the inclusion of research elements in our programmes. There were many noteworthy events and activities this year.



Prof. Albert de Roeck, senior physicist at CERN, talks about the discovery of the Higgs Boson - work which won a Nobel Prize for Physics



A four electron event at CERN for the ATLAS Collaboration, described in Prof. de Roeck's lecture



Dr Samia Costandi gives a keynote speech at the Ahlia Research Day

- ◆ An Open Lecture by Professor Albert de Roeck, senior physicist at CERN Geneva, on 'The Discovery of the Higgs Boson' was jointly-hosted by Ahlia and the Bahrain Engineering Society. The event attracted great attention in the Kingdom, coming just six months after the theorists were awarded the Nobel Prize for Physics
- ◆ Ahlia faculty published around fifty articles and eight books, all refereed internationally, with at least one book being used as a textbook in an American university
- ◆ Ahlia's President, Dr Abdulla Al Hawaj, opened the first debate at the QS Maple Conference 2014, speaking in favour of the proposition that 'Private universities (for profit and not for profit) are just as effective as their public counterparts when it comes to offering high quality university education'
- ◆ The Ahlia Research Forum 2014, held in February and attended by members of the university and of the general public, included presentations on themes as varied as participatory budgeting; cognitive performance; osteoporosis; impact of technology; and whether science is multicultural
- ◆ The Journal of Financial Reporting and Accounting awarded 'Outstanding Paper of 2013' to Dr Adel Sarea (College of Business & Finance) for his paper "Adoption of AAOIFI Accounting Standards by Islamic Banks of Bahrain"

- ◆ First prize in the Dorrat Watan research contest held by the Emirates Centre for Strategic Studies and Research (ECSSR), which included over 80 studies from 14 Arab countries, was awarded to Dr Allam Hamdan for his paper "The Influence of Market Forces and Efficiency on the Performance of the UAE Banking Industry" in November 2013
- ◆ Ahlia faculty delivered keynote lectures and invited talks at prestigious events across the world; and served as editorial board members and reviewers for several international publications
- ◆ Ahlia launched the Academy of Supervisors, three days of workshops designed to develop faculty supervision skills
- ◆ Mohammed Tharwat (Adviser to the Speaker of the Bahraini parliament and Adviser to the American Media Development Programme) gave a workshop on 'The new approaches to news writing' hosted by the College of Arts, Science and Education
- ◆ Student research projects during the year covered a wide range of topics, including leadership styles; television advertising campaigns; oil price forecasting methods; GCC monetary union; demographics and volunteer motivation; and risk management in the banking sector
- ◆ A Lower-Limb Mobility Device invented by BSc Physiotherapy graduate Amina AlHawaj during her programme won many awards, including the Diamond Award for Best Inventor in the World in 2013



PhD Students presented their work at a poster session during the PhD Symposium



Professor Shawqi al Dallal explaining research initiatives at the Ahlia Research Day



BSc Physiotherapy graduate Amina AlHawaj with her multi-award winning Lower Limb Mobility Device

# STUDENTS & ACTIVITIES

As a university committed to developing our students, Ahlia strives to ensure students maintain a balance of curriculum-related learning and wider activities which nurture critical thinking, personal growth and good citizenship. There were many highlights this year for our students.



Annual Book Sale



Ahlia Debate Team



The Malaysia Visit

- ◆ Ahlia's Debate Team won the Universities Debate Competition organized by the General Organization for Youth and Sports, in which nine Bahraini universities participated
- ◆ Our students attended the Carnival to mark National Charter Day at the Bahrain International Circuit
- ◆ The Ahlia Walkathon was a 3km walk around Amwaj Islands to raise money for charity
- ◆ Ahlia students participated in an Indoor Football Tournament at Najma Club with fifteen other teams
- ◆ Student visits to Kuwait and Malaysia were highlights of the extra-curricular activities during the inter-semester breaks
- ◆ A full-day cultural tour of Bahrain for the French students attending Ahlia as part of their programme exchange introduced them to Bahrain's rich cultural heritage

- ◆ Participation in Tamkeen events helped to raise students' awareness of business issues
- ◆ An Ahlia Team competed in the Inter-College Speech Competition in Dubai organised by the Emirates' Environmental Group
- ◆ New student clubs included the Engineering Club (College of Engineering); the Technology and Engineering Club (Colleges of Engineering and IT) and the IT Alumni Club (College of IT)
- ◆ The extremely successful Ahlia Careers Day 2013 enabled our students to meet prestigious local and international companies and hear about career opportunities in the public and private sectors



Ahlia Charity Walkathon



Indoor Football Tournament



Ahlia Careers Day



# UNIVERSITY & COMMUNITY

At Ahlia we value all our communities: our 'internal community' of faculty and staff and our 'external community' of stakeholders in Bahrain and society in the wider world. Our Strategic Plan emphasises the importance we place on engagement with our communities and we continued to be very active in 2013/14.



The Capital's Governor opens the proceedings at Ahlia's National Day Celebrations 2013



Ahlia University presents a balance device to Bahrain's Ministry of Health



Ahlia Blood Donation Day 2014

- ◆ Our students, faculty and staff enjoyed a vibrant celebration of National Day 2013, which included a cultural exhibition and various other activities
- ◆ Professor Kailash Madan (College of IT) was given the prestigious 'Bharat Gaurav Award' (Pride of India Award) in December 2013, by the India-International Friendship Society (IIFS), for overall contribution in the field of education
- ◆ Our faculty engaged in a wide range of community events including
  - » The Capital Governorate's guidance and mentoring programmes for children
  - » the Bahrain English Language Teaching Professionals Network
  - » the Malcolm Jardine Academic Assistance Programme remedial classes (in collaboration with the British Council)
  - » breast cancer awareness talks
  - » the 'World Cup for All' initiative (with the Capital Governorate and the Ras Romman Youth Centre)

- ◆ Ahlia University presented a Balance Device as a donation to the Ministry of Health
- ◆ Bahrain's Women's Council were invited to give a presentation on their work
- ◆ Ahlia organised a Blood Donation Day
- ◆ The Student Council organised a Charity Bazaar
- ◆ The College of Medical and Health Sciences organised a Physiotherapy Week, in collaboration with the Bahrain Physical Therapy Association
- ◆ Ahlia participated in the Oral Health Day organised by the Dental Association of Bahrain
- ◆ The University was a major exhibitor at the Bahrain Exhibition for Training and Education pre-Employment 2014, a national initiative held at the International Exhibition and Convention Centre



Ahlia students' Charity Bazaar March 2014



Visit by representatives of the Bahrain Women's Council



A Bahraini school student group visits Ahlia



**ANNUAL REPORTS**  
**2013 / 14**





# PRESIDENT'S OVERVIEW

Looking back over the past academic year, I want to recognise the much-valued contributions of Ahlia's staff, students and stakeholders – including our Board of Trustees and Board of Directors. Their energies and commitment have been essential to our achievements and I record my sincere thanks to them all. As mentioned in the Introduction, the past academic year was full of excitement and challenges. Our academic achievements and active community engagement demonstrate the lasting contribution that Ahlia is making to higher education and the wider community in Bahrain.

## Programmes and Quality

Our commitment to academic quality was demonstrated once again when "Full Confidence" judgements were awarded to the undergraduate and postgraduate programmes in the College of Information Technology in their review by Bahrain's National Authority for Qualifications and Quality Assurance of Education and Training (QQA).

## Students

This year's enrolment of 2,337 students was our highest number to date and comprised 25 different nationalities. 278 students graduated, student activities were as varied as usual and our new Alumni Office was established to offer continuing support to our graduates as they move into their future lives.

## International Exchanges

Our international exchange programme continued to grow in 2013/14. The highest number of students so far came to Ahlia from French universities; and for the first time Ahlia students went to Brunel University to take part of their programme in the UK. Exchange programmes are a valuable part of the way Ahlia provides a broad education programme and develops graduates who are able to play a full part in society, locally and in the wider world.

## Continuing Professional Development

Ahlia University values the contribution of its faculty and staff and places great importance on providing professional development opportunities, which benefit our staff and the university itself. In 2013/14, our development programme provided over thirty courses for faculty and administrative staff; and supported attendance at several external conferences and workshops.

## Community Engagement

As in previous years, Ahlia University continued to be active in our local communities, with students and staff organising and contributing to events as varied as blood donation, breast cancer awareness, World Cup football and literacy programmes.

## Strategic Planning

Our current Strategic Plan covers the period 2010/11 to 2014/15. This year, as usual, each department and directorate devised an Annual Operational Plan for activities towards our strategic objectives. Our Strategy Committee has been working on the next Strategic Plan. A major step towards one of our key strategic goals was achieved this year as we received ministerial approval for the foundation-laying for our new campus.

## Research

Ahlia faculty produced a significant number of refereed articles and books this year and we continued our tradition of awarding certificates and trophies to recognise their scholarly achievements. The university's research management plan was reviewed and it will inform our future strategy as we develop our research capacity to support the Kingdom.

## Graduation

Our ninth Graduation Ceremony was held on 22 June 2014, in the Gulf Convention Centre. The Ceremony was attended by senior ministers, diplomats, dignitaries from the business sector, and the students' families and friends, all gathered together to celebrate the success of our graduates.

The Annual Reports from different parts of the university in the following pages present a closer look at our achievements in 2013/14. I hope you will enjoy reading about a year in the life of our university family.

**Professor Abdulla Al-Hawaj**

President, Ahlia University



## COLLEGE OF ARTS, SCIENCE & EDUCATION

During 2013/2014 the College made further progress on its mission to provide excellent teaching and research in a stimulating learning environment. Several course reviews were conducted and outcomes included successfully implementing changes to two of the six service courses offered by the Foreign Languages Department and initiation of course benchmarking in the Interior Design Department.

The College organised fortnightly seminars for faculty to present their current research; and a series of workshops to share best practice in teaching. Prestigious external speakers at College seminars included Mr Mohammed Tharwat (Adviser to the Speaker of the Bahraini Parliament and to the American Media Development Programme) who gave a workshop on "The new approaches to news writing" and Professor Albert de Roeck (Senior Physicist at CERN) whose lecture was jointly organised by the College of Research and Graduate Studies and the Bahrain Engineering Society and is featured in Research & Scholarships Highlights.

Our faculty and students participated in several conferences in Bahrain, including the Conference on Freedom and Social Responsibility in Social Media; the Dialogue of Civilizations Conference; the Gulf Media Conference on Social Media and National Security; and the Youth Conference on Women and Social Media. Outside Bahrain, our faculty represented Ahlia at international conferences, presenting papers in Austria, Canada, Egypt, Malaysia and Qatar.

College students represented Ahlia in Dubai at the Inter-College Speech Competition organised by the Emirates' Environmental Group; and made a number of course field trips to public and private sector organisations to enhance their learning experiences.

**Dr Hussain Dhaif**  
College Dean



BSc Interior Design students at work



Dr Mar de Fez Laso talks a student through an experiment in her physics class



In the Design Studio



# COLLEGE OF BUSINESS AND FINANCE



In 2013/14, the College accounted for about 60% of Ahlia's students, making us the largest college in the university with a mission to develop students' business and managerial skills and enable them to compete in local and global labour markets.

This year we hosted over 20 extra-curricular events, many involving external speakers. The events are opportunities for our students to discuss a range of social, cultural, economic, political and international events, emerging trends and issues; they also provide a platform for engagement with the wider community. This year more of our students opted to take up internships – these help them gain work experience; practise the knowledge and skills acquired during their studies; and enhance employability.

Our faculty were also active in research and scholarship. Textbooks published by faculty included a four volume series on Islamic Economics joint-edited by Professor Al Roubaie (College Dean); and the Arab World adaptation of Principles of Managerial Finance, joint-authored by Professor Al Roubaie, Professor Elali (Vice President for Administration and Finance) and others.

During 2013/14 we initiated the process for our MBA programme to receive accreditation from the Association of MBAs, the international authority on postgraduate business education. Also this year, our Bachelor's Degree in Accounting and Finance (BSAF) was recognized for exemptions from certain professional examinations of the UK's Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA).

**Professor Amer Al-Roubaie**  
College Dean



Professor Amer AlRoubaie delivers a business lecture



MBA students discussing a group project



Business & Finance Students visit the Bahrain Stock Exchange



# COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING

In 2013/14 we focused on developing our teaching, as we pursued our mission to provide high quality programmes through innovative and dynamic curricula designed to equip students with skills and knowledge they need to become globally competitive engineering professionals. We reviewed long-running engineering courses, seeking feedback from stakeholders and conducted benchmarking against a number of accredited international universities. As a result, we made course curriculum modifications; strengthened practical activities by adding hardware components and experiments; and introduced various new courses. The programme revisions led to a substantial increase in student enrolment.

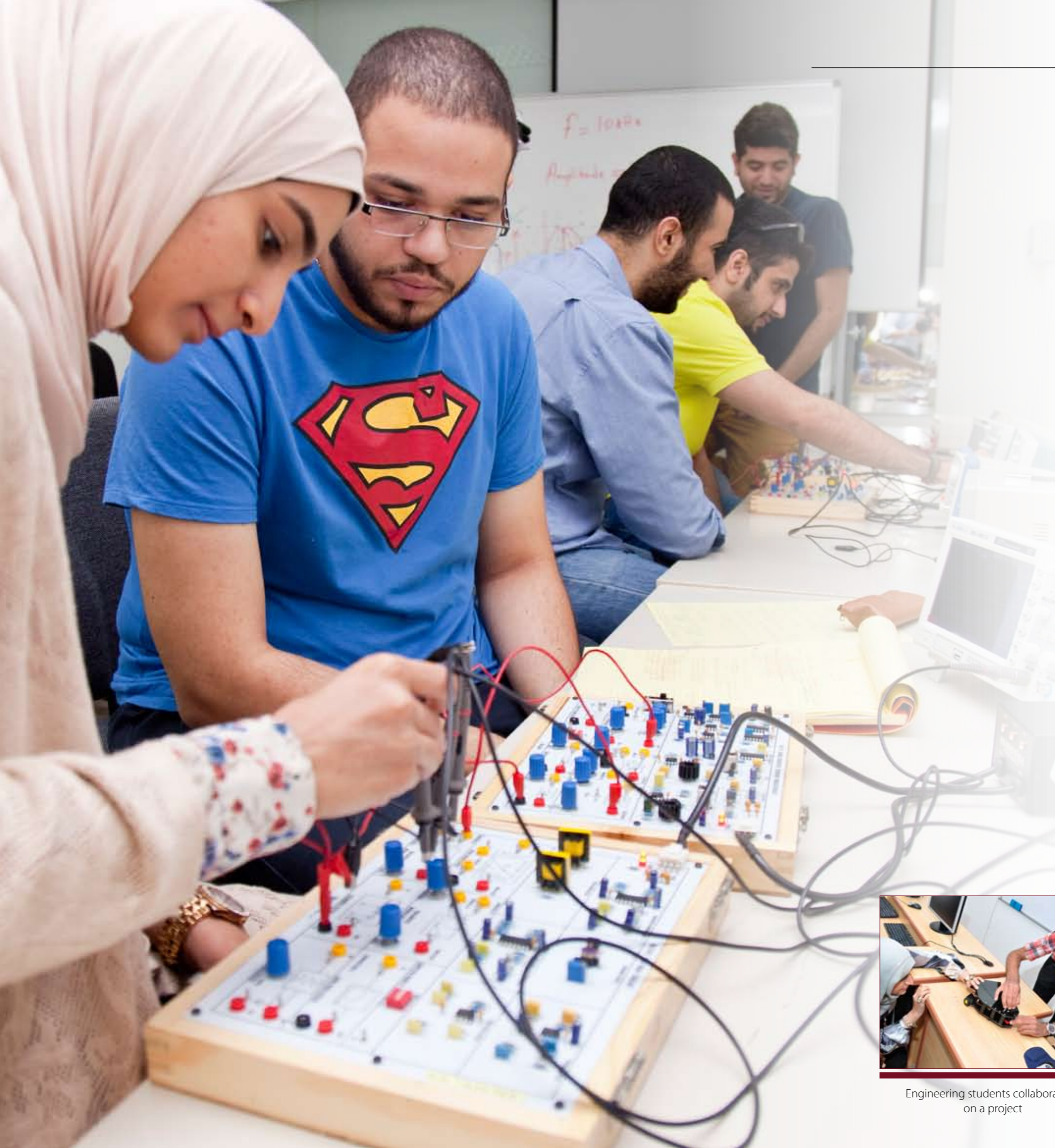
During the year, designation of additional funding led to the allocation of the first Engineering Laboratory and the associated equipment.

Five of the college's courses are part of Ahlia's MSc in IT & Computer Science programme (three of the six core courses and two of the four electives). The college was therefore a key contributor to the successful review by the QQA in October 2013.

2013/14 saw the launch of the student-led Engineering Club, which (with faculty mentoring) organised several activities to broaden student learning experiences. Events organised included the presentation of major projects in the National Day Celebration Exhibition, many of which gained highly-positive feedback from industry visitors; a Telecommunication Workshop on fixed line and mobile technologies in collaboration with Batelco; and a visit to Zain Telecommunications for a tour and a presentation on 4G technology. Students also participated in the Batelco TechShow, where they presented output from their major projects.

Our faculty attended various regional and international conferences during the year and the College itself organised five seminars on topics ranging from Online Multimedia Networks to Teaching Mathematics to Engineering Students in Developing Countries.

**Dr Madina Hamiane**  
College Dean



Engineering students collaborating on a project



Undergraduate degrees conclude with a design-and-build project and a report



Explaining design concepts at the Engineering Exhibition on National Day



## COLLEGE OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

During 2013/14 we were pleased to receive Programme Review Reports from Bahrain's quality authority (QQA) awarding judgements of Confidence in all three of our programmes: BSc Information Technology, BSc Distributed Systems & Multimedia and MSc Information Technology & Computer Science.

In addition to teaching and supervision of student projects, our faculty members were also involved in their own research activities, including participation in international conferences in Europe and in the USA; publication of articles, book chapters and books; and acting as reviewer in international journals.

The Information Technology and Engineering Colloquium (ITEC), formed two years ago to enhance faculty and student involvement in research activities, held several seminars delivered by internal and external presenters during 2013/14.

The Technology and Engineering Club (TEC), set up by students from IT and Engineering to stimulate student learning through activities and talks by invited experts, was also active during 2013/14. In September 2013, TEC presented an Exhibition of student projects from the TEC-organised summer course on Linux and they received participation awards from the University President. In October 2013, TEC organised a public lecture presented by Dr Shaker Al Aradi to encourage student participation in *Global Cyberlympics* which is an online ethical computer network hacking defence game in which teams of 4 to 6 players compete in elimination rounds with the top teams from each continent playing live at the World Finals in September 2014. The aim of *Global Cyberlympics* is to raise awareness about ethics in information security through a series of cyber competitions which cover forensics, ethical hacking and network defence.

In 2013/14 the College also founded the IT Alumni Club, whose regular meetings help maintain contact with our former students.

**Professor Kailash Madan**

College Dean



In the Computing laboratory



TEC's open lecture on Ethical Hacking



Launch of the College of Information Technology Alumni Association



## COLLEGE OF MEDICAL AND HEALTH SCIENCES

In 2013/2014, we enrolled our highest ever number of Physiotherapy students. We also reviewed the programme and implemented a new curriculum with standardised assessment criteria for clinical practice. We introduced a new Clinical Induction Session for our students and the instructors at external facilities, outlining the framework of the clinical training element. We recruited four laboratory demonstrators to improve the quality of students' practice at Ahlia prior to clinical training; we also increased to nine the number of external facilities we use for clinical training (two government and seven private hospitals).

The College organised three seminars by external speakers: Introduction to Osteopathy by Dr Hisham Khalil from the USA (jointly with Bahrain Physical Therapy Association), Pain Management Program by Dr Duncan Critchly of Kings College London (UK) and Facilitation Technique conducted by the inventor of the technique, Dr Hussain Nasser. We also organised an in-house Seminar Programme conducted by college faculty. Our faculty presented at conferences in Canada, China, and Oman and at international workshops and had five scientific papers published in regional and international journals.

The College's contribution to the community was recognised in September 2013 when our faculty and administrative staff received a Plaque of Appreciation from the Bahrain Physical Therapy Association (BPTA). During the year the College donated a Balance Device to the Ministry of Health for use by Salmaniya Medical Centre's physiotherapy department; the device will enhance diagnostic and therapeutic approaches for patients with balance problems of neurological origin. The donation also enhances joint research by Ahlia PT department and the SMC PT department on diagnosis and therapy for patients with balance problems caused by neurological problems. In collaboration with BPTA, we organized a Physiotherapy Week with twenty workshops by Ahlia faculty and external speakers to support development of the physiotherapy profession across Bahrain and the GCC.

Our students established a Physiotherapy Club and most second year students were awarded a UK certification for Emergency First Aid At Work with Automated External Defibrillator (AED) Training. Students participated in the Annual GCC-Wide Oral Promotion Week organized by the Ministry of Health. One of our former students, Ms Amina AlHawaj, won several awards in 2013/14, including the British Invention Show's Gold Medal and the Diamond Award for Best international invention, for lower limb physiotherapy devices that she developed while following her degree programme at Ahlia.

**Professor Shawqi AlDallal**

Acting College Dean



Dr Ebrahim Rajab accepts the Bahrain Physiotherapy Association's award on behalf of Ahlia's Department of Physiotherapy



BSc Physiotherapy graduate Amina AlHawaj receiving the British Invention & Innovation Show's Gold Award in 2013



Opening Ceremony of Physiotherapy Week



# COLLEGE OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

2013/14 was the fifth year since the College was established, during which time major steps have been taken to enhance research activity and the quality of faculty publications. With College support, faculty have presented papers at academic conferences locally, regionally and internationally; several have delivered keynote speeches at respected international forums. In 2013/14, faculty produced eight books and fifty articles in refereed journals.

The College held the annual Ahlia Research Forum in February, featuring four keynote speeches (in economics, engineering and two in philosophy of science) and seven other presentations on research in business management, IT and medical and physical sciences.

A major highlight of the year was the visit in March by Professor Albert de Roeck of CERN (the European Centre for Nuclear Research), who delivered a fascinating lecture on the discovery of the Higgs Boson. This event created excitement across the Kingdom as it was just six months after the award of the Nobel Prize in Physics to the two scientists who developed the theory. During his visit, potential collaborations between CERN and Ahlia were discussed.

The College has a highly successful collaboration with Brunel University (London) for a PhD programme that is one of its kind in the Gulf as it allows students to study in Bahrain for three years, take their viva voce exam in London and gain a Brunel doctorate. This year's PhD cohort of 20 students is the largest to date. The annual Ahlia-Brunel PhD Student Symposium was held in April for current doctoral students to present their work and prizes were awarded for Best Presentation and Best Article.

The College also collaborates with The George Washington University (USA) to offer a Master's programme in Engineering Management, in which students study at Ahlia to earn a GWU degree. Demand has been steadily increasing and this year's cohort of 55 students is the highest to date.

As part of the College's developmental work, we launched the Academy of Supervisors to enhance research supervision skills of early-career faculty. We also initiated discussions on establishing various research centres, some in collaboration with other universities, and (when we move to our new campus) a science park.

The College also led the review of the university's research management plan, which will inform future strategy for our postgraduate and research profile as we further develop research capacity to support the Kingdom.

**Professor Shawqi AIDallal**  
College Dean

**Contextual Background**

- Evidence identifies the existence of barriers to female equality at senior leadership positions.
- Empirical evidence demonstrate the consistent failure of women to achieve success in senior leadership positions.
- What remains unclear is why women consistently fail to achieve success senior leadership.
- this study seeks to investigate the nature and impact of gender diversity in board composition of corporate houses as an important facet of corporate governance. And the barriers women face to attain corporate boardroom.

**Problem statement**

- Quota (as a form of positive discrimination) is one of the most obvious attempts to address the problem of gender imbalance in the boardroom.
- They have been mandatory in some countries for several years with mixed levels of success. They are recommended in some with apparently limited impact. They are non-existent in others.
- Are they possibly the best way of eradicating barriers women face in the corporate boardroom—such as discrimination to female success by foreign organisations to address the issue.
- Are there other phenomena like ... could be used to support quotas as ... barriers.

**Research Questions**

- What are the barriers faced by women to scale the corporate ladder, and are they organisational and individual measures overcome them?
- What are the reasons behind the substantive quotas to resolve the corporate gender imbalance?
- What are the implications of the competency discourse for the efficacy of quotas?

**Aim**

The over-arching aim of this research is to critically examine the potential barriers that prevent women from achieving boardroom positions, and probable solutions in the form of quotas for women membership and empowerment to overcome the barriers faced.

**Why this Research**

- There is a gap in the literature related to resolutions of barriers faced by women in accessing boardroom positions. It shows that hardly any conclusive are generalizable models or resolutions have been developed by researchers that could enable women to overcome the barrier in the context of boardroom positions.
- A promising resolutions in the form of quotas for women in the boardroom positions although found to be promising by researchers, has not been well investigated.

**Overview of the Research**

Barriers to lack of women representation in the corporate boardroom → Resolutions to empower women reach corporate board positions and overcome the issue of gender discrimination → Gender → Other successful factors → Empowerment

**Key Areas of Investigation**

- A review of the secondary literature and overview of the evidence of the barriers faced by women in senior executive positions.
- A triangulation of the societal, organisational and individual barriers faced by women as they attempt to ascend the corporate ladder.
- A consideration of the societal and practical resolutions in the under-representation of females in senior corporate positions.
- A granular examination of the attitudes and approaches of senior female managers towards the use of quotas, in order to determine whether or not they are viable.
- Recommendations aimed at helping females overcome internal and individual barriers in order to achieve career advancement.



PhD students present their work in poster sessions



Prof Albert de Roeck (centre) with Prof Mansoor Al A'ali, Prof Abdulla AlHawaj, Prof Shawqi AIDallal and Dr Mar de Fez Laso



Prof Shawqi AIDallal with visitors to the Ahlia Research Day



# DEANSHIP OF STUDENT AFFAIRS

During 2013/14 the Deanship's six units continued to perform key functions supporting Ahlia's academic programmes: admission, enrolment/registration, student induction, alumni, employer liaison, internships, student activities, student counselling and student information system support. In response to feedback we made various enhancements to systems, processes, policies and procedures in order to improve our services. System developments included launching an Online Application Form; developing a student complaints module (to facilitate reporting and resolution of issues); developing the student ID card module; developing the advising module (to facilitate and record the student advising process); developing the counselling module (to support students at risk); and introducing user-specific menus to make it easier to use.

Continuing our efforts to provide practical support to Ahlia students and alumni, we established the Professional Relations Unit to develop relationships with public and private organisations; provide opportunities for internship, employment, and scientific research; and generally engage students in the labour market and prepare them for employment. The deanship also participated in Tamkeen events to raise students' awareness of business issues and successfully organised the Ahlia Careers Day 2013, which enabled our students to meet prestigious local and international companies and learn about career opportunities in the public and private sectors.

Our Student Activities Unit assisted college-based student clubs and organised extra-curricular activities including a 3km Walkathon around Amwaj Islands and an Indoor Football Tournament. Many of our activities were aimed at promoting the university's relationship with the local community such as organising a Blood Donation Drive and participating in National Day celebrations. Students also participated in external events such as the Universities Debate Competition organised by the General Organization for Youth and Sports (where our students achieved first place) and competing in the Intercollege Speech Competition in Dubai organised by the Emirates Environmental Group.

In recent years the deanship has been increasing the use of data-mining to support better planning and decision-making and to promote the quality of university services; this year the Dean presented Ahlia's innovative techniques at international higher education conferences including QS Apple in South Korea and QS Maple in Abu Dhabi.

**Dr Mansoor Al-A'ali**  
Dean



New students at registration time



Prize-winners at the 2013 Poetry Event



The Annual Student Charity Bazaar



## QUALITY ASSURANCE

Ahlia places a great emphasis on educational quality management and we have therefore established a robust internal quality system (AUQMS) covering every operational area of the university (teaching, administrative and management). The AUQMS is designed to further the university's vision and mission by ensuring that our academic programmes maintain excellent quality standards, in line with appropriate international norms and to address the needs of our stakeholders.

2013/14 was the fifth year of operation of the Centre for Accreditation and Quality Assurance (CAQA), which ensures effective implementation of the AUQMS and provides support to departments with programme and quality matters. CAQA also acts as the link with Bahrain's National Authority for Qualifications and Quality Assurance of Education and Training (QQA), the independent agency mandated by the Government to evaluate academic programmes in the Kingdom's public and private educational institutions.

The University's rigorous internal processes for academic activity ensure we achieve the highest educational standards and as a result Ahlia has met all external quality requirements. In 2013/14, the QQA awarded Ahlia three more "Full Confidence" programme review judgements bringing our total to seven, which was at the time the highest number in the Kingdom :

- BSc Marketing and Management (2009)
- MBA Business Administration (2011)
- BSc Physiotherapy (2012)
- BSc Distributed Systems and Multimedia (2013)
- BSc Information Technology (2013)
- MSc Information Technology and Computer Science (2010 and 2013)

Our established high reputation for educational quality was further confirmed in 2013 by our invitation to participate in the National Qualification Framework Pilot and the professional exemptions agreement for our Bachelor's Degree in Accounting and Finance (BSAF) granted by the UK's Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA).

Additionally, in QQA Institutional Reviews (First Cycle: 2009 to 2013), Ahlia received an excellent report and was the only university only university (public or private) that was judged to have made "good" progress in IR follow-up. These achievements were singled out by QQA for recognition in their Annual Report 2010 and in a featured Success Story in their Annual Report 2013.



Workshop on Intended Learning Outcomes



QQA Review for Programmes -within- College (PwC) review



CAQA-IT meeting to prepare for the QQA review visit



## ADMINISTRATION

Ahlia has an effective administration of six directorates and five centres to support its academic activities and promote high quality learning for our students.

Among the contributions of the administration across Ahlia's activities, highlights of 2013/14 included:

- ◆ A comprehensive programme of staff development activity including
  - Twelve workshops on topics related to teaching and learning methodologies for academic staff
  - Ten workshops on technology which supports learning also for academic staff
  - Ten workshops on various topics for administrative staff
- ◆ Establishing a Strategic Planning Directorate to support the work of the Strategic Planning Committee (SPC), assist with implementation of annual objectives and measure performance against KPIs
- ◆ The start of a major marketing and branding review, to improve communications with our stakeholders and enhance our international strategy and enhance our strategy for internationalisation of the university's activities

High levels of satisfaction with administration services are indicated in internal surveys of students, faculty, alumni and employers. Survey data and the review recommendations are being used to identify potential improvement areas and incorporate these into individual operational plans.

Additionally In 2013/14 we commissioned an external review of our administrative activities and the review report recognised the significant contribution made by the administration to Ahlia's progress.



Professional development certificates presented after the administrative staff training day



University decision-making in action



First aid workshop for staff



STUDENTS  
FACULTY

**THE AMERICAS**

Canada	◆	◆
USA	◆	◆

**EUROPE**

France	◆	
Germany		◆
Lithuania	◆	
Poland		◆
Spain		◆
UK	◆	◆

**AFRICA**

Algeria		◆
Morocco	◆	
Somalia	◆	
Sudan	◆	
Tunisia		◆

**MENA REGION**

Bahrain	◆	◆
Egypt	◆	◆
Iran	◆	
Iraq	◆	◆
Jordan	◆	◆
Kuwait	◆	
Lebanon	◆	◆
Libya	◆	
Palestine	◆	◆
Qatar	◆	
Saudi Arabia	◆	◆
Syria	◆	◆
UAE	◆	
Yemen	◆	◆

**ASIA**

Bangladesh	◆	
India	◆	◆
Indonesia		◆
Pakistan	◆	
Philippines	◆	◆
Sri Lanka	◆	
Thailand	◆	◆

## INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION ... LOCALLY

Our vision and aspiration is to be an outstanding regional and international academic institution. From our small beginnings in 2003, by the end of 2013/14 we had achieved a significant international footprint.



### COLLABORATION PARTNERS

**THE AMERICAS**

**USA**  
George Washington University  
University of Wisconsin-River Falls  
**Mexico**  
Tecnologica de Monterrey

**EUROPE**

**UK**  
Brunel University  
**Switzerland**  
CERN  
**France**  
EPITA (Graduate School of Computer Science)  
EPITECH (European Institute of Technology)  
ISG (High Institute of Management)  
Supbiotech (School of Biotechnology)

**MENA REGION**

**Bahrain**  
Bahrain Institute of Banking and Finance  
Bahrain Institute of Technology  
**Jordan**  
Philadelphia University

**ASIA**

**South Korea**  
Keimyung University  
**Japan**  
Waseda University



## INTO THE FUTURE

Since 2003, Ahlia University has occupied its current location in central Manama, in the heart of the Kingdom of Bahrain – an island which is at the crossroads of the Arabian Gulf. Our current premises are located in the GOSI Complex in Exhibition Avenue, beside the Diplomatic Area. The space occupied has increased as our student numbers have grown and the University currently occupies the first, second and third floors of the Complex.

In line with our Vision, Mission and Strategic Plan, Ahlia University aspires to become a major regional and international university. Part of this strategy involves increasing the size of our student population and we have therefore been planning for appropriate new premises.

In 2011, we signed an agreement with the Ministry of Finance for land for a permanent new campus in Al Madina Al Shamaliya, a strategic building project of the Kingdom of Bahrain. The Conceptual Masterplan by Mohammed Salahuddin Consulting Engineering Bureau (MSCEB) and a Financial Feasibility Study by Ernst & Young have been approved and the phased project is planned to start at the beginning of 2015. The campus project reached another major milestone in 2013/14 when the Ministry of Housing gave approval for the Ground-breaking Ceremony. This is planned to take place in 2015 and will include laying the campus foundation stone.

The new purpose-built campus will support Ahlia's further expansion, with state-of-the-art facilities for a student population of 7,500 and all appropriate amenities, including a conference centre and a science park, to serve the full breadth of our dynamic and developing academic community.

Summing up, I will end this Annual Report the way I began by expressing how proud I am of everything that has been achieved by Ahlia University in 2013/14 and in our first decade. As this Annual Report shows, our successes are evidence of our commitment to quality in all areas and a demonstration of our ability to achieve it.

Knowing that our faculty, staff and students share a spirit of community and a desire for excellence, I look forward to the future with optimism and confidence.

**Professor Abdulla AlHawaj**

President  
Ahlia University



## Acknowledgements

Photo	Source
Professor Zahir Irani	Brunel University, UK <a href="http://www.brunel.ac.uk/bbs/research/academic-and-research-staff/full-time-faculty/zahir-irani">http://www.brunel.ac.uk/bbs/research/academic-and-research-staff/full-time-faculty/zahir-irani</a>
HRH Prince Andrew, Prof Abdulla Al Hawaj and Prof Zahir Irani	Brunel University, UK <a href="https://brunelbusinessschool.wordpress.com/tag/zahir-irani/">https://brunelbusinessschool.wordpress.com/tag/zahir-irani/</a>
2014 meeting of the Association of Arab Private Institutions of Higher Education (AAPIHE)	Ministry of Higher Education & Scientific Research, UAE <a href="http://www.mohe.gov.ae/En/MediaCenter/News/Pages/The-Association-of-Arab-Private-Institutions-for-Higher-Education-calls-for-localization-and-keeping-up-with-technology.aspx">http://www.mohe.gov.ae/En/MediaCenter/News/Pages/The-Association-of-Arab-Private-Institutions-for-Higher-Education-calls-for-localization-and-keeping-up-with-technology.aspx</a>
4-electron event at CERN for the ATLAS Collaboration	CERN © 2012, for the benefit of the ATLAS Collaboration <a href="http://www.atlas.ch/news/2012/latest-results-from-higgs-search.html">http://www.atlas.ch/news/2012/latest-results-from-higgs-search.html</a>
Ms Amina Al Hawaj	Amina Al Hawaj <a href="http://www.aminaalhawaj.com/">http://www.aminaalhawaj.com/</a>
World map	<a href="http://qvectors.net/halftone-world-map/">http://qvectors.net/halftone-world-map/</a>







## **Ahlia University**

---

P.O. Box 10878

Manama - Kingdom Of Bahrain

Tel: +973 17298999

Fax: +973 17290083

Email: [admissions@ahlia.edu.bh](mailto:admissions@ahlia.edu.bh)

[www.ahlia.edu.bh](http://www.ahlia.edu.bh)