

Europe and International Department

## EVALUATION AND ACCREDITATION DOCUMENTS

### **Bachelor of law**

**King Saud University  
Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia**

**OCTOBER 2018**

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## EVALUATION REPORT

Bachelor of Law

King Saud University  
Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

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**August 2018**



The King Saud University (KSU) has mandated the Hcéres to perform the evaluation of its Bachelor of Law. The evaluation is based on the "External Evaluation Standards" of foreign study programs, adopted by the Hcéres Board on October 4<sup>th</sup>, 2016. These standards are available on the Hcéres website ([hceres.fr](http://hceres.fr)).

**For the Hcéres<sup>1</sup> :**

Michel Cosnard, President

**On behalf of the experts committee<sup>2</sup> :**

Philippe Didier, President of the committee

In accordance with the decree n°2014-1365, November 14<sup>th</sup>, 2014,

<sup>1</sup> The president of Hcéres "contresigne les rapports d'évaluation établis par les comités d'experts et signés par leur président." (Article 8, alinéa 5) — "countersigns the assessment reports made by the experts' committees and signed by their president" (article 8, alinea 5).

<sup>2</sup> The evaluation reports "sont signés par le président du comité". (Article 11, alinéa 2) — "are signed by the president of the committee" (article 11, alinea 2).

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# I. STUDY PROGRAM IDENTITY SHEET

## University/institution:

King Saud University

## Component, faculty or department concerned:

College of Law and Political Science

## Program's title:

Bachelor of Law

## Year of creation and context:

King Saud University was established in 1957. A department of law was set up in 1979, the first of its kind in the Kingdom. The department was part of the College of Commerce alongside the department of economics, the department of business administration and the department of political science.

In 2006, a full College of Law and Political Science was established with 5 departments. In 2010, they were reduced to three: public law, private law and political sciences.

The Bachelor of Law program was created in 1979 when the Department of law was established as a part of the College of Commerce.

## Site(s) where the program is taught (Town and campus):

The program is offered in Riyadh (KSA). However, following Saudi law male and female students are segregated and attend classes on two different campuses. Each campus has its own buildings and staff. However, they are part of the same program and they are both under the authority of the same Dean. The Dean is not allowed to visit the female campus but a female vice-dean acts as his representative in the female campus.

The female campus is in the same area of Riyadh but a few kilometers away from the male campus.

## Program director:

- Surname, first name: Dr Othman Taler Talbi
- Profession and grade: Head of the Private Law department, assistant professor
- Main subject taught: private law.

# METHODS AND RESULTS OF THE PREVIOUS ACCREDITATION(S)

## Methodology and agency

A previous evaluation was carried out by the then-AERES in 2012. It was performed according to the AERES standard practice: a self-assessment report was sent by the College and was followed by an on-site visit by an expert committee.

## Results:

### Strengths:

- Sound organizational structure
- Sufficient funding to meet the requirements
- The College's commitment to improving the degree – particularly by bringing into line with the current requirements of the job markets
- Impressive organization of the quality unit
- Teaching meets the expectations of the job market, in the Saudi Arabian context
- Small student numbers with a positive rate of academic supervision.

#### Weaknesses:

- Insufficient critical approaches to law
- Insufficient foreign language learning
- Insufficient harmonization of modules and knowledge testing between the male and female streams
- Documentary collections are old and do not meet teaching needs
- No statistical processing of raw data, undermining management of the training program.

Based on its analysis, the committee made the following “desired recommendations”:

- Develop a more critical approach to law
- Introduce foreign language lessons throughout the Bachelor of Law degree
- Continue with the plans to create a Master of law by ensuring the teaching between the bachelor and the Master correlates so that the former leads logically on to the latter. The Master may comprise several sub specialties meeting the needs of the socioeconomic and institutional environment and society in Saudi Arabia
- In the last year of the bachelor, offer specializations that would function like an introduction to the future subspecialties of the Master.
- Enrich the documentary collections by providing students with up-to-date documentation and setting up bibliographic monitoring.
- Limit the number of attempts that students can make to pass a module.
- Use assistants in education as a teaching resources.

The program was issued a grade “A”.

## HUMAN AND MATERIAL RESOURCES DEDICATED TO THE PROGRAM

### Human resources

	Male	Female
Professors	5	0
Associate professors	7	0
Assistant professors	19	10
Lecturers and assistants	81	31
Outside ad hoc instructors	11	0

### Buildings and equipments

Both the male and female campuses are modern. They are in accordance with the number of students, even if it has grown dramatically. They offer a pleasant working environment.

The premises have been adapted to accommodate students and staffers with special needs.

	Male campus	Female campus
Offices*	90	63
Computers	104	45
Support staff	55	128
Classrooms** ***	54	47
Conference rooms and event rooms	3	2
Computer labs	4	8
Remote teaching studio	9	15
Library****	1	1
Instructor lounge	3	3
Infirmary	1	1

Canteen	1	3
Refreshment bar	2	2
Play room	1	1

\* Offices are for instructors but some are for student clubs and societies.

\*\* Classrooms are fitted with a computer, a projector and a smart whiteboard.

\*\*\* Among the classrooms, several are specifically devoted to exams. They are fitted with closed circuit cameras for monitoring students. In addition to the rooms listed, there exist a mock courtroom and a mock UN security council-style room.

\*\*\*\* The library is specific to the College and is dedicated to Law and Political science. It is spacious and pleasant.

The book collection is mainly Arabic. The book collection in English (and even more for French books) is limited and seems outdated. Students have access to online resources both national and international (Saudi Digital Library, Lexis-Nexis...).

## STUDENT POPULATION: EVOLUTION AND TYPOLOGY OVER THE LAST 4 YEARS

Years	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017
<b>Students</b>	<b>313</b>	<b>581</b>	<b>827</b>	<b>1057</b>	<b>1497</b>
<b>Female students</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>309</b>	<b>587</b>	<b>885</b>	<b>1169</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>417</b>	<b>890</b>	<b>1414</b>	<b>1942</b>	<b>2666</b>

## II. ON-SITE VISIT DESCRIPTION

### COMPOSITION OF THE EXPERTS PANEL

- Philippe DIDIER, Professor at Paris Descartes University, Chairman of the committee
- Mathieu Cardon, Associate Professor at Jean Moulin University in Lyon
- Johanna Guillaumé, Professor at the University of Rouen Normandy, Dean of the Faculty of Law
- Maxime Touchais, PhD student at Paris Descartes University.

The Hcéres was represented by Martin Lebeau, scientific advisor.

### ON-SITE VISIT DESCRIPTION

- Date of the visit:

The visit took place on Sunday April 8<sup>th</sup> and Monday April 9<sup>th</sup>, 2018.

- Summary of the proceedings:

Before the visit took place, the self-assessment report had been received by the experts on February 14<sup>th</sup>, 2018. A proposed planning for the visit was given on March 19<sup>th</sup>. It was discussed and approved during a preparatory meeting, held in Paris at the HCERES headquarter on March 21<sup>st</sup>, 2018.

On-site, the visit went ahead according to the planning.

Meetings and visits were scheduled from 8:30 am to 6:00 pm for both days.

All meetings were held in the male campus. During plenary meetings, an audio connection was established with the female campus through which female staff and students could take part in the discussion.

- Organisation of the visit:

Sunday April 8<sup>th</sup>:



- Meeting with the Dean and members of the Faculty council
- Meeting with the Head and members of the Department of Public Law
- Meeting with the Head and members of the Department of Private Law
- Meeting with the Head and members of the Department of Political Science
- Meeting with several alumni and employers
- Meeting with students.

Monday April 9<sup>th</sup>:

- Visit and meeting with the quality office of the College
- Meeting with faculty members from the 3 departments of the College of Law and Political Science, the heads of department being absent.
- Tour of the College building for male students (including teaching rooms, library, exam rooms, conference rooms, staff offices, club and societies offices, teaching room connected to the female campus for class taught by male professors ...)
- A tour of the female campus was given to Pr Johanna Guillaumé alone during which she could meet with female students, instructors and staffers in person.
- In camera meeting with the Dean.

— Cooperation of study program and institution to be accredited:

The College of Law and Political Science of King Saud University has been forthcoming during all the process. The self-assessment report was sent in advance, according to the agreed-on schedule.

During the visit, no request from the committee has been denied. The committee was denied access to no places, no documents or no persons. The visit to the female campus was asked for on the first day of the visit and it was immediately set up for the morrow.

Some follow-up questions and additional documents were asked during the visit and they received speedy answers.

The committee is confident that the conclusion it has reached is based on a fair and full disclosure of all relevant information.

— People met:

**From the College:**

- Dr Mufleh bin Rabiean Al Qahtani, Dean of the College of Law and Political Science, Chairman of the Saudi Human rights society.
- Dr Abadallah Al Ghamedi, vice-Dean for academic affairs
- Dr Adel Abdelkrim, vice-Dean for higher studies
- Dr Abdelaziz Al Hamoudi, vide-Dean for quality assurance
- Dr Othman Taher Talbi, Chairman of the Department of private law
- Dr Abadallah Al Musfer , Chairman of the department of public law
- Faculty members
- Students

**From outside the College :**

- Mansour Abdallah Al-ossaimi, Committee of Experts to the Council of Ministers
- Abdelwahab Nedjr Al-Otaibi, Law firm
- Khaled Abdelrahmane Al-Fakhiri, Human rights society
- Said Nacer Al-Kahtani, Agricultural Development Fund
- Fayçal Nacer Al-Adiyani, law firm
- Khaled Abdelatif Abid, Ministry of Trade and Investment.

During the visit, the committe proceeded to the evaluation of both the Bachelor of Law Program and the Bachelor of Political science. As a result, some meetings and visits were common to both programs while other were specific.

The current valuation report has been written contemporaneously with the evaluation report of the Bachelor of Political science. It addresses issues relevant to both programs in the same way. However, issues specific to one program are dealt with specifically.

### III. PRESENTATION OF THE STUDY PROGRAM

King Saud University is one of the oldest and most prestigious universities in the Kingdom. It is located in Riyadh. Even if the College of Law and Political Science was formally established in 2010, its roots date back more than 40 years.

The Bachelor of Law is a four-year program which aims at giving a general legal education. Due to its success, the program has introduced requirements to limit the number of students. A minimum general average level is required from applicants.

After graduating from the program, students are expected to be able to join the job market in the legal field. Subject to additional professional certification, they can be lawyers or work in a legal department of the Government or of a private firm.

If they wish so, students can further their education by joining a Master's degree program.

To be graduated, student must complete 9 levels of courses, roughly equivalent to 9 semesters, which are delivered on-site. Additional work at home is required. Subjects are taught through lectures, discussions and other interactive exercises. The program includes internships and training in real-life conditions.

The content of the curriculum has been set by mixing foundational subjects which are the core of a legal education according to standard international practice and more technical subjects identified by representatives of the socio-economic world.

The acquisition of knowledge and skills is monitored through a strict examination protocol.

The program is open to male and female students but is delivered on two separate locations.

### PRESENTATION OF THE PROGRAM'S SELF-EVALUATION APPROACH

The program has a strong commitment to quality assurance. The College relies on a Quality Bureau which monitors key indicators of performance.

The self-evaluation report which was sent to the expert committee describes the objectives of the program, its positioning, its structure, including its curriculum, and its management.

It is based on qualitative and quantitative elements which are documented either in the report itself or in its annexes (32). The main report is 80 pages long.

## IV. EVALUATION REPORT

### 1- AIMS OF THE STUDY PROGRAM

**Standard 1-1: The study program has explicit objectives with regard to knowledge and skills to be acquired**

The Bachelor of Law program offered by King Saud University is a degree aimed at giving a general legal education. It aims at giving both theoretical knowledge about legal reasoning and professional skills in the field of law. More precisely, the program is about teaching Saudi Arabian Law which is based on Sharia but distinct from it. In this regard, the program covers both public (constitutional law, administrative law, public international law, ...) and private law (family law, commercial law, general theory of obligation, ...), and give students a strong Islamic culture.

The program follows the requirements set by the National Framework for Higher Education Degrees issued by the Saudi Higher Education Ministry. As such, the program sets its learning outcomes in accordance with the learning outcomes required by the national framework. The syllabus of each course, which is available at all moments to students on the support management system, must state how the course implements the five kinds of learning outcomes set by the National framework.

The objectives of the program are made known through the website of the University. A syllabus is sent at the beginning of each class, summarizing the objectives in terms of knowledge and skills. The document is written by professors and follows guidelines set by the College.

Discussions with students reveal that they were well informed of these objectives and that they made a knowing choice. Their professional aspirations match with the studies they have chosen.

### Standard 1-2: Outcomes in terms of job opportunities and further studies are explicitly stated

Once graduated from the bachelor's degree, graduates can follow two paths: pursue their studies at the master's level or leave studies to enter professional life.

Those who would like to pursue their studies can apply for a master's degree at KSU. Two masters are offered to students, one in public law, the other in private law. The Master of Law degrees of KSU are not part of the current accreditation process and will not be discussed. Graduates can also apply for a master in another university in Saudi Arabia or abroad.

The degree aims at preparing student to hold any position in the legal sector (lawyer, judge, civil servant, ...), and, as a matter of fact, graduates find a job at the end of their studies. In the Saudi job market, not having a master is not an issue to get a job.

King Saud University gives useful information to help student enter the job market. In addition, meetings between students and professionals, such as the career week, are regularly set up by the College.

As a result, it appears that students and other stakeholders are aware of the outcomes in terms of job opportunities and further studies.

## 2 – POSITION OF THE STUDY PROGRAM

### Standard 2-1: The study program states its position in the local, regional, national or international environment, as applicable.

In the Kingdom, eight state funded universities and four private institutions offer a Bachelor's degree program in law. Apart from the traditional international rankings, often unsatisfactory, there is no specific rankings of Saudi universities to assess the position of the program.

From its interviews, the committee understands that among Saudi undergraduates, going to law school is considered second only to going to medical school.

In addition to its privileged location, Riyadh, the College of Law and Political Science is one of the oldest schools of law in the Kingdom. It enjoys a solid reputation among other prestigious schools (such as the Faculty of Economics and Administration (FEA) of the King Abdulaziz University (KAU) in Jeddah).

The College acts as a nursery of talents for senior public and private administration in the Kingdom. It boasts scores of alumni who have reached high positions within the Government. That of course has an impact on the attractiveness of the program which as a result is in high demand.

### Standard 2-2: There is a clear link between the study program and research.

The development of scientific research is the fourth strategic objective of the College's five-year plan (2012-2017) in line with the Saudi national policy that includes research activity among the criteria for the accreditation of a program.

The College of Law and Political Science does not offer a Doctoral research program accredited by the Saudi authorities yet. Nevertheless, with this objective in mind, legal research is gradually being introduced into the curriculum of undergraduate students, followed by the two Master's degrees in private and public law opened in 2015.

A first course, recently introduced, entitled "Legal Research" ("115 Laws") offers students at the 2<sup>nd</sup> level the rudimentary skills to carry out legal research, giving them the main tools; it is a prerequisite for taking courses at the 3<sup>rd</sup> level. It is similar to a research methodology course, very useful for students who have never carried out one: choosing a topic, making a proper bibliography, developing the plan. The objective pursued explains its positioning in the second year. In the 9<sup>th</sup> semester, students follow a course entitled "Research and Training" ("Laws 405") which, despite the ambiguity of its title, seems to offer students the necessary skills to carry out research in the various fields of Law, in particular through practical cases or on specific legal questions which, in some cases, have been asked by institutional partners.

As far as faculty members are concerned, in order to promote scientific production, grants and bonuses, conditional on the signature of a contract or the respect of conditions, are allocated by the College and by the University to research centers and to instructors. The College has a budget of more than 85 000€ to support research works.

The College also publishes some of the works carried out by its own instructors, or by those of other local or regional universities, in the Journal of Law & Political Science (King Saud University Press), only written in Arabic. The topics of the publications are diverse, such as certain aspects of European law or Intellectual Property Rights.

At the College level, research chairs and scientific associations confirm the commitment to promoting research (e.g., the Saudi association of law). However, the College underlines the administrative difficulties and slowness in the organization of international conferences or colloquia.

The variety of academic backgrounds of instructors (Ph.D., particularly in Europe, the United States, North Africa, the Near and Middle East, etc.) contributes to the development of a scientific production of quality, but also rich in terms of thought and method.

### Standard 2-3: The study program explicitly states its relationships with businesses, associations and other cultural or industrial partners, including international partners.

The College seems to maintain strong ties with public institutions, private entities (law firms, etc.) and representatives of civil society (National Human Rights Association, etc.). The presence of former students among their representatives is at the origin of privileged relations.

Together with the partners, in particular through the Advisory Council, the College ensures that the content of training is adapted to changes in the labor market and thus meets the demand inherent in the new legal and judicial professions. The socio-economic representatives note the increase in the number of courses and observe favorably the constant evolution of courses' content for a greater adequacy with the practice.

In 2013, the College created an Internship Committee to strengthen links with institutional partners and contribute to improving professional training. The head of the Center for Training and Legal Consultations also oversees the question of professional success.

The internships are organized in coordination with the College, on the basis of a memorandum of understanding concluded between the host entity and the representative of the College and give rise to an evaluation grid. Students also prepare an internship report that is evaluated. The partners observe the efforts made during the one-semester internships carried out by the students, which meet the demand in a satisfactory manner. The partners believe that the trainees have received practical training and have sufficient knowledge. Most internships lead to recruitment proposals. In this context, employers most often claim to favor an application from a KSU graduate student over one from another university, even if he is ranked lower in his promotion.

In addition to the links between the College and its partners through the Advisory Council, actors from the socio-economic world regularly consult their former professors on current issues. Requests for legal opinion at the Center for Training and Legal Consultations or the Center for Criminal Studies are also frequent.

The strategic plan of the College for the years 2012-2017 confirms the will to establish, through the signing of agreements, an effective local partnership with public or private institutions. These partnerships aim to provide students with opportunities for continuous learning, complementary training or cultural programs. Among the partners contributing to achieving the objectives, in cooperation with the College, are several ministries (Higher Education, Justice...), but also other political and judicial authorities, such as the Office of Investigation and Prosecution or the National Human Rights Association. These partnerships create a true interaction between the institution and society.

#### Standard 2-4: The study program explicitly states the added value of its partnerships with foreign higher education institutions.

With the exception of the agreement signed with the Faculty of Law of the Université Jean Moulin Lyon 3 in 2012, cooperation and partnership agreements with foreign universities and institutes are signed at the level of the University, acting on behalf and for the benefit of all Colleges. In this regard, agreements have been made with French universities since 2008 (Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne, Université Paris Descartes, Institut d'études politiques de Paris); however, their actual benefit for the College could not be assessed.

In the same way, the actual results of agreements signed with US or British Universities such as the one signed with Indiana University, remain to be seen. The College acknowledges the insufficiency of its international partnerships as a weakness.

KSU students do not seem to have the opportunity to spend a year in exchange during their Bachelor program (see also standard 3-7) . Therefore, potential mobility is only considered at the end of the program, in particular in direction of European and American universities. In this context, the setting up of a Campus France Agency in Riyadh helps students wishing to continue their studies in France.

### 3 – STUDY PROGRAM TEACHING STRUCTURE

#### Standard 3-1: The structure of the study program is adapted to the different student academic pathways.

The program is structured in 9 levels. Each level is divided in 5 subjects, each of which is given 2 or 3 credit hours depending on the subject. Each credit hour corresponds to one-hour attendance per week for 15 weeks (length of the semester). As a result, to complete the program, students must attend: 151 (number of credit hours for the whole program) x15 (length of the semester)=2265 attendance hours.

The first two levels (semesters) are common to all programs offered in the University. They act as a refresher course for basic knowledge and skills in math, computing, oral and written communication, research and English language.

The following 7 levels are specific to each program. The Bachelor of Law program requires the completion of 99 credit hours (33 subjects) in Law as well as the completion of 3 credit hours outside the legal field. Additionally, 6 elective credit hours (two subjects) must be chosen from a list of subjects set at University level.

Most subjects in Law have prerequisites: to be able to attend a subject, student must have passed a previous subject which is deemed necessary to understand the following one. This system provides for a gradual specialization of students, from the foundational subject to the more technical one.

To complete the program and get the degree, students must pass all 151 credit hours. There is no make-up exam and students failing a subject must attend again the whole class. No compensation is available between subjects.

The organization of the program is coherent and ensures a progressive acquisition of knowledge and skills.

The elements of the program are made known to students through leaflets and through the website of the College. The Academic Guidance Board offers individual guidance to students. A comprehensive syllabus is prepared for each subject and is available to students.

The program is devised primarily as an initial education preparing for the job market. However, it can be joined as part of continuing education. Specific requests are processed by the Academic Guidance Board.

Students with special needs benefit from the "Universal Accessibility" program that exists at the level of the University. For example, visually impaired students are provided with an assistant to help them take the exam.

### Standard 3-2: The content of the study program is consistent with the requirements of the socioeconomic world.

The law departments emphasize practical knowledge and skills in order to promote the professional integration of its graduates.

The content of the program is devised after a SWOT analysis and with the input of outside stakeholders (legal professions, employers, public authorities ...) through the Advisory Board to the College council.

The content of the program is reviewed every four years in order to take into accounts changes of the job market. For example, some areas of the law ( such as corporate law and arbitration law) are gaining so much importance in the job market that the board has advised that more hours be devoted to them. The curriculum has been amended accordingly as a result. The current curriculum has been set in 2017 and will be effective with the start of the second semester of the academic year 2017/2018. Students are also informed of the evolution of the job market through a career week which is organized once a year.

The current list of subjects covers the main fields of the Law, private and public, as well as some elements of Shariah. It gives a comprehensive education covering a wide spectrum of fields. As such the program is meant to produce a "generalist" legal profile who will be able to meet the needs of Saudi economy and accommodate the job market

In fact, it seems that the job market does not require highly specialized lawyers but, on the contrary, needs generalists who can apply their skills to different settings. . It must be kept in mind that, to a certain extent, law is a new field of activity in the Kingdom. Moreover, some lines of working are now open to women. This results in a high demand for lawyers.

However, the program does contain subjects that relate to foundational issues of research. They are found either during the first level ( "learning, researching and thinking skills" class #140 APP) or during the advanced levels ("Research and training" class #405 LAW). A new subject 'legal research - 115 LAW' has been added to the curriculum as a result of the last review of the program. It is planned to be effective in 2018.

Classes are taught in Arabic. Foreign student may receive additional training in Arabic before or during the program.

All students must attend two compulsory classes of general English during the first year. In addition to that, they may take two elective classes taught in English: 'Legal Terminology – 309 LAW' and/or 'International Trade Law – 422'.

### Standard 3-3: Projects and internships are a key teaching tool, with specific support mechanisms.

Internships are part of the elective classes available during the 9<sup>th</sup> level. The learning outcomes of each internship are agreed on with the Instructor in charge of the class. At the end of the period, students must write a report which is assessed and graded by the instructor.

A new process is planned to allow student who have completed 107 hours to take an internship.

The actual implementation of this novelty should be a priority in order to help students understand the requirements of the working life.

Distinct from the internship during the initial training, law graduates must complete a three-year internship to be able to practice as lawyers. The duration of the internship is reduced to one year for students holding a Master's degree. Doctors are exempt from internships.

Beside internships, the program includes projects which can be taken before the ninth level. Each semester the Internship Board sets a planning of mock cases which are offered to students to take. They result in a live hearing in the mock courtroom.

Mock cases are an important tool but should not be understood as an alternative to actual internships.



#### Standard 3-4: The study program allows students to acquire additional skills that are useful for employment or further study.

The program is mainly focused on the acquisition of knowledge and skills related to the legal field.

Additional skills are garnered by mock trial sessions, conference training, field visits and courses given by speakers from the professional world.

#### Standard 3-5: The study program encourages the use of digital technologies and other innovative teaching methods.

Classes are taught in groups of around 40 students. For subjects in which more than 40 students are enrolled, additional groups are set up. For foundational subjects at the start of the program, it means that the same subject may be taught by many different instructors. Homogeneity is achieved through the syllabus which describes precisely (up to a weekly schedule of topics that must be dealt with) the content of the class and through the supervision of the chief instructor in charge of the subject who coordinates the work of all instructors (see standard 4-1).

Not all topics can be covered by the female Faculty members. For those subjects where female faculty are not available, they are taught by male instructor. However, since strict sex segregation is required by law, male instructors cannot be in the same room with female students. As a result, classes are taught through an audio connection. The male instructor is in an audio booth on the premises of the male campus while his image and sound are displayed in the female campus. He cannot see female students but can hear them. Conversely, they can see and hear him.

For their classes, instructors, in both campuses, enjoy the technological equipment all rooms are fitted with (computer, projector, SMART whiteboard). Wifi is available everywhere on both campuses. Students and instructors have also access to a Learning Management System where syllabuses, additional readings... may be made available.

At all times, students can access information about their courses or their academic status through support management systems (Edugate, SAMER).

Classes are carried out as a mix of lectures and interactive discussions with students. Critical thinking and argumentative skills are considered by most instructors as a central piece of their teachings. Mock trials allow instructors to give students more hands-on approach to legal issues.

#### Standard 3-6: The study program offers specific tools for successful program completion.

The first year of the program acts as a refresher year for students starting the program. They are given a general basis for higher studies which is not specific to the College of Law but which is shared by all Colleges of the University.

Instructors have to ensure office hours in order to answer questions or offer help to students. At the start of each academic year, the Academic Guidance Board welcomes students. It explains the curriculum for each year and introduces the heads of the different departments and services.

Academic Guidance Committees are in place to help students who experience disappointing results. A list of students with the general average below 3/5 is drawn on each semester and is referred to the Academic Guidance Board. Each student is to receive a specific support tailored to his needs. It may include additional teaching hours.

Students who experience serious personal issues ( academic failure, social and psychological distress... ) can be referred to the University guidance board for professional help.

Students with outstanding results are rewarded as well. The prestigious 'Dean's list' is publicly displayed on the premises and students may be called to sit on the different boards of the College as representatives of the students. Students who have made it to the Dean's list also enjoy rewards and the support of the College to carry out personal projects.

#### Standard 3-7: The study program prepares students for the international environment.

Classes are taught in Arabic. The primacy of the Arabic language is understandable since it is the official language of the legal system. Foreign students may receive additional training in Arabic before or during the program to help them cope with the issue.

All students must attend two compulsory classes of general English language during the first year. In addition to that, they may take two elective classes taught in English: 'Legal Terminology – 309 LAW' and/or 'International Trade Law – 422'.

The previous evaluation has listed the scarcity of foreign language classes as a weakness of the program. If some changes have been made, the previous assessment is still valid. It appears that the lack of foreign language skills curb students' ambitions to pursue their studies abroad.

Outbound student mobility is limited. Most students stay with the College during the whole program. However, some may be admitted to other Gulf universities on an individual basis. Inbound students mobility is also limited: the College hosts only about 50 students, both male and female, from outside the Kingdom mainly from Africa and Asia.

The College benefits from the agreements the University has signed with foreign institutions. However, in practice, those agreements have not resulted in foreign students or foreign academics coming to the College or the reverse.

The exchanges with foreign universities, even Gulf universities, is hindered by the lack of mutual recognition of credit hours completed by students in another university.

## 4 – PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

### 4-1: The study program is implemented by a formally identified teaching team.

The College of Law and Political Science is well structured.

It is headed by a dean. There are several consultation bodies. First, the College council headed by the dean, composed of vice-deans, department heads and three members of the teaching staff. Then, an advisory council of the College, which includes external members. This council fosters links between the College and the professional world, in particular by proposing changes to the curriculum with a view to the future professional integration of graduates. Finally, there is also a students' advisory council, whose composition and role are not clear enough.

More specifically concerning the law, the College is composed of two law departments: a Department of Public Law and a Department of Private Law. Each department is headed by a professor and composed of all the instructors in the department. This council plays an important role since it chooses the course coordinators, it proposes the evolution of the study program, it requests the recruitment of instructors and establishes the profile of the position.

In each department, there are six committees that oversee the Bachelor's degree: committee for higher education, committee for the development of quality and academic accreditation, committee for seminars and scientific communication, committee for nominations and grant holders, committee for study programs and books and committee of course coordinators. Each committee is run by an academic rapporteur. The role and objectives of some these committees – except the committee of course coordinators – are not clearly defined.

The public law department has 17 professors, while the private law department has 24. Professors are divided into professors, associate professors and assistant professors. A significant number of these professors are hired through a time-limited contract. The teaching team is supplemented by external speakers from the professional world, thus allowing students to have practical lessons.

Most instructors have obtained their PhD abroad, in France or in common law countries, and many of them are non-Saudi by nationality.

This diversity of training of the Faculty members allows students to benefit from a variety of teaching and assessment methods as well as from a familiarity of both the Latin and Common Law legal thinking.

Due to the large number of students enrolled in the program, some classes are taught in several sections with different instructors. The risk of potential discrepancies between sections is dealt with through a robust coordination process. When a course is divided into several sections, the Department appoints a course coordinator who is in charge of supervising the work of all the instructors involved in the course. All course coordinators are members of the committee of course coordinators. The committee sets the content, the learning outcomes and the examination topics of each course. As a result, all students get the same teaching and are assessed in exactly the same way.

For new instructors, there is mandatory training in teaching methods, assessment methods and computer technology.



#### 4-2: Knowledge is assessed according to specifically stated methods communicated to students

The evaluation of knowledge is carried out according to the Regulation relating to studies and examinations which sets out precisely the rules of validation of the degree. The regulation is available to students and is presented to them at the beginning of the first level.

Knowledge testing procedures are developed by Faculty members. However, the Department may make proposals to improve evaluation methods. Indeed, at the end of each semester, the coordinating professor of the course writes a report which specifies in particular the methods of examinations, which specify the success rate and which is accompanied by copies of students as an example. Thanks to this report, the evaluation methods can be improved.

#### 4-3: The study program works to monitor skills acquisition

There is a course specification for every course. Each course specification sets out the aims of the course, the skills and knowledge a graduate from that course will possess, and how it is taught and assessed.

For each course specification, the course coordinator defines course learning outcome. And for each course learning outcome, he also defines an assessment method and a teaching method. When preparing the examination topic, the course coordinator should specify for each question what course learning outcome is concerned: this ensures the results obtained for each objective and for each student.

There is also a skills booklet that allows students to record all the skills acquired during their training.

#### 4-4: Student numbers and the different enrolment regimes for the study program are clearly identified

The number of students enrolled has increased significantly since 2012.

To be able to enroll in law College, it is necessary to do a preparatory year: a preparatory year in human science or a preparatory year in science. Achieving the preparatory year is not enough, as a minimum result must be obtained. There is therefore a selection system whose criteria are clearly defined.

Despite this selection system, the number of students enrolled each year is well above the number expected by the law College. Certainly, this demonstrates the strong attractiveness of the law College. But it is not certain that the teaching team is sufficient given the sharp increase in the number of students.

#### 4-5: The study program has comprehensive information on graduate outcomes

The program lacks an established, comprehensive and systematic system to track students and know their position after graduation. However, alumni are very involved in the running of the program and the College. Alumni do stay in contact and because of the high position they hold, they are a powerful network that benefit the College.

Internship placement is made easier because of the alumni. Likewise, alumni who hold positions in official bodies often refer questions to the College or ask for reports on new and difficult legal issues.

#### 4-6: The study program is based on a publicly available quality assurance and ethics policy

The College has a quality unit that plays a key role in developing an enhancement strategy. It has developed several evaluation methods: evaluation of teaching by students, evaluation of courses by instructors, evaluation of courses by graduates, evaluation of graduates by employers. These various evaluations are analysed by the quality unit, which can then formulate prospects for improvement to the department.

It is also the quality unit that analyses the course reports written by the course coordinators at the end of each semester. This report, which includes various elements – course identification and general information; objectives; course description (syllabus, list of topics); courses learning outcomes; learning

resources, exam subjects, best and less good marks, etc. –, helps to improve the course content and examination procedures.

The work of the quality unit is remarkable. However, the lack of data on graduates is regrettable: indicators concerning proportion of graduates who continue their studies and graduate employment rates are lacking.

## V. CONCLUSION

The Bachelor of Law program of King Saud University is one of the most prestigious university programs in the Kingdom. Scores of high profile personalities have graduated from it and still today its attractiveness can be seen in the dramatic increase of applicants. This outcome is no accident.

The program has a forty-year history and has been given adequate means. The overall working conditions of students are good. The curriculum is given careful thinking. It is based on a thorough assessment of the needs of advanced education as well as needs of the Saudi job market.

The program is a bachelor program. As such, it is not meant to be an advanced research program. However, the Bachelor of Law program of King Saud University offers a balanced content which includes foundational knowledge and skills as well as more advanced technical subjects. It offers both academic and professional-like training. Students who graduate from the program are well equipped to become effective professionals and either join the job market or enter into the field of research in a master's program.

Outside stakeholders are part of the periodic review process and their input is effectively taken into account.

The program is managed according to the latest international standard. It is strongly committed to a culture of quality assurance.

The program is facing a daunting challenge: due to the evolution of the Saudi society, the field of Law has expanded dramatically recently, creating a high demand of lawyers in the job market. In order to meet this new demand, the College of Law has increased dramatically the number of enrolled students. There are now more than 6 times the number of students that were enrolled five years ago. This has caused a wave of hiring of lecturers while the number of experienced faculty has remained approximately the same. The challenge the College is facing is to keep the same level of achievement while working with 6 times more students.

The program still exhibits some weaknesses that were highlighted in the last accreditation. Foreign languages are still not taken seriously enough in the curriculum. The library does not seem to have improved to a material extent since the last accreditation process.

The segregation of male and female students, which is required by law, creates a specific challenge that the management of the program must deal with. Remote teaching, that is teaching through an audio-only connection, is not satisfactory and should be used only as a last resort. The challenge is all the more serious that currently the female faculty accounts for 25% of all Faculty (with no senior positions) while female students accounts for 43% of all students.

## STRENGTHS

**Strengths that were identified in the previous report and which are still relevant:**

- Funding of the program which gives adequate means.
- Commitment of the College and all Faculty and staffers to improving the degree, particularly by keeping it in line with the needs of the job market.
- Impressive organization of the quality unit.
- Comprehensive organizational structure.

#### Additional strengths that have been identified in the current report:

- By adding new faculty that were trained in different legal systems, the College has developed a plurality of approaches to legal education. Critical thinking, that is the ability to have a well-argued reasoning, is gaining ground.
- The periodic review process, held with the advisory board, has proven to be effective and has led to actual amendments of the program.
- The quantitative analysis of students' results and achievements has been improved.
- New faculty has been hired.

## WEAKNESSES

#### Weaknesses that were identified in the previous report and which are still relevant:

- Foreign languages are limited to a lesser role in the curriculum.
- Documentary collections are limited, especially for foreign books.
- Specific issue: Absence of co-education

The College is required by law to offer separate but equal education to male and female students. The College is dedicated to offering equal treatment to male and female students. That objective is certainly reached as far as buildings and equipment are concerned.

The College is trying hard to achieve it as to the hiring of Faculty. However, current female faculty does not cover all subjects taught in the program which leads to the use of remote teaching through audio connection (see standard 3-5). The committee remains skeptical as to the efficiency of the process. The committee feels that it creates serious obstacles in the communication between instructors and students. As a result, for classes where the technique is used, there is a discrepancy of treatment between male and female students.

#### Additional weakness that have been identified in the current report:

- The enrollment of students has grown dramatically. New faculty have been hired to keep the size of the classes around 40 students. However, those new faculty are mainly junior faculty with limited experience. The College has emphasized coordination between sections of the same courses to limit the risk of discrepancies between sections. However, the other side of coordination is rigidity: to be sure to be able to deliver the same content, all instructors must follow the same script. This goes directly against the objective of enhancing critical thinking and fostering imaginative argumentative skills of students. The most formative discussions are those where the instructor can engage with the students and bring them to the limits of their arguments. That process cannot be scripted in advance and replicated iteratively.
- While there seems to be a willingness on the part of the College to foster links with foreign universities, it has not resulted in effective exchanges of students and or faculty, even at the regional level.

## VI. RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE INSTITUTION

- Improve the weight allocated to foreign languages in the curriculum.
- Improve the content of the library. The policy on quality assessment which has been developed for the program could be expanded to the management of the library (for example, compliance with ISO standards on library management could be introduced).
- Hire more female faculty to cover all topics of the curriculum.
- Maintain high standard of recruitment for new faculty.
- Develop foreign exchanges of students and faculty.

## VII. COMMENTS OF THE INSTITUTION

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كلية الحقوق والعلوم السياسية  
مكتب العميد

**From:** Dr. Mufleh R. Al-Kahtany, Dean of College of Law and Political Science, King Saud University, Riyadh, 12371, Saudi Arabia.

**To:** Mr. Michel Cosnard, President of HCERES, 2 rue Albert Einstein, 75013 Paris, La France.

**Date:** September 20, 2018

**Re:** Response to Evaluation Report of Department of Law.

**Dear President Michel Cosnard,**

First, the faculty-members and staff of the College of Law and Political Science would like to express their deep gratitude and appreciation to the Expert Panel for its efforts in preparing the evaluation report and its constructive feedback. The faculty-members and staff of the College of Law and Political Science would also especially like to thank the Committee members for their professional work during their visit to our college on April 8-9, 2018.

The meetings with the Committee members during the visit were fruitful and helpful for the faculty members and the staff of the College, who are in charge of running the Law Program. The meetings were very important for the two reasons:

- The meetings helped to demonstrate and enrich the information that the evaluation report considers.
- The interview between the Committee members and the management, faculty-members and staff of two departments of law showed the determination of the faculty-members and staff, which will enable them to adopt the best academic standards to increase and improve the quality of the educational program offered to the students in the near future.
- The evaluation report highlighted the progress and developments that the faculty of the Law Program has made over the past few years as the result of their collective efforts to meet the recommendations issued by the former committee of experts during the evaluation by the AERES in 2012.

The program's representatives and the faculty welcome the Committee members' comments and constructive criticism in the current evaluation report. The comments will encourage the Law Program's representatives to do their utmost to develop and improve the program's effectiveness and efficiency.



To respond to the constructive criticisms that the Committee mentioned in its current evaluation report, we must provide the following clarifications:

### 1. Incorporating Foreign Language Teaching and Learning in the Curriculum:

According to article 11 of the Saudi Law of Higher Education, Arabic is the language of education in universities. If necessary, the relevant university council may decide that courses can be taught in another language. However, the current curriculum of the Law Program, which is designed for law students, includes two legal courses that are taught in a foreign language. They involve legal terminology and international trade law. Due to the significance of foreign languages, the management of the Law Program has issued a new study plan that includes additional legal courses to expose students to global modes of legal education, which emphasize critical thinking and self-inquiry, and to substantive law, and to enhance our students' ability to do advanced scholarly work in a foreign language. The foreign courses in the new curriculum of the Law Program will teach an introduction to law, legal history, conflicts of law and public international law. The project has just been finalized by the special committee within the Law Program, and it will be submitted to the Vice-President of Academic Affairs for approval.

### 2. Criticism of the Management of the Library and its Documentary Collections:

The University's officials, including the Vice-President and the managers of libraries, supported the needs of the library of the College of Law and Political Science by allocating additional funds for the library's annual budget. These funds will be used to purchase library materials and to enrich educational resources that will help students in their academic studies and research.

The library of the College of Law and Political Science has computers with modern software that provide students access to the resources of the University's Central Library, so that students can request books that are not available within the library of the College of Law and Political Science. The software at the library of College of Law and Political Science can be used to track its books and items, orders made, and students who have borrowed books or items.

Moreover, the library of College of Law and Political Science has modern equipment that is available for students to use for free, such as photocopiers, color printers and scanners. We are improving the library to provide the best educational environment possible for all students.

### 3. Enrollment of Female Students and Recruitment of Female Faculty-Members:

The Law Program totally agrees with the concerns of the Committee members about the small number of female appointments and enrolled students. We have not yet retained more women faculty-members, because the Female Law section is new as compared to the Male Law section. However, we fully intend to expand our efforts to retain qualified female



scholars. We sent administrative and academic committees overseas to hire professors and scholars from other countries to help fill this need. As a result, the number of female faculty-members increased. In fact, we have 69 female faculty members at our Law program, 16 of whom hold doctorates in law, 38 of whom hold a Master of Laws, and the remaining hold a bachelor of law degree.

Due to the small number of female faculty members, the Law Program used to offer courses to the female students by using remote teaching through an audio connection. However, as we have increased the number of female faculty members as mentioned above, the use of remote teaching through an audio connection has significantly diminished.

The number of enrolled female law students is also related to the fact that the Female Law section is new compared to the Male Law section. The Female Law section has been open for about ten years, while the Male Law section has been open for almost thirty years. Nevertheless, we are committed to increasing the number of female students. In this regard, the Law Department plans to raise awareness among female students about law as a significant major in undergraduate study to increase the number of female applicants to the Law Program.

In addition, the chairmen of the Law Program have reserved academic seats exclusively for females during the next academic year (2019/2020) to increase the number of female students in the Departments of Law.

#### 4. Criteria Considered in the Recruitment of Faculty-Members:

One of the most important goals of Departments of Law is to ensure quality teaching by hiring well-known and respected professors. Accordingly, the Departments of Law have recently adopted high standards and requirements for hiring new faculty-members. For example, the Departments require that applicants have work experience and published articles in well-respect journals before their applications will be considered. This requirement aims to attract professors of demonstrated intellectual and academic excellence from all over the world.

In response to criticism of our current faculty-members, we wish to mention that some of our faculty-members were hired after they graduated from our college, because we had a strategic plan to send them to study at top universities around the world. Most of our young faculty-members graduated from well-respected universities in different countries, such as the United States, the United Kingdom and France. We expect them to be good scholars and researchers in the upcoming years. Therefore, we have succeeded in implementing our strategic plan.

To improve the academic skills of our faculty members, professors at the Law Program are required to work part-time serving the community. They must also work with private and public entities to obtain practical skills. This helps them to apply theoretical knowledge in an actual work environment, which will improve the quality of their teaching. The Law Program also hosts visiting scholars and visiting researchers and accommodates a small

number of legal scholars and researchers from around the world. Finally, the Law Program has recently adopted academic standards to assess faculty-members annually to ensure the effectiveness and efficiency of their academic work.

#### 5. The Coordination between Faculty-Members in Teaching the Same Course:

Professors of the same courses are encouraged to coordinate to help them to cover the essential topics of the courses. Therefore, such coordination does not restrict the academic freedom of the professors of the courses. The faculty-members have academic freedom in terms of choosing topics and teaching methods that they wish to use in their courses.

#### 6. Partnership with Foreign Educational Institutions:

The University has already formed global partnerships and is fostering relationships with other institutions across the globe. The University's partnerships with foreign universities provide tremendous opportunities for students and staff alike. The University's international cooperation with other institutions also offers research opportunities, cultural awareness, and international experiences including study abroad programs and staff and student exchanges. In terms of teaching, the University's international cooperation benefits curriculum development and degrees formed in collaboration with partner institutions. The Law Program has enabled some of its former students to obtain admission to pursue their graduate studies at universities located in France, the United States and the United Kingdom.

More information about the University's partnerships with foreign institutions is available at "International Cooperation & Scientific Department". Please click the link below for further details: <https://icstd.ksu.edu.sa/en>.

In conclusion, we hope this response clarifies any confusion or misunderstanding about some of the criticisms expressed in the evaluation report. Once again, we would like to express our sincere thanks to the experts, the Chair of the Committee and the representatives of HCERES for their help and time. The Committee members' constructive criticism will be considered by the management and staff of the Law Program. We will always be grateful for the Committee members' insights. We are looking forward to meeting with you again in the near future.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any further questions.

Sincerely,

Dr. Mufleh R. Al-Kahtany

Dean of College of Law and Political Science

King Saud University



البريد

الفاكس

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البريد الإلكتروني

## ACCREDITATION DECISION

### Bachelor of Law

King Saud University  
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

**October 2018**



## SCOPE OF THE ACCREDITATION GRANTED BY HCERES

HCERES has built its evaluation process based on a set of objectives that higher education institution study programmes must pursue to ensure recognised quality within France and Europe. These objectives are divided up into four fields among which are the accreditation criteria.

As for the "External Evaluation Standards", the accreditation criteria have been specifically designed for foreign programmes. The accreditation criteria were adopted by the Board on June 2016 and are available on the HCERES website ([hceres.fr](http://hceres.fr)).

The accreditation committee, meeting his accreditation decision, has wholly taken into account the final evaluation report of the study programme. This accreditation decision is the result of a collegial and reasoned process.

The accreditation decision issued by HCERES shall not grant any rights whatsoever, whether in France or abroad. The decision on training programme accreditation confers an accreditation label and does not infer recognition of the accredited qualifications. The HCERES accreditation process therefore has no impact on the qualifications recognition process in France.

## FULFILLMENT OF ACCREDITATION CRITERIA

### FIELD 1: AIMS OF THE STUDY PROGRAMME

#### Accreditation criterion

The objectives of the study programme with regard to knowledge and skills to be acquired are clearly defined and communicated. Students and other stakeholders are aware of outcomes in terms of job opportunities and further studies.

#### Assessment of criterion

The objectives of the program are clearly set. The program aims at giving a general legal education which gives students the ability either to join the job market or to further their education in a master's degree program are clear: the program aims at giving a general legal education which gives students the ability either to join the job market or to further their education in a master's degree program.

Those objectives are made available to students in a clear and accessible way.

### FIELD 2: POSITION OF THE STUDY PROGRAMME

#### Accreditation criterion

The study programme has set a comprehensive positioning suited to its objectives and including a clear link with research, scholarly partnerships and/or with the economic and social world, national and/or international partnerships.

#### Assessment of criterion

The program curriculum takes into account knowledge and skills that are required in the field of law practice. Students are also introduced to more advanced research tools and skills.

The program is a bit defective in that it lacks a strong commitment to the teaching of foreign language. In the same line, the program lacks partnership with foreign institutions. Those which exist have not produced effective results.

### FIELD 3: STUDY PROGRAMME TEACHING STRUCTURE

#### Accreditation criterion

The study program includes a set of teaching units that are coherent, gradual and adapted to all kind of students. The study program allows students to acquire additional skills that are useful for employment or further study.

Internships and projects are included in the study program curriculum. So are Information and Communication Technologies in Education (ICTE) and education innovations. The study program prepares students for the international environment.

#### Assessment of criterion

The curriculum is thorough. After a refresher year, it offers a gradual deepening of knowledge and skills. It includes both academic and practical skills.

Internships are included as well as mock trials.

### FIELD 4: STUDY PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

#### Accreditation criterion

The study programme is implemented by a formally identified and operational teaching team including stakeholder and student participation. It is carried out by an educational team which benefits from clear and

up-to-date data. Methods for checking knowledge are explicitly stated and communicated to students. Teaching and practical professional units are expressed in terms of skills. Anti-fraud measures have been implemented.

#### Assessment of criteria

The management of the program follows the latest international standard. It is well structured with a strong commitment to quality assurance.

Processes are in place and are documented.

## FINAL ASSESSMENT

Considering the accreditation criteria analysis detailed above, the accreditation committee issues the following decision:

**"Five-year unreserved accreditation decision: 2018-2023"**

and draws attention to the following points:

- It is important that the bachelor's staff and the College of Law pay more attention to foreign languages in the curriculum and to develop foreign exchanges of students and faculty.
- A particular attention must be paid to hire more female faculty to cover all topics of the curriculum, at least one female full professor.

#### SIGNATURE

For HCERES and on behalf of



**Michel Cosnard**  
Président

2 rue Albert Einstein  
75013 Paris, France  
T. 33 (0)1 55 55 60 45

Michel COSNARD,

Président



Date: Paris, October 29<sup>th</sup>, 2018

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