



# Decision of the FIBAA Accreditation Committee for Programmes

**115<sup>th</sup> Meeting on June 5<sup>th</sup>, 2020**

|                                      |   |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| <b>Project Number:</b>               | 18/051  |
| <b>Higher Education Institution:</b> | Doha Institute for Graduate Studies                               |
| <b>Location</b>                      | Doha, Qatar   |
| <b>Study Programme:</b>              | Media and Cultural Studies (Master of Media and Cultural Studies) |
| <b>Type of Accreditation</b>         | Initial accreditation   |

The FIBAA Accreditation Committee for Programmes has taken the following decision:

According to § 12 (2) in conjunction with § 16 (1) of the “Special Conditions for awarding the FIBAA Quality Seal for Programme Accreditation “FIBAA Programme Accreditation””, the study programme is accredited.

Period of Accreditation: June 5<sup>th</sup>, 2020 until the end of spring semester 2025

The FIBAA Quality Seal is awarded.

**FOUNDATION FOR INTERNATIONAL  
BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION ACCREDITATION**

FIBAA – BERLINER FREIHEIT 20-24 – D-53111 BONN

---

## Assessment Report

---

---

**Higher Education Institution (HEI):**

Doha Institute for Graduate Studies  
Doha, Qatar

---

**Master study programme:**

Media and Cultural Studies

---

**Qualification awarded on completion:**

Master of Media and Cultural Studies

# General Information on the study programme

---

**Brief description of the study programme:**

The Media and Cultural Studies (MACS) programme examines the role of media in a globalised world by studying rapidly evolving communication venues, including traditional, new and social media. The students will acquire expertise in both cultural studies and social science approaches to the study of the ever-changing global media environment and be prepared to carry out both qualitative and quantitative research underpinned by diverse theoretical perspectives. The MACS programme seeks to help students acquire the skills necessary for pursuing media and cultural studies research in the Arab world and beyond.

---

**Type of study programme:**

Master programme

---

**Projected study time and number of American Credit points assigned to the study programme:**

Full-time: 2 years

Part-time: up to 4 years

42 Credit points

---

**Mode of study:**

full-time and part-time

---

**Didactic approach:**

Study programme with obligatory class attendance

---

**Double/Joint Degree programme:**

no

---

**Scope (planned number of parallel classes) and enrolment capacity:**

1 class; capacity 25

---

**Programme cycle starts in:**

Fall semester

---

**Initial start of the programme:**

September 2015

---

**Type of accreditation:**

Initial accreditation

---

# **Procedure**

A contract for accreditation of the Media and Cultural Studies programme, Master of Media and Cultural Studies, was made between FIBAA and the Doha Institute for Graduate Studies on 20 October 2018. On 5 December 2019, the HEI submitted a self-evaluation report, which included a detailed description of the programme and further documents in order to prove that the criteria for programme accreditation were met.

At the same time, FIBAA appointed a review panel. The HEI agreed with the chosen experts. The panel consisted of:

**Prof. Dr. György Széll**

Osnabrück University, Germany

Professor Emeritus for Sociology/Professional and Practical Field Research

(International Comparative Social Sciences, Political Economics, Labour, Social and Public Law, Business Administration, Economics, Economic and Social History, Social Policy, Anthropology)

**Prof. Dr. Britta Bergemann**

Heilbronn University of Applied Sciences, Germany

Professor for International Marketing and Sales

Managing Director of the "Steinbeis Graduate Institute of Management - Middle East". (Communication, Public Relations, Digital/Social Media Management, Intercultural Management, Project Management, Strategic Management, Business Planning, Online Communication knowledge of the Iraqi and Saudi Arabic Higher Education System)

**Martin Luckmann**

Martin Luckmann - Managing Business Consultancy, Vienna, Austria

Management and Organisational Consultant

(Adult Education, Sociology, Social Media, Entrepreneurship, Business Development, Change Management)

**Laura Ritter**

University of Cologne & Osnabrück University, Germany

Student of Psychology (M.Sc.) (Specialization in Media & Economy Psychology)

Student of Cognitive Science (M.Sc.) (Neuroscience, Linguistics, Philosophy)

Completed: Cognitive Science (B.Sc.), Osnabrück University, Germany

**Dr. Khalid M. El-Hassan, Country Expert**

Higher Education Consultant

Higher Education Institutions' Affairs Directorate

Ministry of Education and Higher Education, Doha, Qatar

Expertise in quality assurance, governance in higher education, qualifications frameworks, programme design and planning, internationalization of curriculum, capacity building, diversity in education, study abroad and cross-cultural education

FIBAA project manager:

Dr. Heinz-Ulrich Schmidt

The assessment is based on the self-evaluation report, amended by further documents, requested by the panel, and a site visit. The site visit took place on 26/27 February 2020 at the HEI's premises in Doha. The same cluster included an appraisal of the Master programme Sociology and Anthropology. At the end of the on-site visit the panel gave a short feedback on its first impressions to representatives of the HEI.

The assessment report based on this was delivered to the HEI for comment on 29 March 2020. The statement on the report was given up on 5 April 2020 it has been taken into account in the report on hand.

# Summary

The Media and Cultural Studies programme offered by Doha Institute for Graduate Studies fulfils the FIBAA quality requirements for master programmes and can be accredited by the Foundation for International Business Administration Accreditation (FIBAA) for five years starting on 5<sup>th</sup> of June 2020 and finishing on the end of spring semester 2025. The programme is in accordance with the national and the European Qualification Frameworks and the European Standards and Guidelines in their applicable version valid at the time of opening of the procedure, and with the Bologna declaration.

There are many criteria in which the programme exceeds the quality requirements:

- International orientation of the study programmes design (see Chapter 1.2),
- Positioning the study programme in the educational market (see Chapter 1.3),
- Positioning the study programme within the HEI's overall strategic concept (see Chapter 1.3),
- Admission requirements (see Chapter 2.1),
- Counselling for prospective students (see Chapter 2.2),
- Selection procedure (see Chapter 2.3),
- Transparency and documentation of admission procedure and decision (see Chapter 2.6),
- Logic and conceptional coherence (see Chapter 3.1),
- Integration of theory and practice (see Chapter 3.1),
- Interdisciplinary thinking (see Chapter 3.1),
- Methods and scientific practice (see Chapter 3.1),
- Equality of opportunity (see Chapter 3.2),
- Logic and plausibility of the didactical concept (see Chapter 3.3),
- Course materials (see Chapter 3.3),
- International contents and intercultural aspects (see Chapter 3.4),
- Internationality of the student body (see Chapter 3.4),
- Internationality of faculty (see Chapter 3.4),
- Academic qualification of faculty (see Chapter 4.1),
- Internal cooperation (see Chapter 4.1),
- Student support by the faculty (see Chapter 4.1),
- Programme Director (see Chapter 4.2),
- Quantity, quality, media and IT equipment of teaching and group rooms (see Chapter 4.4),
- Access to literature (see Chapter 4.4),
- Programme description (see Chapter 5.3).

There are two criteria, which have been appraised, as exceptional:

- Objectives of the study programme (see Chapter 1.1),
- Process organization and administrative support for students and faculty (see Chapter 4.2).

For the overall assessment of the programme, please refer to the quality profile at the end of this report.

# Information

## Information on the Institution

The Doha Institute for Graduate Studies (DI) is an independent academic institution for postgraduate studies in the social sciences, humanities, public administration, and development economics. The DI realises its academic mission by integrating teaching and learning with research in a manner that prepares its graduates to become academic researchers and capable professionals who can advance human knowledge and respond to the needs of the Arab region, in ways that result in social, cultural and intellectual development in the preceding academic fields.

The DI aims through its teaching and learning programmes and the research activities of its faculty to prepare a new generation of academics and researchers who are independent thinkers and proficient in an array of research methodologies and tools.

The DI has adopted Arabic as the main language for study and research, supported by other common languages, particularly English.

The DI features two Schools — the School of Social Sciences and Humanities and the School of Public Administration and Development Economics. In total, the DI offers 17 degree programmes. The Media and Cultural Studies programme is a part of the School of Social Sciences and Humanities (SOSH). The DI is licensed by Qatar's Ministry of Education and Higher Education. The Institute's academic programmes were authorised by the Ministerial Decision No. 45 of the year 2016.

The DI also has an Executive Education Excellence Center and a Language Center.

All masters' programmes at the DI have been designed and developed to meet and be aligned with the UK qualification framework and its learning outcome descriptors for a higher education qualification at level 7 on the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (FHEQ) and Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) level 11 on the Framework for Qualifications of Higher Education Institutions in Scotland (FQHEIS).

The qualification descriptors of the UK frameworks for higher education qualifications align with the qualification descriptors of the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area (QF-EHEA), the Dublin descriptors. Conforming to the UK framework has been discussed and agreed on with the Ministry of Education and Higher Education in Qatar and was a prerequisite to achieving successful licensure for all the DI's programmes.

## Further development of the programme, statistical data and evaluation results

Initial programme learning outcomes were developed as part of the initial programme specification document in 2016. Over Spring and Fall 2018, however, the programme council revised the programme specification document. Revisions included a major overhaul of the programme learning outcomes, which were reduced from 21 to 8. Revisions were made after feedback from the Institutional Effectiveness and Quality Assurance Committee, consultations

with the Office of Institutional Effectiveness (OIE), and discussions led by the Head of Programme and involving all MACS programme faculty members.

## **Statistics** (separated by cohorts and gender) concerning:

| <b>Master Study Program: Media and Cultural Studies</b>   |          |                   |                    |                    |                  |
|---|----------|-------------------|--------------------|--------------------|------------------|
|   |          | <b>MACS- 2017</b> | <b>MACS - 2018</b> | <b>MACS - 2019</b> | <b>MACS 2020</b> |
| <b># Study Places</b>   |          | 15                | 15                 | 15                 | 15               |
| <b># Applicants</b>   | $\Sigma$ | <b>123</b>        | <b>166</b>         | <b>106</b>         | <b>82</b>        |
|   | f        | <b>48</b>         | <b>73</b>          | <b>49</b>          | <b>38</b>        |
|   | m        | <b>75</b>         | <b>93</b>          | <b>57</b>          | <b>44</b>        |
| <b>Application rate</b>   |          | 820.00%           | 1,106.67%          | 706.67%            | 546.67%          |
| <b># First-Year Students</b>  | $\Sigma$ | 16                | 19                 | 8                  | 9                |
|   | f        | 9                 | 14                 | 4                  | 4                |
|   | m        | 7                 | 5                  | 4                  | 5                |
| <b>Rate of female students</b>  |          | 56.25%            | 73.68%             | 50.00%             | 44.44%           |
| <b># Foreign Students</b>   | $\Sigma$ | 15                | 17                 | 7                  | 9                |
|   | f        | 9                 | 13                 | 3                  | 4                |
|   | m        | 6                 | 4                  | 4                  | 5                |
| <b>Rate of foreign students</b>   |          | 93.75%            | 89.47%             | 87.50%             | 100%             |
| <b>Percentage of occupied study places</b>  |          | 106.67%           | 12.,67%            | 53.33%             | 60.00%           |
| <b># Graduates</b>  | $\Sigma$ | 14                | 14                 | 7                  | Expected in 2020 |
|   | f        | 8                 | 10                 | 3                  |                  |
|   | m        | 6                 | 4                  | 4                  |                  |
| <b>Success rate</b>   |          | 87.50%            | 73.68%             | 87.50%             |                  |
| <b>Dropout rate</b>   |          | 12.50%            | 26.32%             | 12.50%             |                  |
| <b>Average duration of study</b>  |          | 2.07 years        | 2.07 years         | 2 years            |                  |
| <b>Average grade of final degree</b>  |          | 3.45              | 3.61               | 3.67               |                  |
| <b>Note:</b>  |          |                   |                    |                    |                  |
| MACS 2017 (1 <sup>st</sup> graduating cohort) refers to students who were admitted in 2015-2016 |          |                   |                    |                    |                  |
| MACS 2018 (2 <sup>nd</sup> graduating cohort) refers to students who were admitted in 2016-2017 |          |                   |                    |                    |                  |
| MACS 2019 (3 <sup>rd</sup> graduating cohort) refers to students who were admitted in 2017-2018 |          |                   |                    |                    |                  |
| MACS 2020 (4 <sup>th</sup> graduating cohort) refers to students who were admitted in 2018-2019 |          |                   |                    |                    |                  |

## Appraisal

As additionally evidenced during the on-site visit, DI uses administration, faculty, and student feedback to make changes to the programme as necessary on a regular basis including hiring faculty, study plan, programme specification. Programme review use to involve assessments of outcomes, and an examination of admissions, graduation, and grades data. The development of the programme is well documented.

The admission procedure is rather rigid, as the figures above show: Lots of applicants, low enrolments: less than capacity, since DI is looking only for highly gifted and talented and ambitious students as well. Nevertheless, there are some dropouts, based on low grades of the students.

# Programme Description and Appraisal in Detail

## 1. Objectives

### 1.1 Objectives of the study programme (Asterisk-Criterion)

According to DI mission, its focus is on interdisciplinarity, research, the Arab region, and the Arabic language. It aims to prepare a new generation of researchers with skills in a variety of research methodologies. The MACS programme is a research-focused degree in media and cultural studies. It aligns with the Doha Institute's multipurpose mission centred on research and Arab centrality. The MACS curriculum highlights the Arabic language and is decidedly research-focused — the programme assigns classic media and cultural studies research texts and requires students to gain expertise in a variety of research methods and produce several research papers and a Master thesis.

In various courses, the programme also asks students to grapple with local Arab, regional, and global media structures, production, and usage.

As per the Self-Assessment Report (SAR), the MACS programme aims to deliver eight Programme Learning Outcomes (PLOs)/objectives, centred on knowledge and understanding, intellectual skills, practical skills, and transferrable skills, to its students, which are continuously reviewed and respectively adapted.

#### **The knowledge and understanding-centred outcomes are:**

1. Demonstrate familiarity with relevant academic scholarship on media and culture, in the West, the Arab region and the wider Middle East.
2. Critically explore approaches to de-westernizing media and cultural studies.
3. Attain knowledge of, and familiarity with, key anthropological approaches, arguments and debates to the study and rethinking of contemporary Arab media cultures.

#### **The intellectual skills-centred outcomes are:**

4. Apply relevant and existing media and cultural studies theories and research methodologies to the Arab context.
5. Identify key institutional, political, and economic structures in global media.

#### **The practical skills-centred outcomes are:**

6. Develop writing, debating and public speaking skills.
7. Use appropriate media and cultural studies methodologies to pursue research on original problems concerned with well-defined aspects of media, culture and society.

#### **The transferrable skills-centred outcome is:**

8. Use acquired knowledge of research methods and data gathering for original research.

Where and how courses are aligned to programme learning outcomes and where and how they are assessed, is shown in the Programme Learning Outcomes matrix.

## Appraisal:

The HEI systematically bases the qualification objectives of the programme on the specific requirements of the target group. The qualification objectives are documented in detail. They are constantly reviewed for their adequacy and up-to-datedness and are adapted accordingly. In addition, the Media and Cultural Studies (MACS) programme examines the role of media in a

globalised world by studying rapidly evolving communication venues, including traditional, new and social media. It is focusing on a variety of media, research, the Arab region, and diverse research methodologies. The MACS programme seeks to help students acquire the skills necessary for pursuing media and cultural studies research in the Arab world and beyond.

The outcomes relate broadly to a larger focus on academic proficiency, employability, social commitment, and the development of individual student personality. Specifically, the knowledge and understanding, and intellectual skills-centred outcomes speak for academic proficiency, while practical skills-centred and transferrable skills-centred outcomes, with their focus on original research on media and society issues, serve both employability and social commitment objectives. All four areas serve the development of individual student personality. Each of the four broad areas of focus, and all eight outcomes, require students to maintain originality, both in terms of ideation and execution.

The experts are very much impressed by the combination of Western and Arabic culture and research approach and its reflecting in the curriculum and teaching materials. From their point of view, this is unique and an example of best practice.

|   | Exceptional | Exceeds quality requirements | Meets quality requirements | Does not meet quality requirements | n.r. |
|---|-------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------------|------|
| 1.1* Objectives of the study programme (Asterisk Criterion) |             | X                            |                            |                                    |      |

## 1.2 International orientation of the study programme design (Asterisk Criterion)

The MACS programme is internationalised, both in terms of curricular content, and student and faculty composition (see below chapter 3.4). In multiple courses, the curriculum deals explicitly with the globalization phenomenon, considering both utopian notions of global heterogenization and more dystopian notions of cultural and media homogenization and imperialism, as well as global media production and culture. Media ethics, the political economy of communication, and visual cultures are all treated from local, national, and international perspectives. Moreover, the curriculum calls for media systems in the Arab region, Europe, and North America to be discussed, analyzed, and compared. Peer-reviewed papers involving case studies spanning much of the world are assigned as part of course readings. Textbooks and other teaching materials are chosen from international authors and publishers.

### Appraisal:

The programme design is in total internationally oriented. Owing to the emphasis of the programme design on internationality in teaching and study (e.g. in terms of curricular contents, academic staff), the programme, by imparting knowledge with that goal in mind and developing the concomitant skills, enables graduates to competently handle international tasks.

|   | Exceptional | Exceeds quality requirements | Meets quality requirements | Does not meet quality requirements | n.r. |
|---|-------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------------|------|
| 1.2* International orientation of the study programme design (Asterisk Criterion) |             |                              | X                          |                                    |      |

### 1.3 Positioning of the study programme

According to the DI, there are relatively few Master programmes in mass communication/media studies in the Arab region and, outside of the DI, none in Qatar. The specific combination of media and cultural studies is unique for graduate programmes in the Arab region, where programmes tend to take more exclusive empirical, social science approaches to media studies (or mass communication, as it is commonly called), and altogether lack focus on cultural studies. The relative dearth of graduate programmes in the region makes it challenging for Arab media research institutes and universities to fill media research and teaching positions. There is relatively little published research on Arab media systems, audiences, and phenomena. Research on Arab media systems, audiences, and phenomena lags behind comparable research on North American, European, Asian, and Central and South American media. Most of the published research on Arab media has been produced either by non-Arab academics or by Arab academics living and working in the West. There is an urgent need for endogenous Arab media scholarship, particularly in light of the Arab region's struggles with authoritarianism, censorship, media propaganda, and (the lack of) media professionalism. Thus, on more than one level, the MACS programme can help fill important gaps in the educational sector, specifically in Qatar.

Given the rigor of the programme and curriculum — courses feature classic media texts, and the programme is the only one in the region to use a 42-credit hour system — and also the enhanced quality of MACS faculty, students can be well positioned to produce high-quality MA theses and compete for opportunities for PhD work either in the Arab region or the West. Students not wishing to complete doctoral studies can be well positioned for jobs as media researchers at think tanks and NGOs, and as media professionals in media industries, as well as government or non-government analysts and strategic communication specialists.

Results from four separate surveys of MACS graduates — three exit surveys carried out in 2017, 2018, and 2019, respectively, and an alumni survey conducted in 2019 — all suggest that programme graduates believe the programme's curriculum prepared them for media work and further graduate study.

The DI was established as a small, elite graduate teaching and research institute focusing on the social sciences, humanities, public administration, and development economics. From the start, media-related education plays a significant role. The DI offers two media-related degree programmes: an MA in Journalism, designed for aspiring professional journalists, and an MA in Media and Cultural Studies, designed primarily for aspiring media researchers and educators. The MA Media and Cultural Studies programme fits neatly within the larger DI vision because it emphasises research. According to the strategy of the faculty and the Doha Institute, the programme emphasises research quality and productivity, exposing students to advanced studies in the field (and related fields), and requiring them to complete several academic assignments.

## Appraisal:

The HEI has thoroughly examined the educational market and used the results in establishing its own unique and competitive profile. There are no serious competitors in the Arabic world and beyond. The objectives of the programme are the unique selling points.

The arguments in support of graduate employability on the basis of the stated qualification objectives are convincingly presented. The future fields of employment for graduates are plausibly set forth.

As evidenced in the interviews with faculty, students and management, the study programme's qualification goals constitute the core of the faculty's strategy and are sustainably implemented.

|       |  | Exceptional | Exceeds quality requirements | Meets quality requirements | Does not meet quality requirements | n.r. |
|-------|--|-------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------------|------|
| 1.3   | Positioning of the study programme   |             |                              |                            |                                    |      |
| 1.3.1 | Positioning of the study programme in the educational market                         |             | X                            |                            |                                    |      |
| 1.3.2 | Positioning of the study programme on the job market for graduates („Employability“) |             |                              | X                          |                                    |      |
| 1.3.3 | Positioning of the study programme within the HEI's overall strategic concept        |             | X                            |                            |                                    |      |

## **2. Admission**

The MACS programme seeks to attract top Arab students from across the region. Applicants are expected to have a demonstrated track record of academic success — including an undergraduate degree with a minimum 3.0 Grade Point Average (or its national equivalent) — and possess good command of both Arabic and English. The DI website and application form clearly outline admission requirements. Applicants submit the following during the online application process:

- official identification
- undergraduate bachelor's degree
- academic transcripts
- a minimum of two academic references
- a personal statement
- an academic essay
- a CV.

Additionally, MACS applicants must provide proof of an acceptable IELTS (International English Language Testing System) exam score. While the official DI requirement is an IELTS score of 5.5, successful MACS applicants usually submit scores of at least 6.0. The more stringent requirement reflects the MACS programme's more substantive reliance on English-language academic sources. Students who score 6.0 must still take one advanced level English course through the DI's Language Center. Students who score 6.5 or higher on the IELTS exam satisfy the graduation English language requirement and are therefore exempt from Language Center courses. All MACS students — regardless of English level — take a single English Language for Media course. Applicants with scores lower than 5.5 are not considered for admission to the programme. Applicants with certified degrees from English-language undergraduate programmes are allowed to have this application requirement waived, however.

A programme brochure highlights admission requirements. Additionally, the DI website lists all admission requirements.

Local (Qatar-based) applicants are encouraged to attend one of multiple annual "Open Days" held on the DI campus, online, or in their respective institutions in Qatar during the course of the academic year. Local prospective students are also able to visit DI booths at university fairs in Doha or visit the Head of Programme for further clarifications or guidance. The Head of Programme's contact information is available on the DI website. International and regional applicants are encouraged to participate in one of multiple meetings held online via WebEx video conference, via social media platforms, and via the DI YouTube Student Channel. When applicable, prospective international students can meet DI representatives in recruitment activities abroad. All prospective applicants can also submit questions to either the Head of Programme via the DI website or via a special email address set up for this purpose: [admissions@dohainstitute.edu.qa](mailto:admissions@dohainstitute.edu.qa). They may also email the Head of Programme directly at a personal email address listed on the website or call with inquiries at a posted phone number. Questions, which come in regularly about application procedures and requirements, are answered in a timely fashion. DI Admissions updates the Head of Programme about admissions filings, including complete and incomplete files, and follows up with applicants who have started but not finished their application files. Specifically, follow-up emails are sent to ask if these applicants have additional questions or need assistance with the application process.

The selection process is carried out in two phases: the Admissions phase, and the programme review phase.

An initial filtering takes place at the Admissions level before final, completed, and qualified applications are accepted by the MACS programme. DI Admissions does not pass on to the programme any applications that are incomplete or which do not meet the minimum admissions requirements.

Once initial filtering takes place at the Admissions level, remaining applications are forwarded on to the MACS Head of Programme for programme review. The MACS Head of Programme forms an annual, three-person applications committee — chaired by the Head of Programme and including two other programme faculty — to evaluate all applications received by the programme. An initial evaluation is carried out based on submitted application files. Using the electronic Student Information System (SIS), committee members do individual close readings of transcripts, academic essays, and personal statements. Each MACS programme admissions committee member uses SIS to score each prospective student on a scale of 1-10 for each of the three aforementioned items. All items carry the same weight. Applicants with average scores of 6.0 or higher (on the ten-point scale) pass on to the final stage of the application process, which consists of a face-to-face or video conference interview with the programme admissions committee. In addition to numerical scores, the committee also includes short comments on applicant quality in an open-ended item in the SIS evaluation page.

Video interviews are conducted via Skype and last approximately 30-minutes. Interviewers pose questions in both Arabic and English and seek to assess applicants' academic aptitude, fit for the MACS programme, commitment to graduate study, and ability to comprehend and communicate in both Arabic and English. Moreover, during the interview, a short English-language academic text is presented to interviewees, who are asked to summarise and explain the text and answer questions about it.

Committee members use SIS to give numerical scores for interview performance. Students with the highest composite scores are admitted. Additionally, qualitative comments on interview performance are also provided on the SIS evaluation page.

Video conference interviews are used as a secondary measure of language proficiency. Questions are posed to interviewees in both English and Arabic, and responses are required in both languages.

All applicants are formally informed of their admissions status via emails sent by the DI Admissions at the conclusion of the evaluation process. Accepted applicants fill out a confirmation of enrolment form and a scholarship application form and provide Admissions with the official required documents. Rejected applicants are sent a rejection letter.

Throughout the admissions season, DI Admissions updates the MACS Head of Programme on applications received. Once final filtering is complete, Admissions also provides the Head of Programme with information about the total number of applications passed through to programme review level, and information about why applications did not advance to programme review level (e.g. low IELTS scores, or low GPAs).

All programme evaluation results are communicated electronically and in real-time via SIS to Admissions and the Dean of the School of the Social Sciences and Humanities (SOSH). The documentation includes both numerical scores and qualitative comments about all applicants. At the conclusion of programme review, the MACS Head of Programme prepares a short report about the admissions process, including final number tallies, concerns with the admissions criteria, and overall quality of applicants.

## Appraisal:

The application process is highly competitive, with only top students gaining admission. Although no specific media related bachelor's degree is required, the admission procedure is focused on talented, ambitious and media enthusiastic applicants. The interview process, while time consuming, is essential to student selection, particularly because there is sometimes a disconnection between what a student writes on paper and his/her actual aptitude is. Having said that, DI recognises that the interview process is imperfect. In the past, some MACS students have been interviewed very well (and been accepted), only to show a lack of ability and/or effort during their degree programmes. DI thinks needing to be even more selective going forward.

The admission requirements are defined and comprehensible. The national requirements are presented and taken into account. Additionally, the admission requirements are totally oriented towards the strategic goals of the study programme.

The HEI ensures a constant availability for prospective students and reacts quickly to incoming enquiries. The counselling options are based on the target group's needs.

The selection procedure was developed on the basis of the study programme's objectives. The procedure is periodically reviewed for its effectiveness and adapted in accordance with the obtained results.

The admission requirements (required language proficiency level or required result in a concrete language test) or preparatory language courses ensure that students are able to successfully complete the study programme (courses, additional literature, utilisation of counselling services and extracurricular activities).

The admission procedure is described, documented, and accessible for interested parties. The admission decision is based on transparent criteria and is communicated in writing. In addition, the admission decision contains detailed information on the results of the admission procedure.

|   | Exceptional | Exceeds quality requirements | Meets quality requirements | Does not meet quality requirements | n.r. |
|---|-------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------------|------|
| 2.1* Admission requirements (Asterisk Criterion)  |             | X                            |                            |                                    |      |
| 2.2 Counselling for prospective students  |             | X                            |                            |                                    |      |
| 2.3* Selection procedure (if relevant)  |             | X                            |                            |                                    |      |
| 2.4(*) Professional experience (if relevant; Asterisk Criterion for master programmes that require professional experience) |             |                              |                            | X                                  |      |
| 2.5* Ensuring foreign language proficiency (Asterisk Criterion)   |             |                              | X                          |                                    |      |
| 2.6* Transparency and documentation of admission procedure and decision (Asterisk Criterion)                                |             |                              | X                          |                                    |      |

### **3. Contents, structure and didactical concept of the programme**

#### **3.1 Contents**

##### **MACS Study Plan Core Courses**

| <b>Course Code</b> | <b>Credit Hours</b> | <b>Course Name</b>   |
|--------------------|---------------------|--|
| MACS 611           | 3                   | Communication Research Methods (Semester 1)                    |
| MACS 612           | 3                   | Mass Communication Theory (Semester 1)                         |
| MACS 613           | 3                   | Rethinking Arab Media Cultures: An Anthropological Perspective |

##### **Required Non-Elective Core Course**

| <b>Course Code</b> | <b>Credit Hours</b> | <b>Course Name</b>                      |
|--------------------|---------------------|---|
| MACS 001           | 0                   | English Language for Media (Semester 1) |

##### **Elective Courses (Students Choose 5 of these 8 courses)**

| <b>Course Code</b> | <b>Credit Hours</b> | <b>Course Name</b>  |
|--------------------|---------------------|---|
| MACS 622           | 3                   | Critical Approaches in Media and Cultural Studies (Semester 2)                            |
| MACS 623           | 3                   | Global Visual Cultures: Art, Aesthetics and Criticism (Semester 2)                        |
| MACS 627           | 3                   | The Political Economy of Communication: Ownership, Management and Regulation (Semester 2) |
| MACS 628           | 3                   | Media Audiences and Users (Semester 2)  |
| MACS 633           | 3                   | Ethics and Law in Contemporary Journalistic Practice (Semester 2)                         |
| MACS 624           | 3                   | Media Representations and Post-Colonial Studies (Semester 3)                              |
| MACS 625           | 3                   | Media Activism in the Middle East and North Africa (Semester 3)                           |
| MACS 626           | 3                   | Media and Communication: From the Press to Web 2.0 (Semester 4)                           |

##### **Interdisciplinary Courses (Students Choose Two Courses from this List)**

| <b>Course Code</b> | <b>Credit Hours</b> | <b>Course Name</b>   |
|--------------------|---------------------|--|
| SOSH 670           | 3                   | Experiences of Modernity in the Arab World (Semester 3)                                  |
| SOSH 671           | 3                   | Colonialism and Arab National Liberation Movements (Semester 3)                          |
| SOSH 672           | 3                   | Civil Society in Comparative Perspective (Semester 3)                                    |
| SOSH 673           | 3                   | Gender, Identity and Modernity in the Middle East (Semester 3)                           |
| SOSH 674           | 3                   | Critical Readings in Modern and Contemporary Aesthetics: Sound, Image, Text (Semester 3) |
| SOSH 675           | 3                   | Sociolinguistics (Semester 3)  |

|          |   |   |
|----------|---|---|
| SOSH 676 | 3 | Political Economy of the Arab World (Semester 3)                  |
| SOSH 677 | 3 | Comparative Cultural Studies: Theory and Application (Semester 3) |
| SOSH 678 | 3 | History of Liberation Ideas (Semester 3)                          |
| SOSH 679 | 3 | War Ethics (Semester 3)   |
| SOSH 680 | 3 | Advanced Critical Thinking and Academic Writing (Semester 3)      |
| SOSH 681 | 3 | Power and Language (Semester 3)                                   |
| SOSH 682 | 3 | Philosophy of Social Sciences (Semester 3)                        |
| SOSH 683 | 3 | Survey Research (Semester 3)                                      |

#### **Required School Interdisciplinary Course**

| Course Code | Credit Hours | Course Name   |
|-------------|--------------|---|
| SOSH 601    | 6            | Issue in the Study of the Social Sciences and Humanities (Semester 1) |

#### **Non-Restricted Elective Course**

| Course Code      | Credit Hours | Course Name                   |
|------------------|--------------|-------------------------------|
| Student's Choice | 3            | Student's Choice (Semester 4) |

#### **Thesis**

| Course Code | Credit Hours | Course Name  |
|-------------|--------------|--|
| MACS 699    | 6            | Dissertation – Media and Cultural Studies (Semester 4) |

The specific sequence of courses allows for progressive expertise and the steady accumulation of knowledge. Students take two required programme courses on research methodology and theory in their first semester, along with a required School of Social Sciences and Humanities interdisciplinary course and an English course. Semester 2 is devoted to four MACS programme electives, with students choosing four of five elective course options. In semester 3, students take the final programme core course, an additional MACS elective course, and two elective interdisciplinary courses (out of 14 total interdisciplinary course choices). In semester 4, students take their non-restricted elective course and complete their theses.

According to the DI, this specific set of courses was chosen to uniquely address the needs of Arab graduate students in media and cultural studies. The topical expertise will be provided through elective courses, combined with expertise on theory and methodology acquired in core courses, that will equip students for PhD study or professional work beyond their MA degrees.

Given the programme's dual focus on traditional mass communication studies and cultural studies, the name of the programme is Media and Cultural Studies. It conforms with national guidelines.

As a programme designed to prepare students for PhD studies, the MACS degree programme is obviously highly academic and theoretical. It is also practical, however, with courses emphasizing practical skills such as research methodology, academic writing, and public speaking and debate.

Individual course assignments offer more specific glimpses into the integration of theory and practice. For example, the programme's Ethics and Law course (MACS 633) asks students

to identify a recent real-world ethical dilemma related to Arab mass media and then use an ethical decision-making model to produce a solution. The applied decision-making model, the S.A.D. formula, asks students to apply an ethical theory to their decision-making process. Additionally, the Rethinking Arab Media Cultures course (MACS 613) requires students to visit a local museum and examine artefacts using theories taught in assigned readings and lectures.

As the MACS programme's primary focus centres on research and scholarship, there is not a formal media training or internship component to the MACS curriculum. However, students are encouraged to seek out such opportunities, and the DI helps facilitate them through an established, formal relationship with the Doha-based Al-Jazeera Media Network, and also by providing local media contacts and free transportation to-and-from formal media training activities.

Beyond the inherently interdisciplinary natures of both media studies and cultural studies, the MACS study plan was designed with an even more explicitly interdisciplinary focus. This focus was influenced by the DI's vision of interdisciplinarity, which is built into the Institute's mission. Courses in the MACS programme — and their accompanying reading lists — draw from media studies, cultural studies, sociology, political science, literature, history, and philosophy.

The MACS study plan addresses the ethical dimensions of mass media and academic research on a number of levels. This is done primarily through course material. Mass Communication Theory (MACS 612), Media Activism in the Middle East (MACS 625), Media Audiences and Users (MACS 628), and Mass Communication Research Methods (MACS 611) all address ethics in different ways.

The MACS programme is research-intensive. Students are asked to produce numerous research papers: in most courses, one final primary research paper is required.

Cultural studies are situated within the constructivist, interpretive paradigm, with scholars employing primarily qualitative research methodologies. Media studies, however, are characterised by significant paradigmatic, ontological, and epistemological diversity, with media scholars essentially divided along qualitative and quantitative lines. The MACS programme attempts to expose students to a variety of approaches and requires students to gain aptitude in both quantitative and qualitative research techniques.

All assessments at the DI are governed by the grading, assessment, and thesis policies. Most MACS courses feature a combination of assessments including reading, interpretation, writing, application, and creative skills. Specific assessments are chosen appropriately based on desired outcomes. Instructors design assessments to align with course learning outcomes, as evidenced in the individual course syllabi. The two midterm examinations employed in these courses feature a combination of short-answer, essay, multiple-choice, and essay/application questions. Exam questions focus on key concepts addressed in the courses and which students are expected to master. The pedagogical purpose of exams in these courses is to formally assess to what extent students have mastered course concepts and achieved course learning outcomes.

The thesis research project is expected to represent the culmination of two years of learning, and a practical application and integration of methodological, theoretical, and topical knowledge. Students are expected to produce original, primary data that contributes to at least one body of existing academic literature. Theses are formally evaluated by an examination committee consisting of two Media and Cultural Studies faculty members. Students must also orally defend their theses in front of the same panel of two faculty

members. Students are provided detailed feedback by their evaluation committees. Additionally, thesis advisers provide many rounds of feedback/comments to help ensure student success. A student must score at least a B on his/her thesis in order to 'pass' (MACS 699).

## Appraisal:

The programme's media and cultural studies focus on Arab centricity. Collectively, the MACS core and elective courses contained within the curriculum aim to deliver on dozens of specific course learning outcomes (CLOs) grouped around the four aforementioned programme learning outcome areas: knowledge and understanding, intellectual skills, practical skills, and transferrable skills.

The contents and the learning outcomes of the modules consistently reflect the strategic orientation of the study programme. They clearly meet the requirements of the job market. Additional electives enhance the graduates' employability.

The degree and programme name correspond to the contents of the curriculum and the programme objectives.

Theory and practice are systematically interrelated throughout the curriculum. Theoretical discourse and practical application complement each other in developing the students' qualification profile.

The study programme puts an emphasis on preparing the students for an occupation requiring trans- and interdisciplinary knowledge. Ethical implications are appropriately communicated.

Methodological competences and scientific practice are thoroughly trained. Students are equipped with the necessary skills for research-oriented work and for applying those skills in the respective vocational fields.

All exams, as they are defined for the modules, are suited in format and content to ascertain the intended learning outcomes. The requirements are in accordance with the desired qualification level. The exams are characterised by a wide variety of test formats.

The final theses are evaluated based on previously published and coherently applied criteria, rules, and procedures. The students prove, especially in their thesis, their ability to do scientific work and the achievement of the study programme's qualification objectives.

|   | Exceptional | Exceeds quality requirements | Meets quality requirements | Does not meet quality requirements | n.r. |
|---|-------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------------|------|
| 3.1 Contents  |             |                              |                            |                                    |      |
| 3.1.1* Logic and conceptual coherence (Asterisk Criterion)          |             | X                            |                            |                                    |      |
| 3.1.2* Rationale for degree and programme name (Asterisk Criterion) |             |                              | X                          |                                    |      |
| 3.1.3* Integration of theory and practice (Asterisk Criterion)      |             | X                            |                            |                                    |      |
| 3.1.4 Interdisciplinary thinking                                    |             | X                            |                            |                                    |      |
| 3.1.5 Ethical aspects   |             | X                            |                            |                                    |      |
| 3.1.6* Methods and scientific practice (Asterisk Criterion)         |             | X                            |                            |                                    |      |
| 3.1.7* Examination and final thesis (Asterisk Criterion)            |             | X                            |                            |                                    |      |

## 3.2 Structure

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Projected study time   | Two years for full-time students, and either three years or four years for part-time students |
| Number of Credit Points (CP)                                 | 42 credit hours (American Credit point system)  |
| Workload per CP  | 168 hours   |
| Number of modules  | 14 (including one non-credit English course and the thesis)                                   |
| Time required for processing the final thesis and awarded CP | Students have one semester to complete their thesis, which totals 6 credit hours              |
| Number of contact hours                                      | 532 total contact hours   |

The DI operates a calendar with two main semesters, Fall and Spring. Each semester consists of 14 study weeks, in addition to an examination week. The DI applies the American Credit system; it employs a 60-minute credit hour system; courses are worth 3-credit hours each, and each course meets once per week for a total of three hours (180 minutes). Individual courses, then, hold 14 three-hour sessions per semester for a total of 42 semester contact hours.

| Modul e No. | 1 <sup>st</sup> Semester<br>Title of Module / Course Unit | Credit Points per Semester |    |    |    |    |    |    | Workload       |                  | Form and Duration of Examinations |
|-------------|---|----------------------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----------------|------------------|-----------------------------------|
|             |   | 1.                         | 2. | 3. | 4. | 5. | 6. | 7. | Hours in Class | Hours Self-Study |                                   |
| M1          | Module 1  | 3                          |    |    |    |    |    |    |                |                  |                                   |
| M 1.1       | Course Unit 1 - MACS 611 - Communication Research Methods |                            |    |    |    |    |    |    | 42             | 126              | Final Paper (40% of final grade)  |
| M2          | Module 2  | 3                          |    |    |    |    |    |    |                |                  |                                   |
| M 2.1       | Course Unit 2 - MACS 612 - Mass                           |                            |    |    |    |    |    |    | 42             | 126              | Final Research                    |

|            |   |          |          |  |  |    |     |   |
|------------|---|----------|----------|--|--|----|-----|---|
|            | Communication Theory  |          |          |  |  |    |     | Paper (50% of final grade)                |
| <b>M3</b>  | <b>Module 3</b>   | <b>0</b> |          |  |  |    |     |   |
| M 3.1      | Course Unit 3 - MACS 001 - English Language for Media   |          |          |  |  | 28 | 56  | not graded                                |
| <b>M4</b>  | <b>Module 4</b>   | <b>3</b> |          |  |  |    |     |   |
| M 4.1      | Course Unit 4 - SOSH 601 - Issues in the Study of Social Sciences and Humanities                        |          |          |  |  | 42 | 126 | Final Research Paper (40% of final grade) |
|            | <b>2<sup>nd</sup> Semester (students choose four of these five courses)</b>                             |          |          |  |  |    |     |   |
| <b>M5</b>  | <b>Module 5</b>   | <b>3</b> |          |  |  |    |     |   |
| M 5.1      | Course Unit 5 - MACS 622 - Critical Approaches in Media and Cultural Studies                            |          |          |  |  | 42 | 126 | Final Essay (40% for final grade)         |
| <b>M6</b>  | <b>Module 6</b>   | <b>3</b> |          |  |  |    |     |   |
| M 6.1      | Course Unit 6 - MACS 623 - Global Visual Cultures: Art, Aesthetics and Criticism                        |          |          |  |  | 42 | 126 | Final Paper (30%)                         |
| <b>M7</b>  | <b>Module 7</b>   | <b>3</b> |          |  |  |    |     |   |
| M 7.1      | Course Unit 7 - MACS 627 - The Political Economy of Communication: Ownership, Management and Regulation |          |          |  |  | 42 | 126 | Final Essay (40% for final grade)         |
| <b>M8</b>  | <b>Module 8</b>   | <b>3</b> |          |  |  |    |     |   |
| M 8.1      | Course Unit 8 - SOSH 628 - Media Audiences & Users  |          |          |  |  | 42 | 126 | Final Paper (30%)                         |
| <b>M9</b>  | <b>Module 9</b>   | <b>3</b> |          |  |  |    |     |   |
| M 9.1      | Course Unit 9 - SOSH 633 - Ethics and Law in Contemporary Journalistic Practice                         |          |          |  |  | 42 | 126 | Final Research Paper (40% of final grade) |
|            | <b>3<sup>rd</sup> Semester</b>  |          |          |  |  |    |     |   |
| <b>M10</b> | <b>Module 10</b>  |          | <b>3</b> |  |  |    |     |   |
| M 10.1     | Course Unit 10 - MACS 613 - Rethinking Arab Media Cultures: An Anthropological Perspective              |          |          |  |  | 42 | 126 | Final Paper (50% of final grade)          |
| <b>M11</b> | <b>Module 11</b>  |          | <b>3</b> |  |  |    |     |   |
| M 11.1     | Course Unit 11 - MACS 624 - Media Representations and Post-Colonial Studies                             |          |          |  |  | 42 | 126 | Final Paper (30% of final grade)          |

|                                |  |           |          |  |  |            |             |                                  |  |
|--------------------------------|--|-----------|----------|--|--|------------|-------------|----------------------------------|--|
|                                | OR   |           |          |  |  |            |             |                                  |  |
| M 11.2                         | Course Unit 11 - MACS 625 - Media Activism in the Middle East and North Africa |           |          |  |  | 42         | 126         | Final Essay (50% of final grade) |  |
| <b>M12</b>                     | <b>Module 12</b>   |           | <b>3</b> |  |  |            |             |                                  |  |
| M 12.1                         | Course Unit 12 - Elective Social Sciences and Humanities Course                |           |          |  |  | 42         | 126         | Depends on Course Selected       |  |
| <b>M13</b>                     | <b>Module 13</b>   |           | <b>3</b> |  |  |            |             |                                  |  |
| M 13.1                         | Course Unit 13 - Elective Social Sciences and Humanities Course                |           |          |  |  | 42         | 126         | Depends on Course Selected       |  |
| <b>4<sup>th</sup> Semester</b> |  |           |          |  |  |            |             |                                  |  |
| <b>M 14.1</b>                  | <b>Module 14</b>   |           | <b>6</b> |  |  |            |             |                                  |  |
|                                | MA Thesis  |           |          |  |  | 0          | 252         |                                  |  |
| <b>M15</b>                     | <b>Module 15</b>   |           | <b>3</b> |  |  |            |             |                                  |  |
| M 15                           | Course Unit 14 - Free Elective Course  |           |          |  |  | 42         | 126         | Depends on Course Selected       |  |
| <b>total</b>                   |  | <b>42</b> |          |  |  | <b>532</b> | <b>1820</b> |                                  |  |

The MACS study plan consists of 42-credit hours in total, in addition to one non-credit English language course. The 42-credit hour total is broken down as follows:

- Three 3-credit programme core courses (9-credit hours total)
- Five 3-credit programme elective courses (15-credit hours total)
- One non-credit programme English language course (0-credit hours total)
- One required 3-credit school interdisciplinary course (3-credit hours total)
- Two school interdisciplinary elective courses (6-credit hours total)
- One non-restricted elective course (3-credit hours total)
- One 6-credit MA thesis (6-credit hours total)

The study plan is designed to be completed in two years. Theses are expected to be between 12,000 and 18,000 words in length and feature original, primary research.

The collection of eight programme elective courses, of which students are required to take five, aim to deliver more specific topic and knowledge areas.

Each of the eight programme learning outcomes is formally assessed using a single assessment in a single course. Additionally, each course has learning outcomes, which are outlined in each course syllabus and describe the knowledge and skills that the student will gain by the end of a course.

Most programme students are registered full-time and complete their degree programmes in two years. Full-time students may be granted time extensions on case by case bases. A part-time study option also exists, with some students offered part-time study plans that put them on track to complete their degree programmes in either three or four years. The maximum allotted study time for the MACS MA degree is four years.

Study and exams regulations are published in full on the DI website and are referred to and summarised in course syllabi. The assessment policy outlines the rules for syllabi, assessment criteria, and assessment rules and regulations for both courses and individual

assignments. For instance, instructors are required to provide detailed feedback on student assignments; at least 60% of a course's assessments must be research related; and no single course assessment can constitute any more than 40% of an overall course grade. With regards to rules for syllabi, a syllabus template is used by all DI instructors. The template seeks to ensure that all instructors appropriately develop their syllabi and include all necessary information. All syllabi must include course title, credit hours, course description, instructor information, assessment description, semester schedule/plan, learning outcomes, and relevant academic policies.

The Grading Policy outlines each of the DI's grading categories, from A to F, and includes a description of what characterises each grade level. The Thesis Policy governs the completion of MA theses and outlines all thesis requirements for both students and examiners.

The recognition of degrees and periods of study at other HEIs is regulated in accordance with the Lisbon Recognition Convention. A relative grade (rank) is already provided on student transcripts on demand. According to the regulations, it will be added as a general regulation, due to technical reasons only in Fall semester 2020/2021.

As the MACS programme syllabi show, courses assess student performance on the basis of short papers, long-form research papers, written examinations, oral presentations, and both group and individual assignments.

End-of-semester student course surveys include a question on workload feasibility. Results are generally favourable, but some students in some courses have raised concerns about workload. Instructors and Heads of Programmes are required to both comment on student evaluation surveys and make adjustments as necessary. Courses receiving critical remarks on workload have been adjusted. According to HEI, student workload is continuously monitored by DI faculty and administration.

DI operates under an overarching non-discrimination statement prohibiting the inclusion of any non-academic criteria in the selection of students or the evaluation of their credentials such as gender, race, colour, disability, language, religion, opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, minority status, property, birth, etc. Lower-income students are aided by the Institute's free tuition programme. All non-local students benefit from scholarship packages that cover tuition, on-campus housing, a monthly stipend, reimbursement of public health insurance fees, airfare to-and-from their home countries, and subsidised transportation.

Students with special needs are encouraged to visit the Enrolment and Student Affairs department. All syllabi include a note about students with special needs: "Special needs or any disability-related concerns and requests must be submitted by students to the Enrolment and Student Affairs Department in good time to allow for facilitating such requests. The course instructor must also be previously informed of any requests and accommodations."

## Appraisal:

The structure of the programme follows the credit system of the United States. The regular size of three credit hours per course, which represent courses with a total workload of nine hours per week, corresponds to the American system. The programme structure supports the smooth implementation of the curriculum and helps students to reach the defined learning outcomes. The programme consists of courses and assigns credit hours per course on the basis of the necessary student workload.

There are clear policies for assessment and examination, grading, re-sit, academic standing, credit transfer, and MA theses.

As confirmed by students and graduates during the on-site visit, the workload is presently feasible and manageable for the average student.

The programme structure supports the smooth implementation of the curriculum and helps students to reach the defined learning outcomes. The programme consists of modules and assigns Credit-Points (CP) per module on the basis of the necessary student workload. The module descriptions provide detailed descriptions of intended learning outcomes and the information defined in the ECTS Users' Guide.

There are legally binding study and exam regulations which contain all necessary rules and procedures and take into account, where applicable, national requirements. The study programme is designed so that students can study for a certain time at other HEIs or do internships without any extension of their overall study time. The recognition of degrees and periods of study at other HEIs is regulated in accordance with the Lisbon Recognition Convention. The final grade is supplied with a relative grade according to recent DI regulations, due to technical reasons realised only since Fall semester 2020/2021.

The feasibility of the study programme's workload is ensured by a suitable curriculum design, by a plausible calculation of workload, by an adequate number and frequency of examinations, by appropriate support services as well as academic and general student counselling.

The HEI ensures gender equality and non-discrimination. Students with disabilities are provided with affirmative actions concerning time and formal standards/requirements throughout the programme and examinations. The measures taken are periodically reviewed and adapted in accordance with the obtained results.

|  | Exceptional | Exceeds quality requirements | Meets quality requirements | Does not meet quality requirements | n.r. |
|--|-------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------------|------|
| 3.2 Structure  |             |                              |                            |                                    |      |
| 3.2.1* Modular structure of the study programme (Asterisk Criterion) |             |                              | X                          |                                    |      |
| 3.2.2* Study and exam regulations (Asterisk Criterion)               |             |                              | X                          |                                    |      |
| 3.2.3* Feasibility of study workload (Asterisk Criterion)            |             |                              | X                          |                                    |      |
| 3.2.4 Equality of opportunity  |             | X                            |                            |                                    |      |

### 3.3 Didactical concept

As shown in the programme specification document, programme courses address a host of common media and cultural studies topics. Courses feature a combination of seminar-style discussions, peer-teaching, and traditional lectures. Students also watch videos in some courses, and guest speakers are featured in a number of courses. Teaching methods are clearly outlined in course syllabi. Courses are frequently adjusted based on student feedback. For example, one student evaluation survey item asks about the teaching methods employed in the assessed course. Based on feedback to this item, faculty have revised teaching methods and assessment measures.

All teaching materials, including lectures, readings, rubrics, and hand-outs, are uploaded electronically to the course management system (Moodle). Each course has a unique

Moodle site that is accessible to students. This facilitates interaction between course instructors and students. Traditional PowerPoint lectures are used, along with course readings, case studies, and examples and illustrations. Beyond assigned readings, all course syllabi include an “indicative reading list,” which suggests additional readings for students wishing to gain more in-depth knowledge of subject material.

Guest lecturers, either from professional practice or scholarly work, are engaged, and are a staple in MACS programme courses. In addition, prominent scholars frequently address the DI student and faculty bodies.

### Appraisal:

The didactical approaches, methods and tools are convincingly oriented towards the intended learning outcomes. They are described, plausible, and oriented towards the programme objectives. It allows for the application of different teaching and learning methods, such as, for instance case studies. Additionally, the didactical methods are systematically derived from the study programme objectives and are oriented towards the intended learning outcomes of each module, for instance by regularly using case studies.

The accompanying course materials are oriented towards the intended learning outcomes and correspond to the required qualification level. They are up to date and digitally accessible for the students. They are user-friendly and encourage students to engage in further independent studies. In addition, the course materials make the students familiar with different problem-solving approaches from various scientific perspectives. Through interactive work with the materials, the students are enabled to develop their own theory-based problem-solving strategy. The course materials are continuously further developed according to new didactical concepts.

Guest lecturers are invited and contribute to the students' qualification process with their special experience, either from professional practice or scientific work, but also, for example, from culture and politics.

|  | Exceptional | Exceeds quality requirements | Meets quality requirements | Does not meet quality requirements | n.r. |
|--|-------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------------|------|
| 3.3 Didactical concept   |             |                              |                            |                                    |      |
| 3.3.1* Logic and plausibility of the didactical concept (Asterisk Criterion) |             | X                            |                            |                                    |      |
| 3.3.2* Course materials (Asterisk Criterion)                                 |             | X                            |                            |                                    |      |
| 3.3.3 Guest lecturers  |             |                              | X                          |                                    |      |
| 3.3.4 Lecturing tutors   |             |                              |                            | X                                  |      |

### 3.4 Internationality

MACS programme content is explicitly international, in part due to the location of the DI and in part due to the international scope of media and cultural studies. The programme aims to equip students with the ability to continue work or studies in either the Arab region or beyond it.

Courses address the thought of Arab, Western, African, Asian, and other media and cultural studies scholars, and a variety of theories representing diverse schools of international

thought are engaged with. For example, MACS 612 (Mass Communication Theory) reflects the thought of British Cultural Studies, the Chicago School, the Toronto School, the Frankfurt School, and other areas of international theory. Theories of globalization are addressed explicitly in multiple courses, and media of numerous countries, both inside and outside the Arab world, are studied and discussed. In addition to theorising global visual media and culture, MACS 623 (Global Visual Cultures: Art, Aesthetics and Criticism), for example, theorises global modernity, global cultural economy, and international cinema, among other areas of international scope. MACS 633 (Media Ethics & Law in Contemporary Journalistic Practice) compares diverse ethical philosophies and examines multiple legal traditions in the Arab and Western worlds. Most of the other programme courses also contain international themes.

MACS programme recruits students from Qatar and the entire Arab region. This is by design: the programme believes that student diversity will enrich the learning experience.

| Country      | MACS Graduates |           |          | Current MACS Students |                      |
|--------------|----------------|-----------|----------|-----------------------|----------------------|
|              | 2017           | 2018      | 2019     | First Year Students   | Second Year Students |
| Tunisia      | 1              | 0         | 0        | 0                     | 0                    |
| Egypt        | 2              | 0         | 0        | 0                     | 0                    |
| Morocco      | 4              | 8         | 1        | 2                     | 4                    |
| Palestine    | 1              | 2         | 2        | 2                     | 2                    |
| Jordan       | 2              | 1         | 1        | 1                     | 0                    |
| Canada       | 1              | 0         | 0        | 0                     | 0                    |
| Somalia      | 0              | 1         | 0        | 0                     | 0                    |
| Syria        | 0              | 1         | 0        | 3                     | 2                    |
| Sudan        | 0              | 2         | 1        | 1                     | 0                    |
| Algeria      | 0              | 1         | 0        | 1                     | 0                    |
| Qatar        | 0              | 0         | 1        | 0                     | 0                    |
| Yemen        | 0              | 0         | 3        | 0                     | 0                    |
| Chad         | 0              | 0         | 0        | 0                     | 1                    |
| Libya        | 0              | 0         | 0        | 1                     | 0                    |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>11</b>      | <b>16</b> | <b>9</b> | <b>11</b>             | <b>9</b>             |

The MACS programme is small and, in 2019/2020, will consist of just four faculty members. All four current MACS faculty have Western citizenship; three are American and one is British and are of Arab descent.

The MACS programme relies heavily on both Arabic and English. The programme offers MACS 001 (English Language for Media) as a required non-credit course. The Language Center offers a series of English courses for students who need continued assistance with their English language development.

Programme lectures are delivered primarily in Arabic, but English is also employed occasionally by individual professors. Additionally, guest speakers often speak exclusively in English. Course readings are primarily in English, but some Arabic readings are also assigned. Students have the option of producing their papers and MA theses in either Arabic or English.

## Appraisal:

Internationality is the brand of the MACS programme. The acquisition of intercultural competences and skills are at the core of the programme's learning objectives and are strongly promoted.

Most of the students come from various language areas and cultural backgrounds. Thus, discussions in the classroom and group work constantly reflect international aspects. The measures taken to ensure an international composition of the student body show a clear and sustainable effect.

The international composition of the faculty is a fundamental element shaping the profile of the study programme and is promoted by the HEI.

The proportion of foreign language courses and required foreign language materials corresponds with the qualification objectives of the study programme.

|  | Exceptional | Exceeds quality requirements | Meets quality requirements | Does not meet quality requirements | n.r. |
|--|-------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------------|------|
| 3.4 Internationality   |             |                              |                            |                                    |      |
| 3.4.1* International contents and intercultural aspects (Asterisk Criterion) |             | X                            |                            |                                    |      |
| 3.4.2 Internationality of the student body                                   |             | X                            |                            |                                    |      |
| 3.4.3 Internationality of faculty  |             | X                            |                            |                                    |      |
| 3.4.4 Foreign language contents  |             |                              | X                          |                                    |      |

## 3.5 Multidisciplinary competences and skills (Asterisk Criterion)

The programme is attentive to the need to provide students with practical, transferable skills. The programme's sixth learning outcome is focused on allowing students to "Develop writing, debating and public speaking skills." In an effort to fulfil this multi-purpose objective, all MACS courses require significant academic writing, and most have been set up as seminars, with discussion and debate featured. Discussions are intended to solidify the knowledge base, but also to allow students to hone oral communication, argumentation, and debate skills. As the attached syllabi also make clear, leadership and teamwork skills are emphasised through a series of group assignments in multiple programme courses.

Social commitment is encouraged through the media activism course, as well as conferences focused on social and political activism, in defence of broad human rights, or specific causes. The programme also aims to provide students with conflict resolution and handling skills. MACS 633 (Media Ethics and Law in Contemporary Journalistic Practice), for example, requires students to engage with a multitude of ethical philosophies and master multiple ethical decision-making models. As noted earlier in this report, one of the course's assignments asks students to identify a media-related ethical dilemma and propose a detailed solution using an ethical decision-making model.

## Appraisal:

Generic and multidisciplinary skills and competences are well trained. The students acquire communication and public-speaking skills as well as cooperation and conflict handling skills

in accordance with the module descriptions. This is supported by means of suitable didactical and methodological measures.

The acquisition of further multidisciplinary competences, such as leadership skills and broad contextual knowledge, is ensured.

|  | Exceptional | Exceeds quality requirements | Meets quality requirements | Does not meet quality requirements | n.r. |
|--|-------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------------|------|
| 3.5* Multidisciplinary competences and skills (Asterisk Criterion) |             |                              | X                          |                                    |      |

### 3.6 Skills for employment / Employability (Asterisk Criterion)

All DI programme learning outcomes and course learning outcomes adhere to a “transferable skills” learning area, something, which supports student efforts to transition into doctoral work. The MACS programme’s emphasis on broad media, cultural studies, and other social science and humanities knowledge, combined with its focus on practical writing, public speaking, debate, teamwork, leadership, and conflict resolution skills, offer students valuable knowledge and skills for employment. DI believes that students with an MA in Media and Cultural Studies from the DI are well-prepared pursuing media industry careers, communication careers in other industries, or PhD study opportunities.

Evidence compiled so far shows MACS graduates’ success, with some employed in the media industry and others pursuing further graduate study. A number of MACS graduates have already started careers in the media industry, many with Doha-based Al Jazeera. In the 2019 alumni survey, 12 of 14 respondents indicated they are currently employed with the majority of respondents indicating they found their jobs after starting their MA programme at the DI and only two respondents indicating they were employed in fields unrelated to their degree programme. Additionally, two respondents indicated they had been accepted to PhD programmes.

#### Appraisal:

A significant part of the graduates is still not employed in research-oriented employments. But during the on-site visit it turned out that most of them feel overqualified for their current jobs and are looking/waiting for more research-oriented activities.

Nevertheless, the promotion of research-oriented employability - for instance through the integration of theory and practice and through the promotion of multidisciplinary competences and skills - runs as a common thread of the study programme through all its modules.

|   | Exceptional | Exceeds quality requirements | Meets quality requirements | Does not meet quality requirements | n.r. |
|---|-------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------------|------|
| 3.6* Skills for employment / Employability (Asterisk Criterion) |             |                              | X                          |                                    |      |

## **4. Academic environment and framework conditions**

### **4.1 Faculty**

When hiring faculty, the DI, in general, and the MACS programme, in particular, look for individuals who possess PhD degrees from reputable media (or media related) schools and programmes, a track record of peer-reviewed publications, and evidence of university teaching success. Heading into the 2019/2020 academic year, the MACS programme employs four full-time faculty members, including the Head of Programme. According to SAR, four is an appropriate number of faculty, given the programme's typical student body of between 15 and 20, the MACS faculty-to-student ratio ranges from about 1:4 to 1:5.

Faculty members typically serve on three or four committees per year, on average, and advise three MA students per year, on average. Faculty are expected to produce at least one peer-reviewed journal article per year.

As a collective, MACS faculty members are each qualified to teach several courses in the MACS study plan.

Hiring committees interview all candidates. Application files should include a cover letter, CV, writing/research sample, teaching statement, and three references. All current four MACS faculty members hold PhDs from internationally recognised programmes in media studies, mass communication, or cultural studies. Moreover, all four are established researchers and have publication experience. Collectively, the group of four has published 11 books, 53 peer-reviewed journal articles, and 20 book chapters; delivered dozens of presentations at global academic conferences; and accrued multiple awards and honours. MACS programme faculty also have substantive administrative experience: three of the four MACS programme faculty members have served as Heads of Programmes. Most MACS faculty also have extensive experience serving academic journals in various capacities (e.g. founding editors, editorial board members, peer-reviewers).

Prospective faculty must demonstrate high teaching aptitude, speaking to their specific teaching philosophies and unique teaching experiences, and show evidence of favourable student evaluations (if applicable). All four MACS faculty had established track records of teaching excellence prior to joining the DI. Collectively, MACS faculty have taught more than thirty different course topics and have designed many courses themselves. Programme faculty also take part in regular teaching and assessment workshops provided by the DI Teaching, Learning, and Assessment Committee. In addition, they are offered specific measures to further developing their qualification.

Faculty members have worked as research fellows, for media outlets, and in other industries. The MACS programme holds monthly meetings during the academic year. Meetings provide a forum for discussion of teaching progress and challenges. The MACS programme has used meetings as a chance for faculty to help further develop the programme as a whole. Study plan changes have been conceptualised and developed during programme meetings. According to the SAR, the MACS programme places high priority on faculty support for students. In addition to two required weekly office hours per instructor, students are offered opportunities to meet with professors by appointment, and emails are answered quickly. Additionally, academic advisers are required to meet with academic advisees three times per semester to provide guidance on course registration and other academic matters. Thesis advisers are also required to meet regularly with thesis advisees/students.

Beyond these standard matters, the MACS programme also holds a regular "Student-Faculty Forum," which is attended by MACS students and all faculty members. Students dictate the

agenda for forums, which are held at least once per semester. The forums represent an opportunity for students to discuss any concerns or challenges they might have related to their course of study. The MACS programme makes every effort to respond to and address legitimate student concerns expressed at forums.

Faculty also assist students informally with job placement opportunities, writing recommendation letters and using their contacts in Doha to help students find internships and training opportunities, and coordinating with Student Affairs to get students free transportation to and from training/internship duties.

### **Appraisal:**

The faculty is highly committed and enthusiastically engaged in teaching, research and students' support. Even when their teaching assignments in other study programmes are taken into account, the structure and number of the faculty correspond to the programme requirements and ensure that the students reach the intended qualification objectives. The faculty's composition, consisting of full-time lecturers, guarantees that both the academic standards and the requirements of professional practice are fully satisfied.

The faculty's outstanding academic qualification is underlined by scientific publications. The faculty has extensive research and teaching experience which corresponds well to the research focus of the programme. The pedagogical and didactical qualification of the faculty correspond to the requirements and objectives of the study programme. The HEI verifies the qualifications of the faculty members by means of an established procedure. Specific measures for the further qualification of the faculty members are implemented.

The practical business experience of the faculty corresponds to the requirement of the programme to integrate theory and practice.

The faculty members cooperate with each other for the purpose of tuning the modules towards the overall qualification objectives. Meetings of all those teaching in the programme take place regularly. In addition, projects and/or courses are conducted cooperatively.

The faculty members are available for the students outside the specified office hours as well. The students are "fully content" with the support they receive.

|   | Exceptional | Exceeds quality requirements | Meets quality requirements | Does not meet quality requirements | n.r. |
|---|-------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------------|------|
| <b>4.1 Faculty</b>  |             |                              |                            |                                    |      |
| 4.1.1 Structure and quantity of faculty in * relation to curricular requirements (Asterisk Criterion)                                     |             |                              | X                          |                                    |      |
| 4.1.3 Pedagogical / didactical qualification * of faculty (Asterisk Criterion)  |             |                              | X                          |                                    |      |
| 4.1.4 Practical business experience of faculty  |             |                              | X                          |                                    |      |
| 4.1.5 Internal cooperation (Asterisk * Criterion)   |             | X                            |                            |                                    |      |
| 4.1.6 Student support by the faculty * (Asterisk Criterion)   |             | X                            |                            |                                    |      |
| 4.1.7(Student support in distance learning *) (only relevant and an Asterisk Criterion for blended-learning/distance learning programmes) |             |                              |                            | X                                  |      |

## 4.2 Programme management

The MACS Head of Programme leads all areas of programme administration. Specifically, duties include the day-to-day business of programme reporting, course scheduling, registration, thesis and academic adviser assignments, event planning, representing the programme in the School Executive Council, serving as point-of-contact for programme students and faculty, and faculty recruitment, hiring and evaluation.

Additionally, the Head of Programme oversees study plan changes, quality assurance initiatives, and collaborative opportunities with other institutions, leads student recruitment and admissions efforts, and coordinates efforts to add website content and build library media resources.

Programme faculty provide formal assistance to the Head of Programme. The Head of Programme is also aided by both a programme-specific administrative assistant, a school administrative assistant, and colleagues in the Office of the Registrar, Student Affairs, the Office of Institutional Effectiveness, and other DI administrative units.

The primary MACS programme administrative assistant works closely with the Head of Programme and other members of the faculty. Specific duties include syllabus editing (including ensuring syllabi follow DI requirements), meeting and event scheduling, taking program meeting minutes, English-to-Arabic and Arabic-to-English translation, preparing reports and data as needed, facilitating and organising events and guest speaking engagements, sending out announcements, prepping course materials for faculty members; and liaising with the Office of the Registrar, Library, Student Affairs, and Communications and External Relations department.

The administrative assistant also serves as a key point-of-contact for MACS students, particularly in the areas of rules and regulations, form processing, course registration, requests for withdrawal, appeals, enrolment, and MA thesis submissions. Additionally, the administrative assistant sends out announcements to faculty and students regarding important events, including regularly scheduled Student-Faculty forums. The administrative assistant is evaluated periodically by the Head of Programme and is offered opportunities for advancement within the DI.

Most full-time DI students are required to work on campus as part of their assistantships, and MACS programme faculty members frequently hire MACS students as assistants (on research, teaching, and administrative/service work). A school administrative assistant also provides more general support, particularly on school and DI-wide initiatives.

### Appraisal:

The programme director is very convincingly committed in heading the programme effectively as well as efficiently. He successfully takes initiatives to promote the systematic development of the study programme in a manner, which includes all relevant groups.

The administrative staff acts as a service provider for students and faculty, as impressively has been evidenced and confirmed during the on-site visit. The process organization and administrative support for students and faculty is really excellent and exceptional.

|  | Exceptional | Exceeds quality requirements | Meets quality requirements | Does not meet quality requirements | n.r. |
|--|-------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------------|------|
| 4.2 Programme management   |             |                              |                            |                                    |      |
| 4.2.1* Programme Director (Asterisk Criterion)                                 |             |                              | X                          |                                    |      |
| 4.2.2 Process organization and administrative support for students and faculty |             | X                            |                            |                                    |      |

### 4.3 Cooperation and partnerships

The MACS programme has formal and informal relationships with Qatar University, Northwestern University-Qatar, and the Doha Film Institute. The cooperation with Qatar University has enriched the MACS programme by providing speakers and conference participants from Qatar University, and also adjunct instructors (who have taught MACS courses on two separate occasions). The cooperation with Northwestern University-Qatar, which is being finalised in Fall 2019, will witness joint research symposiums for students and faculty beginning in Spring 2020.

A cooperation with the Doha Film Institute (DFI) has been organised by the DI's Journalism programme, which shares a Programme Head with and is a sister of the MACS programme. MACS students will also benefit from this partnership; they will be provided opportunities to attend free film screenings, and also volunteer at a large annual film festival. As of the time of this writing, a Memorandum of Understanding between DFI and DI is being prepared and near finalisation.

The MACS programme has formal partnerships with the Al-Jazeera Media Network and the Qatar News Agency, and an informal relationship with The New Arab. These partnerships have been established with the dual intention of providing students with training and work opportunities during their study programme and creating networking prospects.

### Appraisal:

The scope and nature of cooperation with HEI, other academic institutions and networks and with business enterprises and other institutions relevant for the programme are plausibly presented. The agreements forming the basis of the cooperation are documented. The cooperation is actively pursued and has a clear impact on the conception and

implementation of the study programme. All such activities contribute to the development of the students' qualification and skills.

|   | Exceptional | Exceeds quality requirements | Meets quality requirements | Does not meet quality requirements | n.r. |
|---|-------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------------|------|
| 4.3 Cooperation and partnerships  |             |                              |                            |                                    |      |
| 4.3.1(*) Cooperation with HEIs and other academic institutions or networks (Asterisk Criterion for cooperation programmes)                                  |             |                              | X                          |                                    |      |
| 4.3.2(*) Cooperation with business enterprises and other organisations (Asterisk Criterion for educational and vocational programmes, franchise programmes) |             |                              | X                          |                                    |      |

#### 4.4 Facilities and equipment

Currently, the campus includes 14 primary lecture-style classrooms, two large auditoriums available for larger lectures, one seminar-style classroom, and both student and faculty residences. All DI classrooms are "smart classrooms", integrating technology and allowing for PowerPoint, video, and audio presentations. All students, faculty, and administrative staff are provided free Internet access throughout campus: in classrooms, the library, residences, cafeterias, gym, and all other campus locations. The IT department provides technical support during normal working hours.

In addition to a general computer lab, the campus also has a journalism computer lab/newsroom and a journalism studio. MACS students may use the journalism equipment (cameras, microphones, and editing suite and software) upon request and as needed.

The entire campus, including parking areas, entrances, and classrooms, is disabled person-accessible. There is also a nurse-operated health clinic, which is free for students and operates during normal university hours.

All MACS students have direct access to the DI's growing research library, as well as the Qatar National Library (QNL), including all of its databases.

According to the DI, the library features a total of 66,317 book titles, including a total of 2,642 media-related book titles. According to its website, QNL "has more than one million books in its collections, along with more than 500,000 eBooks, periodicals and newspapers, and special collections". DI students may also borrow from the library at Qatar University, which is situated near the DI campus.

MACS faculty members and the DI library staff update the library with relevant books, textbooks and other sources. The allocated budget is sufficient to update the collections regularly. All literature assigned in course syllabi is available either in the DI library or is uploaded directly to and available on individual course Moodle sites. The library is open from 7:30 a.m. – 10 p.m. during the work week (Sunday – Thursday) and from 9 a.m. – 9 p.m. on Saturdays. The library is staffed appropriately and holds regular library orientations, database training sessions, and other workshops for students and faculty. The library features study rooms, quiet spaces, and computers.

Combined, the DI and QNL subscribe to more than 216 databases, including the Communication and Mass Media Complete database, which is a staple of media studies research. At initial student registration, the DI library provides all new students with unique DI

barcode login credentials. Students are then able to access online resources from anywhere in the world via the internet for the duration of their DI study period.

### Appraisal:

Facilities and equipment are totally appropriate to the requirements. The teaching rooms and labs are equipped with state-of-the-art technology. For special contents of the curriculum (e.g. business games, role-playing games, virtual elements), the HEI possesses appropriate rooms, including the specific technical components needed.

The library is accessible during most of the day. Access to relevant digital media is available from the students' home. Qualified library staff is there to advise students.

|   | Exceptional | Exceeds quality requirements | Meets quality requirements | Does not meet quality requirements | n.r. |
|---|-------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------------|------|
| 4.4 Facilities and equipment  |             |                              |                            |                                    |      |
| 4.4.1* Quantity, quality, media and IT equipment of teaching and group rooms (Asterisk Criterion) |             |                              | X                          |                                    |      |
| 4.4.2* Access to literature (Asterisk Criterion)  |             |                              | X                          |                                    |      |

### 4.4 Additional services

The DI operates a DI Academic and Career Advising Unit. This unit holds career events, advises students on job preparation, and informs them of job opportunities. This unit uses an official "DI Student Careers" email address to send out regular job announcements. It is also worth noting here that the DI holds an annual career fair. In addition to the services provided by the Career and Academic Advising Unit, the DI's Language Centre carries out a number of important (and related) services for students. In the 2019/20 academic year, the Language Centre will deliver workshops on CV and cover letter writing, Arabic oral presentation skills, English oral presentation skills, professional writing, and personal statements.

According to the SAR, alumni activities have been sparse, given the recent establishment of the DI, but plans are in place for these to be substantially increased.

Some alumni activities have been held, facilitated jointly by Student Affairs and the Communications and External Relations department, and, briefly, by an Alumni Office. A new alumni relations officer has been hired and will take up appointment soon.

As of the start of the current academic year (2019-2020), the responsibilities of the Alumni Office have been assigned to the Communications and External Relations department, which has initiated the following actions:

- Prepared a set of Alumni policies and regulations, which are now in the editing phase.
- Began work on the first large, formal Alumni gathering, which is tentatively scheduled for early Spring 2020.

## Appraisal:

Career counselling and placement services are offered to the students and graduates to promote their employability. The HEI provides sufficient resources.

An alumni organization has been set up with the aim of developing an alumni network.

|  | Exceptional | Exceeds quality requirements | Meets quality requirements | Does not meet quality requirements | n.r. |
|--|-------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------------|------|
| 4.5 Additional services                        |             |                              |                            |                                    |      |
| 4.5.1 Career counselling and placement service |             |                              | X                          |                                    |      |
| 4.5.2 Alumni Activities                        |             |                              | X                          |                                    |      |

## 4.6 Financing of the study programme (Asterisk Criterion)

The DI is financed through a Qatari state grant, providing by far the most significant portion of funding. The DI covers all expenses for international students, including free tuition, a monthly stipend, free national health insurance, and free accommodation. Additionally, students are provided with free transportation inside Qatar. Qatari students are fee-exempt but are not provided with housing, health insurance, or a monthly stipend.

## Appraisal:

During the on-site visit DI presented that the study programme is funded for the entire accreditation period so that students will be able to complete their studies. DI confirmed that there is no lack of financial means.

|  | Exceptional | Exceeds quality requirements | Meets quality requirements | Does not meet quality requirements | n.r. |
|--|-------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------------|------|
| 4.6* Financing of the study programme (Asterisk Criterion) |             |                              | X                          |                                    |      |

## **5 Quality assurance and documentation**

The DI's Office of Institutional Effectiveness (OIE) provides a framework and guidance for assuring the quality of academic programmes, research, academic services, administrative services, and public service at the DI. The MACS programme works within this framework to assure quality.

With the help of the OIE, the MACS programme developed its programme specification (see above p.6). The programme has revised the document to ensure that its programme learning outcomes are appropriately assessed. According to the SAR, the last meaningful revision to the document occurred in September and October 2018, when programme faculty met as a collective to improve the document – including the programme's mission, goals and programme learning outcomes – under the guidance of the OIE.

The programme holds a monthly meeting, chaired by the Head of Programme and attended by all faculty. One purpose of the meeting is to discuss course contents, assessments, syllabi construction, student affairs, and research. All faculty members can suggest meeting agenda items by emailing the MACS administrative assistant or Head of Programme.

Beyond these macro-level steps to improve and assure quality in the programme, individual faculty members are required to maintain high standards of quality. Faculty self-evaluate performances in teaching, research, and service. The MACS Head of Programme carries out primary evaluations of individual faculty members, discusses evaluations with faculty members, and highlights areas of potential improvement. The Head of Programme meets individually with faculty members on individual basis (as needed) to provide mentorship and guidance, particularly in the areas of research and student learning.

To ensure the involvement of all relevant stakeholders in the DI quality assurance process, students, faculty, and relevant administrative staff are represented in the Teaching, Learning, and Assessment Committee, and the Institutional Effectiveness and Quality Assurance Committee. The DI's Teaching, Learning, and Assessment Committee developed a Programme Annual Monitoring Report template, which documents and records the process of annual programme review. It also includes a programme learning outcome assessment process, which features a template and a section, which considers the results of different surveys.

The student course evaluation process is characterised by a three-pronged process. First, at the conclusion of each semester, students are asked to fill out anonymous, individual course evaluations. The OIE collects these data and sends them to course instructors and Heads of Programme. Final results include both quantitative and qualitative data.

Second, and also at the conclusion of each semester, all DI instructors use a specially designed form to comment on the student evaluation survey results for their courses. Both, collected student evaluation results and the instructor feedback form are required to be included as part of an end-of-semester "course file" submitted by each instructor to the OIE.

Third, Heads of Programmes use the Instructor Course Feedback Form to report to the relevant School Dean regarding all taught courses, with specific reference to both student course evaluation results and instructor feedback on student course evaluations. Programmes are expected to address any glaring weaknesses in course design or delivery with faculty members. Measures for teaching improvement are implemented on a continuous basis.

Furthermore, students and alumni also evaluate and provide programme feedback through annual Graduate Student Exit and Alumni surveys. The results of these surveys are addressed in the Programme Annual Monitoring Report template and improvement plans to the programme are subsequently made. All improvements are communicated to students via emails, meetings with the students and/or meetings with the DI Student Council.

The MACS programme also holds at least one “Student-Faculty Forum” per semester. These forums provide an opportunity for MACS students to address concerns and grievances directly with MACS faculty. The MACS Head of Programme is required to submit a report to the DI President regarding each forum, including reference to remedial measures.

Although the DI remains a relatively new institution for higher learning, formal external evaluation mechanisms exist, with plans to establish more under way.

As for third party evaluations, the DI has made a decision that each programme will be evaluated externally for accreditation by an internationally acting quality assurance agency. The MACS programme is one of the first two programmes to be reviewed externally.

The programme is documented in detail on the programme page of the DI official website. The website explains the programme’s mission and provides descriptions of the entry requirements and programme structure, including course descriptions. Additionally, the website provides profiles of the programme’s faculty members, a description of possible career destinations, and instructions on how to apply for admission. All DI academic policies and bylaws are also accessible and found on the DI’s website.

The programme is also documented in a programme brochure, which is scheduled to be updated in 2019/2020. The brochure is distributed at “Open Day” events and other recruiting activities (on and off campus), at academic conferences, and to guests.

News and information about the DI, including the MACS programme and its faculty and students, is published regularly in Zajel, a monthly e-newspaper published by the Communications and External Relations department at DI. Zajel includes information about new DI developments, publications, research grants, awards, conferences, and events.

Additionally, the DI uses its pages on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube to publish and broadcast news about the Institute, including the MACS programme and its faculty. The MACS programme publicises all its events through the Communications and External Relations department, which is responsible for communicating the activities of DI’s schools and programmes to the public.

In general, all DI news and events are published via the Communications and External Relations department. The Communications and External Relations department also prepares flyers for and sends out regular email announcements about events, including those put on by the MACS programme. The DI website has been recently updated. A recently launched Student YouTube channel also produces content quite regularly, with MACS students figuring prominently into production.

## Appraisal:

The DI uses administration, faculty, and student feedback to make changes to the programme as necessary. They continue to seek ways to improve the programme continuously.

Programme review involves assessment of outcomes, and an examination of admissions, graduation, and grades data. Di-Quality Assurance is a system used to ensure that the institution's academic standards are well defined and verified, are consistent with similar standards locally and internationally, and the quality level of learning, research and community involvement are adequate, and meet stakeholders' expectations. The periodic review of academic programmes is a cornerstone activity within this system and essentially serves to verify that DI's academic programmes meet international standards of academic excellence through a self-reflection process. The SAR mentions some examples of reaction, based on results of the programme council meetings.

A quality assurance and development procedure, which systematically and continuously monitors and develops the quality of the programme with respect to its contents, processes, and outcomes, has been set up. It takes into account the evaluation results and the analysis on student workload, success rate, and graduate employment. Faculty members and students participate in the respective committees to plan and assess the quality assurance and development procedures. Responsibilities are clearly defined.

Evaluation by the students is carried out on a regular basis and in accordance with a prescribed procedure; the outcomes are communicated to the students and provide input for the quality development process. The same takes place for quality control by the faculty and for the external evaluation: The outcomes are communicated and provide input for the quality development process.

The study programme is described in detail. This documentation is constantly updated and easily accessible for interested parties both in print and in digital form, which ensures a high level of transparency. The HEI regularly publishes current news and information – both quantitative and qualitative – about the study programme.

|  | <b>Exceptional</b> | <b>Exceeds quality requirements</b> | <b>Meets quality requirements</b> | <b>Does not meet quality requirements</b> | <b>n.r.</b> |
|--|--------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|-------------|
| 5.1* Quality assurance and quality development with respect to contents, processes and outcomes (Asterisk Criterion) |                    |                                     | X                                 |   |             |
| 5.2 Instruments of quality assurance   |                    |                                     |                                   |   |             |
| 5.2.1 Evaluation by students   |                    | X                                   |                                   |   |             |
| 5.2.2 Evaluation by faculty  |                    | X                                   |                                   |   |             |
| 5.2.3 External evaluation by alumni, employers and third parties   |                    | X                                   |                                   |   |             |
| 5.3 Programme documentation  |                    |                                     |                                   |   |             |
| 5.3.1* Programme description (Asterisk Criterion)  |                    | X                                   |                                   |   |             |
| 5.3.2 Information on activities during the academic year   |                    |                                     | X                                 |   |             |

# Quality profile

**HEI:** Doha Institute for Graduate Studies, Qatar

**Master programme:** Media and Cultural Studies

|  |  | Exceptional | Exceeds quality requirements | Meets quality requirements | Does not meet quality requirements | n.r. |
|--|--|-------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------------|------|
| <b>1 Objectives</b>                                  |  |             |                              |                            |                                    |      |
| 1.1*   | Objectives of the study programme (Asterisk Criterion)   |             | X                            |                            |                                    |      |
| 1.2*   | International orientation of the study programme design (Asterisk Criterion)   |             |                              | X                          |                                    |      |
| 1.3  | Positioning of the study programme   |             |                              |                            |                                    |      |
| 1.3.1  | Positioning of the study programme in the educational market   |             | X                            |                            |                                    |      |
| 1.3.2  | Positioning of the study programme on the job market for graduates („Employability“)                                 |             |                              |                            | X                                  |      |
| 1.3.3  | Positioning of the study programme within the HEI's overall strategic concept  |             | X                            |                            |                                    |      |
| <b>2 Admission</b>                                   |  |             |                              |                            |                                    |      |
| 2.1*   | Admission requirements (Asterisk Criterion)  |             | X                            |                            |                                    |      |
| 2.2  | Counselling for prospective students   |             | X                            |                            |                                    |      |
| 2.3*   | Selection procedure (if relevant)  |             | X                            |                            |                                    |      |
| 2.4(*)   | Professional experience (if relevant; Asterisk Criterion for master programmes that require professional experience) |             |                              |                            |                                    | X    |
| 2.5*   | Ensuring foreign language proficiency (Asterisk Criterion)   |             |                              |                            | X                                  |      |
| 2.6*   | Transparency and documentation of admission procedure and decision (Asterisk Criterion)                              |             |                              | X                          |                                    |      |
| <b>3. Contents, structure and didactical concept</b> |  |             |                              |                            |                                    |      |
| 3.1  | Contents   |             |                              |                            |                                    |      |
| 3.1.1*   | Logic and conceptual coherence (Asterisk Criterion)  |             | X                            |                            |                                    |      |
| 3.1.2*   | Rationale for degree and programme name (Asterisk Criterion)   |             |                              |                            | X                                  |      |
| 3.1.3*   | Integration of theory and practice (Asterisk Criterion)  |             |                              | X                          |                                    |      |
| 3.1.4  | Interdisciplinary thinking   |             |                              | X                          |                                    |      |
| 3.1.5  | Ethical aspects  |             |                              |                            | X                                  |      |
| 3.1.6*   | Methods and scientific practice (Asterisk Criterion)   |             |                              | X                          |                                    |      |
| 3.1.7*   | Examination and final thesis (Asterisk Criterion)  |             |                              |                            | X                                  |      |
| 3.2  | Structure  |             |                              |                            |                                    |      |
| 3.2.1*   | Modular structure of the study programme (Asterisk Criterion)  |             |                              |                            | X                                  |      |

|   | Exceptional | Exceeds quality requirements | Meets quality requirements | Does not meet quality requirements | n.r. |
|---|-------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------------|------|
| 3.2.2* Study and exam regulations (Asterisk Criterion)  |             |                              | X                          |                                    |      |
| 3.2.3* Feasibility of study workload (Asterisk Criterion)   |             |                              | X                          |                                    |      |
| 3.2.4 Equality of opportunity   |             | X                            |                            |                                    |      |
| 3.3 Didactical concept  |             |                              |                            |                                    |      |
| 3.3.1* Logic and plausibility of the didactical concept (Asterisk Criterion)  |             | X                            |                            |                                    |      |
| 3.3.2* Course materials (Asterisk Criterion)  |             | X                            |                            |                                    |      |
| 3.3.3 Guest lecturers   |             |                              | X                          |                                    |      |
| 3.3.4 Lecturing tutors  |             |                              |                            |                                    | X    |
| 3.4 Internationality  |             |                              |                            |                                    |      |
| 3.4.1* International contents and intercultural aspects (Asterisk Criterion)  |             | X                            |                            |                                    |      |
| 3.4.2 Internationality of the student body  |             | X                            |                            |                                    |      |
| 3.4.3 Internationality of faculty   |             | X                            |                            |                                    |      |
| 3.4.4 Foreign language contents   |             |                              | X                          |                                    |      |
| 3.5* Multidisciplinary competences and skills (Asterisk Criterion)  |             |                              | X                          |                                    |      |
| 3.6* Skills for employment / Employability (Asterisk Criterion)   |             |                              | X                          |                                    |      |
| <b>4. Academic environment and framework conditions</b>   |             |                              |                            |                                    |      |
| 4.1 Faculty   |             |                              |                            |                                    |      |
| 4.1.1* Structure and quantity of faculty in relation to curricular requirements (Asterisk Criterion)  |             |                              | X                          |                                    |      |
| 4.1.2* Academic qualification of faculty (Asterisk Criterion)   |             | X                            |                            |                                    |      |
| 4.1.3* Pedagogical / didactical qualification of faculty (Asterisk Criterion)   |             |                              | X                          |                                    |      |
| 4.1.4 Practical business experience of faculty  |             |                              | X                          |                                    |      |
| 4.1.5* Internal cooperation (Asterisk Criterion)  |             | X                            |                            |                                    |      |
| 4.1.6* Student support by the faculty (Asterisk Criterion)  |             | X                            |                            |                                    |      |
| 4.1.7( Student support in distance learning<br>*) (only relevant and an Asterisk Criterion for blended-learning/distance learning programmes) |             |                              |                            |                                    | X    |
| 4.2 Programme management  |             |                              |                            |                                    |      |
| 4.2.1* Programme Director (Asterisk Criterion)  |             | X                            |                            |                                    |      |
| 4.2.2 Process organization and administrative support for students and faculty  |             | X                            |                            |                                    |      |
| 4.3 Cooperation and partnerships  |             |                              |                            |                                    |      |
| 4.3.1( Cooperation with HEIs and other<br>*) academic institutions or networks (Asterisk Criterion for cooperation                            |             |                              | X                          |                                    |      |

|  |  | Exceptional | Exceeds quality requirements | Meets quality requirements | Does not meet quality requirements | n.r. |
|--|--|-------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------------|------|
| <b>programmes)</b>                           |  |             |                              |                            |                                    |      |
| 4.3.2(                                       | Cooperation with business enterprises<br>*) and other organisations (Asterisk Criterion for educational and vocational programmes, franchise programmes) |             |                              |                            | X                                  |      |
| 4.4  | Facilities and equipment   |             |                              |                            |                                    |      |
| 4.4.1*                                       | Quantity, quality, media and IT equipment of teaching and group rooms (Asterisk Criterion)   |             |                              | X                          |                                    |      |
| 4.4.2*                                       | Access to literature (Asterisk Criterion)  |             |                              | X                          |                                    |      |
| 4.5  | Additional services  |             |                              |                            |                                    |      |
| 4.5.1  | Career counselling and placement service   |             |                              |                            | X                                  |      |
| 4.5.2  | Alumni Activities  |             |                              |                            | X                                  |      |
| 4.6*   | Financing of the study programme (Asterisk Criterion)  |             |                              |                            |                                    |      |
| <b>5 Quality assurance and documentation</b> |  |             |                              |                            |                                    |      |
| 5.1*   | Quality assurance and quality development with respect to contents, processes and outcomes (Asterisk Criterion)  |             |                              |                            | X                                  |      |
| 5.2  | Instruments of quality assurance   |             |                              |                            |                                    |      |
| 5.2.1  | Evaluation by students   |             |                              | X                          |                                    |      |
| 5.2.2  | Evaluation by faculty  |             |                              | X                          |                                    |      |
| 5.2.3  | External evaluation by alumni, employers and third parties   |             |                              | X                          |                                    |      |
| 5.3  | Programme documentation  |             |                              |                            |                                    |      |
| 5.3.1*                                       | Programme description (Asterisk Criterion)   |             |                              | X                          |                                    |      |
| 5.3.2  | Information on activities during the academic year   |             |                              |                            | X                                  |      |