



# THE HIGHER EDUCATION LANDSCAPE IN DUBAI 2011





# THE HIGHER EDUCATION LANDSCAPE IN DUBAI 2011

Copyright © 2012 Knowledge & Human Development Authority, Dubai, UAE

All rights reserved.

All information contained in this report including text, designs, charts and graphics are protected by copyright and/or other intellectual property rights. All confidential and proprietary information and other intellectual property rights in this report are the intellectual property of the Knowledge & Human Development Authority. You may not copy, distribute, download, display, reproduce, modify, edit, alter, enhance, broadcast or tamper with in any way or otherwise use any material contained in this report without the prior written consent of KHDA.



## **Dr Abdulla Al Karam**

Chairman of the Board of Directors - Director General  
Knowledge & Human Development Authority

---

Dubai is considered a regional hub for trade, tourism and business at the intersection of the East and the West. Similarly, Dubai's reputation as a regional hub for good-quality higher education is growing amongst the business community and aspiring tertiary students.

With the addition of new institutes in 2011, Dubai now has the highest number of international branch campuses in the world. We also have the largest and most diverse group of faculty members and transnational students. Such a diversity offers the potential for a unique student experience that opens the door for links into global networks.

Our student population has grown steadily over the past four years, including right through the economic downturn. Over the past year, numbers of student enrolments grew by a further 10%. Particularly pleasing is the growth in the numbers of Emirati students across the full range of courses and institutions. Finally, the announcement of Resolution 21 by the Government of Dubai in June 2011 ensures that changes in degree certification will ease graduates' access to the Dubai workforce.

Dubai's higher education institutions are providing Emirati nationals and expatriates with the higher-level skills and abilities to sustain the future growth of Dubai's economy. My team and I are looking forward to the journey ahead and to welcoming a growing number of students into an ever-increasing number of courses and institutions.

## **Dr Warren Fox**

Executive Director of Higher Education, Universities & Colleges Agency  
Knowledge & Human Development Authority

---

I am pleased to introduce this second annual report on higher education in Dubai. The report is based on University Census data collected by KHDA in October each year, and provides an overview of the institutions, programs, students and graduates in Dubai in the 2011-12 academic year.

The objective of the report is to give information to institutions, parents and students about higher education in Dubai, and to provide an accurate picture of the current trends and demands for higher education. The information in this report will enable education leaders to plan for higher education initiatives in the future.

I hope you find the report useful and informative. The information reported here, on increasing Dubai enrolments, increasing student enrolment in the special economic zones, and increasing number of graduates, describes higher education in Dubai contributing to social and economic progress and lifelong learning.





# Contents

## Page number

Introduction	2
Higher education institutions in Dubai	3
Dubai's purpose-built zones	3
Location of higher education institutions	4
Educational permits and quality assurance	4
Academic programmes offered in Dubai	5
Student enrolment	6
Graduates	8
Emirati participation in higher education	10
Emirati graduates	11
Further information	12
Appendix: List of Higher Education Providers in Dubai in 2011	13

# What's new in 2011

- 10% increase in higher education students in Dubai (43,212 students)
- 18% increase in students studying at institutions in the Free Zones (17,701 students)
- 1 new university (Amity University), making a total of 52 institutions in Dubai
- Emiratis are the largest group of students in Dubai (43%)
- 11% increase in Emirati students from last year (18,708), and a 9% increase in enrolment for federal institutions
- 55% of Emirati students are male
- Degrees in the Free Zones certified by KHDA (Dubai Government Resolution 21, 2011)

The Higher Education Landscape in Dubai 2009	The Higher Education Landscape in Dubai 2010
	



# Introduction

---

Dubai has been successful in developing its status as an international city within a relatively short period of time; and the development of a world class education system is, consequently, of great importance. A key priority, both for individual growth and the needs of the local government, is increasing student numbers and improving access to higher education, especially for Emirati nationals. Quality higher education in Dubai, which includes relevant skills essential to drive economic growth and development, will equip young people with choices that will shape the future of Dubai and the United Arab Emirates.

Dubai is increasingly committed to expanding and transforming the higher education landscape. The Knowledge & Human Development Authority (KHDA), a Government of Dubai authority established in 2006, is tasked with ensuring that Dubai has the human resources to meet its economic and social needs. Its role is to:

- Develop strategic plans, policies, laws and regulations to improve learning and human development;
- Set Dubai's education standards in collaboration with federal ministries;
- Oversee and facilitate the implementation of learning and human development policies;
- Ensure graduates have the expertise required to meet Dubai's workforce needs.

This report examines the state of the current higher education environment in Dubai by identifying the range and number of institutions, programmes available and the number of students enrolled. The objective is to provide a data snapshot of total higher education student enrolment in Dubai, including institutions in the Free Zones. This is the second annual Higher Education Landscape Report. The information in this report will enable policymakers and education leaders to make strategic decisions and plan for higher education initiatives. As a result of its Strategic Plan 2015, Dubai has been set with major challenges to ensure that the Emirate develops its social and educational infrastructure to support future growth.

The data within this report were collected in October 2011, which marks the beginning of the academic year for most higher education institutions in Dubai. Data were collected directly from institutions who are current providers of higher education in the Emirate. Such data are pertinent in providing an accurate picture of the academic environment: the trends, developments and demands for higher education in Dubai now and in the future.

As of October 2011, there are 52 higher education institutions in Dubai, with a total of 43,212 students. This is a 10% increase in the number of higher education students, as compared to October 2010, and an 11% increase in the number of Emirati students studying in Dubai.

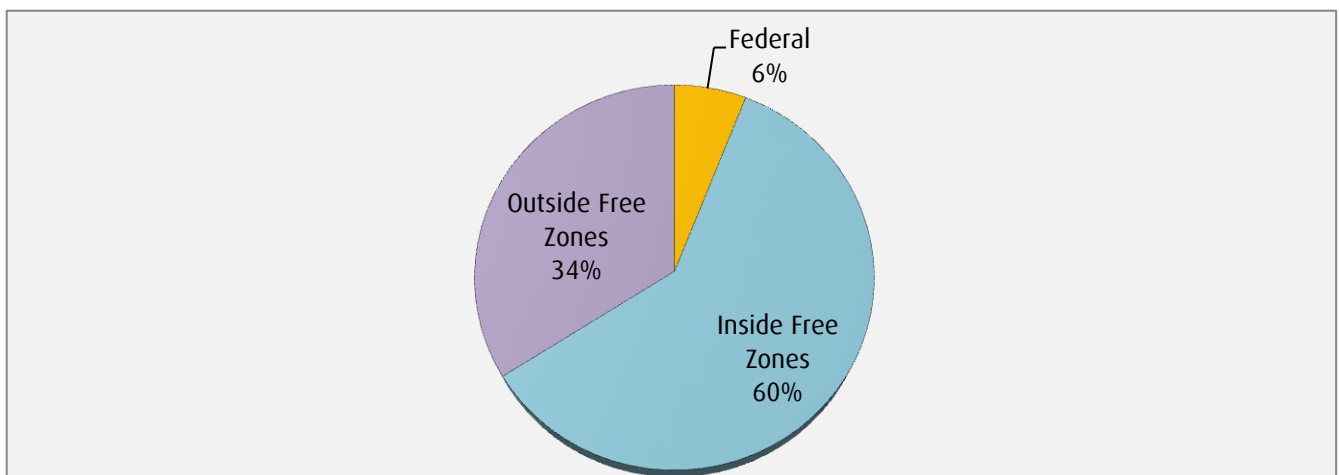
## Higher education institutions in Dubai

---

For the purpose of this report, a higher education institution is defined as an institution of education that has a physical presence in Dubai and has a dedicated full-time faculty to teach its programmes, or faculty from the home institution are flown to Dubai to teach students. This report covers all higher education institutions in the Emirate that offer one-year diplomas and above, and includes the National Institute of Vocational Education (NIVE), which is a provider of vocational education programmes.

There are 52 institutions in Dubai that offer higher education programmes, and they are grouped into three categories in this report; federal institutions, institutions in the Free Zones and institutions outside the Free Zones (Graph 1). Zayed University, Dubai Women's College and Dubai Men's College are the three federal institutions making up 6% of the total number of institutions in Dubai. Federal institutions cater predominantly to Emirati students and are institutions that were established by a federal decree. A list of institutions can be found in the Appendix. Education providers that offer online or distance education programmes are not included as part of this study.

**Graph 1: Different categories of higher education institutions in Dubai, October 2011**



## Dubai's purpose-built zones

---

Dubai's education landscape has changed dramatically since the establishment of several purpose-built zones, which have provided an attractive location for international institutions of higher education to establish a presence in Dubai, thereby increasing the provision of quality higher education to its citizens and residents.

Due to their forward-looking policies and dynamic facilities and infrastructure, a number of Free Zones have attracted higher education institutions from all around the world to provide high-quality international degrees in an environment where alternative licensing provisions are available. International branch campuses have contributed significantly to the growth of higher education in Dubai, and the last decade has seen the higher education student population quadruple in the emirate. Collectively, Free Zones' campuses offer a wider range of programmes than universities outside the Free Zones. By providing an accredited degree from the home institution, these universities are meeting the demand from Emiratis and resident expatriates, as well as attracting international students to the emirate. Most of the higher education institutions in Dubai are international branch campuses from ten different countries.

Dubai Knowledge Village (DKV) was opened in 2003 as the first purpose-built zone to house education institutions. In its first year of operation, the Free Zone attracted eight higher education institutions to set up at DKV, some of which

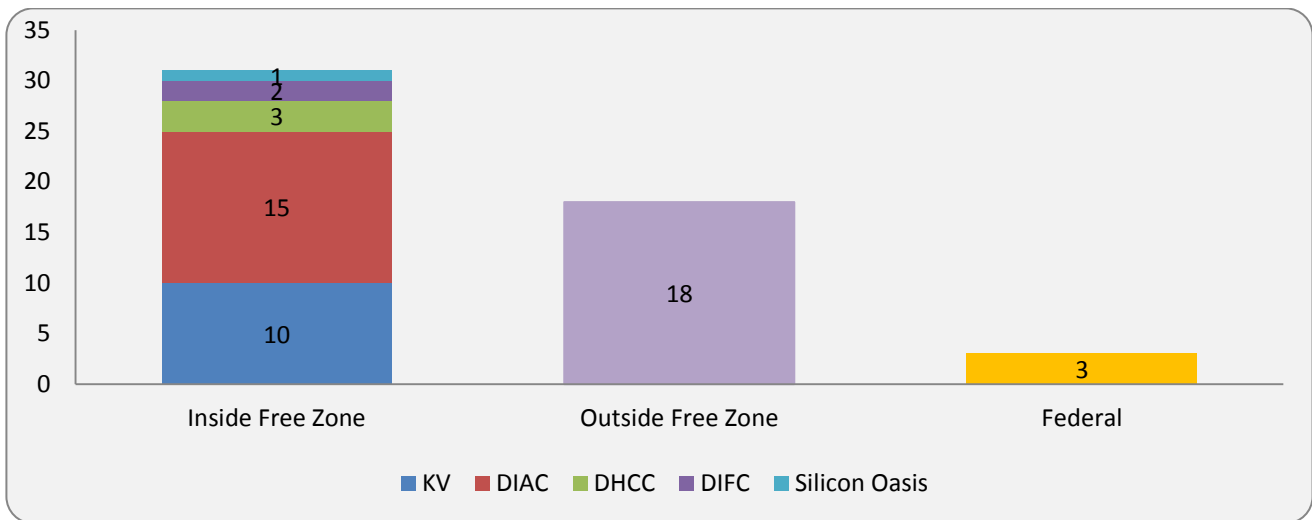
were operating outside the Free Zone prior to its establishment. The popularity of Free Zones encouraged the local government to establish several more, including Dubai International Financial Centre (DIFC) and Dubai Healthcare City (DHCC) in 2004. Due to the exponential growth of DKV, Dubai International Academic City (DIAC) was established in 2005 as a Free Zone to house education institutions offering degree programmes.

The rapid expansion of higher education institutions in Dubai’s Free Zones is a measure of the success of this initiative. The number of higher education institutions in the Free Zones is now 31, a significant increase from the first 5 institutions in 2003. The establishment of these purpose-built environments has attracted a variety of institutions and international programmes to Dubai in a short period of time.

## Location of higher education institutions

Sixty percent (31) of higher education institutions in Dubai are located within Free Zone areas, with the majority of these institutions located in DIAC and DKV. Free Zones, other than DKV and DIAC, aim to attract institutions that provide education that focuses on priority areas of that particular industry zone, such as health or finance. For a breakdown of the total number of institutions across Free Zones, please see Graph 2.

**Graph 2: Number of higher education institutions inside and outside Free Zones in Dubai, October 2011**



## Educational permits and quality assurance

In June 2011, the Government of Dubai issued Resolution Number 21 concerning higher education institutions based in Dubai Free Zones. This is an important milestone in the development of higher education as it clearly establishes KHDA as the regulator of these institutions, supports quality assurance and delegates to KHDA the responsibility for collecting data as well as the certification of academic qualifications. Students who graduate from higher education institutions in the Free Zones will be able to have their degrees certified by KHDA for employment and other purposes in Dubai.

The University and Quality Assurance International Board (UQAIB) was established by KHDA in 2008 to assure the quality of higher education in institutions in the Free Zones. This is an independent board of higher education experts from around the world. The Board makes recommendations about issuing educational service permits to new institutions, as well as renewing the permits of existing universities and colleges. It also approves all new programmes offered by higher education providers.

UQAIB uses a validation model to ensure that the academic programme being delivered in the branch campus is the same as that provided at the home campus of the institution. The ten members of the Board have experience in

quality assurance, transnational higher education and accreditation as well as senior academic experience at higher education institutions. They are from the USA, UK, Australia, New Zealand, India, Hong Kong, Saudi Arabia, UAE, France and Kenya.

UQAIB has been designed to provide an international approach to quality assurance that will allow foreign higher education providers to award international degrees through the branch campus model. It is intended to complement the quality assurance provision of the federal Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research by providing an alternative route to academic recognition. It is an approach that is intended to satisfy international best practice in higher education quality assurance, particularly as regards cross-border higher education.

UQAIB is a full member of the International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAHE), and abides by the INQAHE Guidelines for Good Practice and the OECD/UNESCO Guidelines for Quality Provision in Cross-border Higher Education (2005).

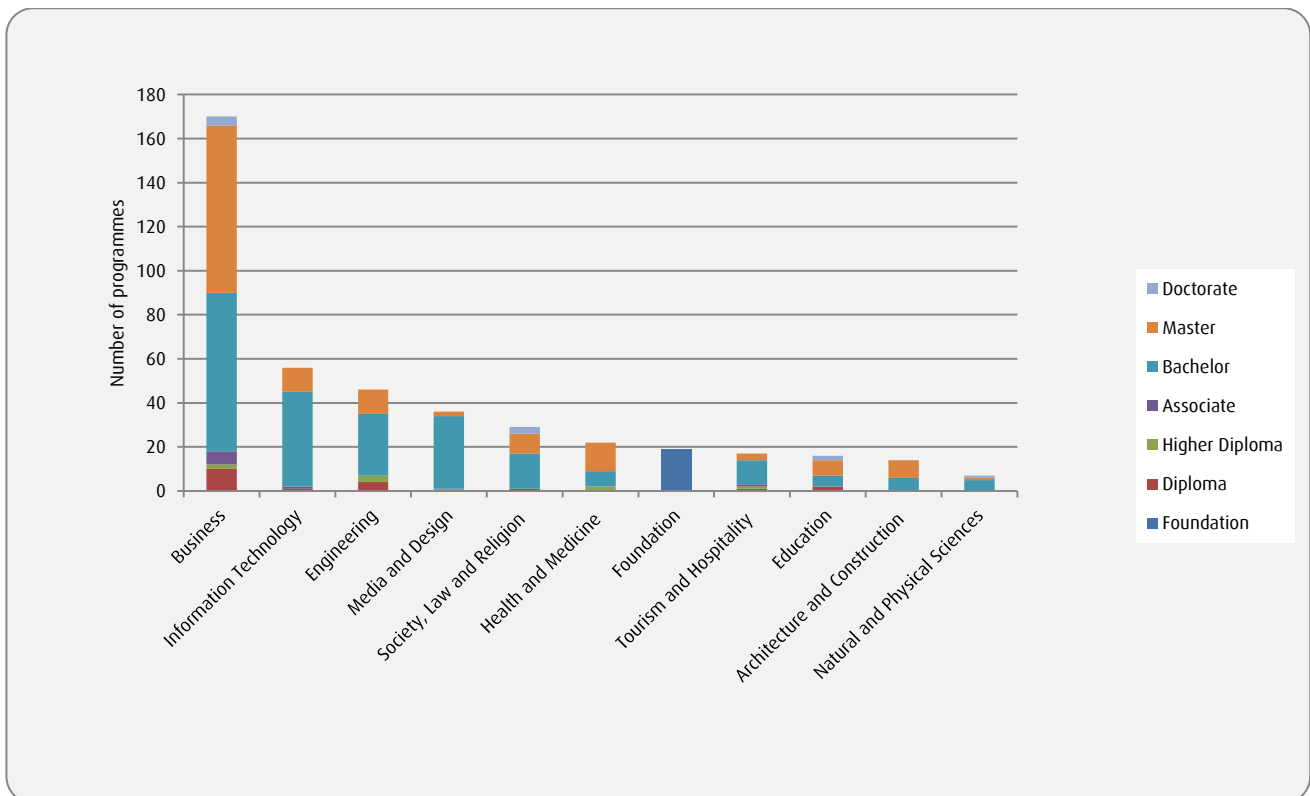
Twenty institutions are reviewed by UQAIB. These institutions offer international programmes that are accredited by the quality agency of their home countries and may also have programme accreditation from external professional bodies. The Commission for Academic Accreditation (CAA), which is part of the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research, requires all institutions that are located outside a Free Zone to be licensed by the CAA.

## Academic programmes offered in Dubai

Students are registered in 432 academic programmes in Dubai. The majority of these programmes (227 or 52%) are at Bachelor’s degree level, and a further 141 programs (33%) are at Master's degree level. See Graph 3 for further details.

In a short time, Dubai has been able to successfully introduce a large number of quality higher education programmes. The majority of programme offerings (39%) are within the field of business; and there are relatively few programmes in Education, Health and Medicine, and Natural and Physical Sciences.

**Graph 3: Academic programmes in Dubai by level and major field of study, October 2011**

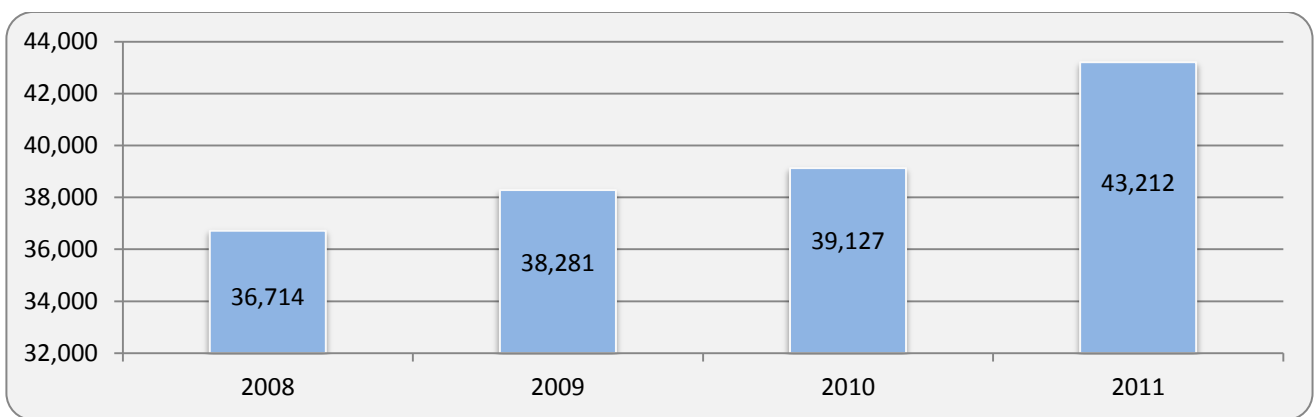


It is evident that a greater variety of programmes are required to ensure that Dubai addresses the educational needs for a more diverse population. As the population in the UAE and surrounding Gulf countries increases, the demand for healthcare, transportation, school education, financial services and housing increases. This translates into the need for more qualified healthcare professionals, teachers and engineers. In order to meet the demands of Dubai's economy, it is important to develop and increase the variety of programme offerings. University research is an emerging area that requires further development in Dubai.

## Student enrolment

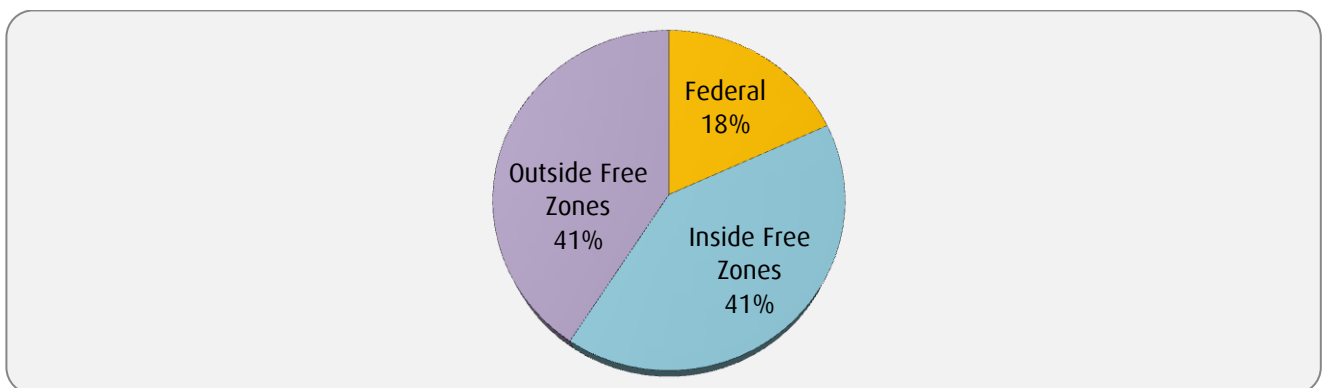
There are a total of 43,212 students studying at higher education institutions in Dubai; this includes both full-time and part-time students. This represents a 10% growth in the overall total number of students from October 2010 and 18% growth since 2008 (Graph 4). In terms of location, the number of students studying in the Free Zones of Dubai has risen by 18% since last year. There has been a 9% increase in enrolment in federal institutions and a 4% increase in private institutions outside the Free Zones.

**Graph 4: Total student enrolment in Dubai (2008-2011)**



Graph 5 shows the relative number of students enrolled in higher education institutions in Dubai: inside the Free Zones, outside the Free Zones and federal institutions. There are 17,701 students enrolled in 32 institutions in the Free Zones and 17,629 students enrolled in 18 institutions outside the Free Zones.

**Graph 5: Students enrolled at the different types of institutions in Dubai**



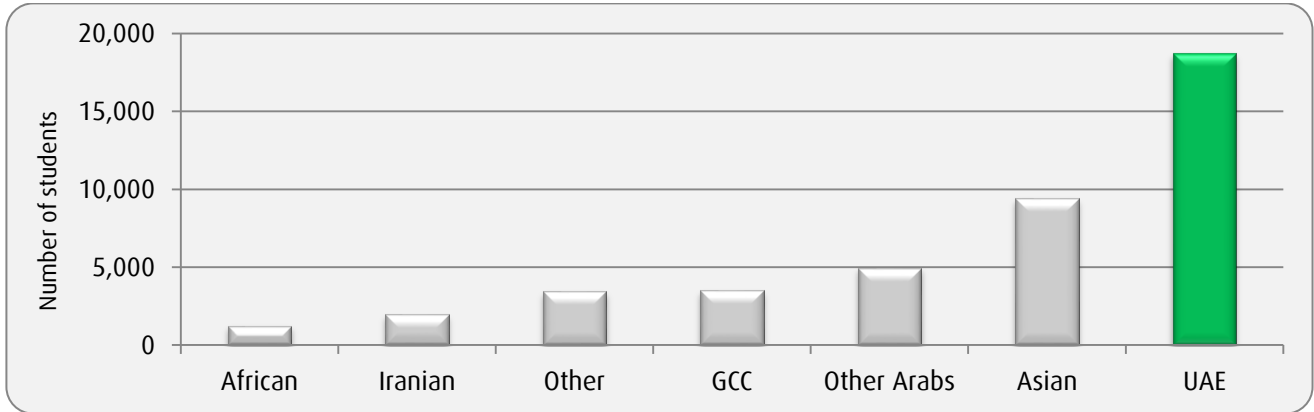
While some institutions offer only one or two highly specialised programmes, the majority of institutions (56%) have more than 300 students and nine universities have more than 2,000 students.

The University of Jazeera is the largest private institution in Dubai in terms of enrolment with 3,129 students, 9% of the total student population. The largest federal institution is Zayed University, which has 3,422 students. The largest institution in the Free Zones is the University of Wollongong in Dubai with 2,433 students.

The ten largest institutions, in terms of size of student body, enrol around 25,000 students in Dubai. This means that 19% of Dubai's higher education institutions provide education to 58% of the total student population. This figure covers all three federal institutions with an enrolment of 7,882 students, predominantly Emirati.

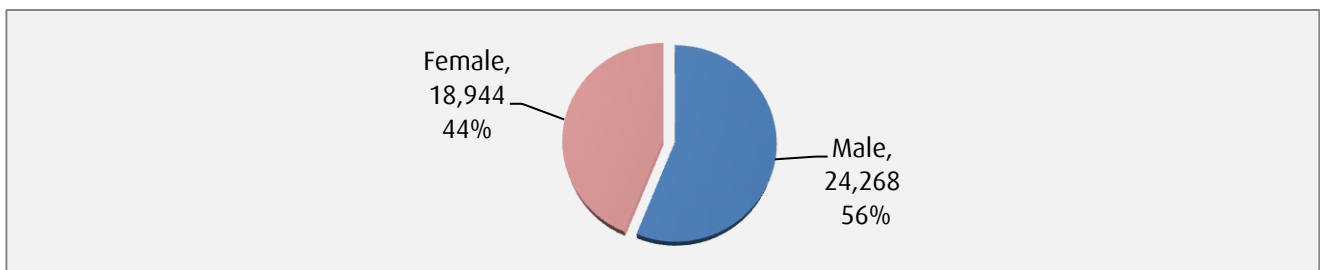
Students studying in Dubai have a wide range of nationalities (Graph 6). Emirati students make up the largest group (43%), followed by Asian students (22%).

**Graph 6: Student enrolment by nationality, October 2011**



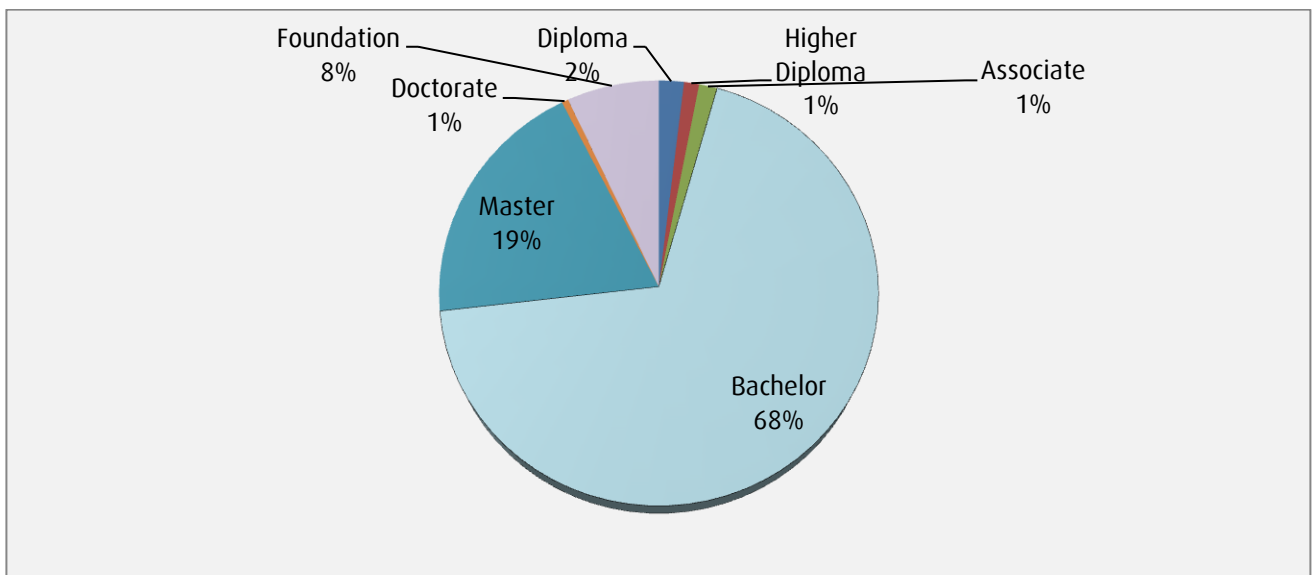
There are more male students (56%) than female students (44%) studying in all higher education institutions in Dubai (Graph 7).

**Graph 7: Percentage of male and female students in Dubai, October 2011.**



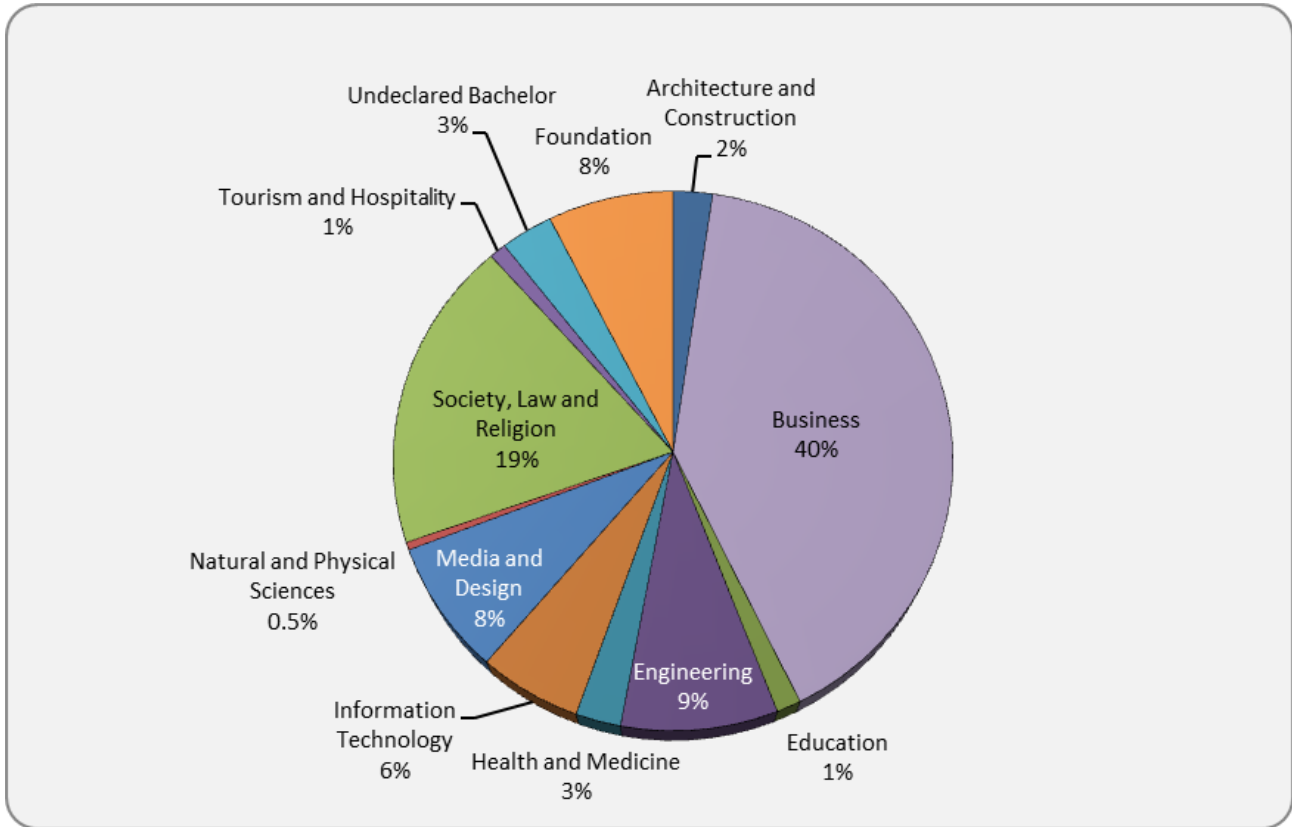
Students are enrolled in a wide variety of programmes in Dubai, from diploma to doctoral level. The majority of all students (68%) are taking Bachelor's programmes, with 19% enrolled in Master's degrees (see Graph 8).

**Graph 8: Programmes of study of students in all Dubai higher education institutions, October 2011**



The most popular fields of study amongst students in Dubai is Business (40%), followed by Society, Law and Religion (19%) (see Graph 9). Significant numbers are also studying Engineering (9%), Information Technology (6%) and Media and Design (8%). There are very few students studying Health and Medicine (3%), Education (1%), Natural and Physical Sciences (0.5%) and Tourism and Hospitality (2%). Around 8% of all students are in foundation programmes that prepare school leavers with the necessary skills for university study.

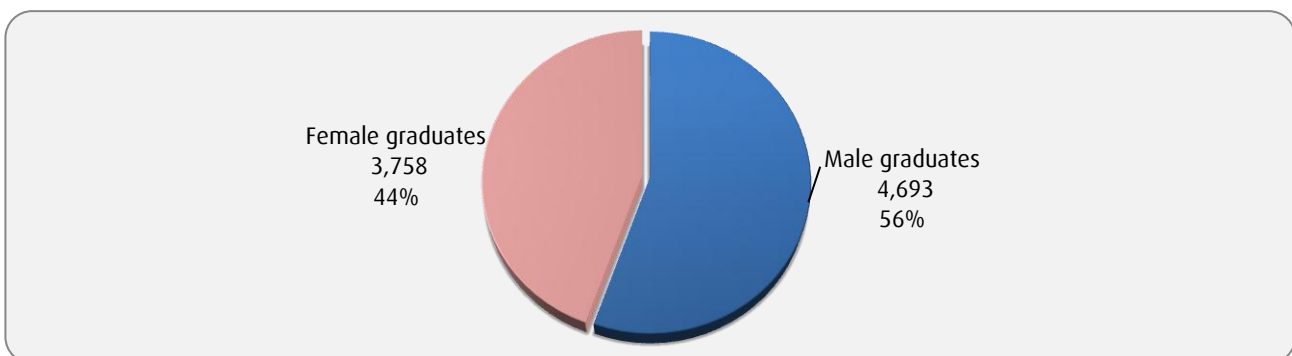
**Graph 9:** Fields of study of students in all Dubai higher education institutions, October 2011



## Graduates

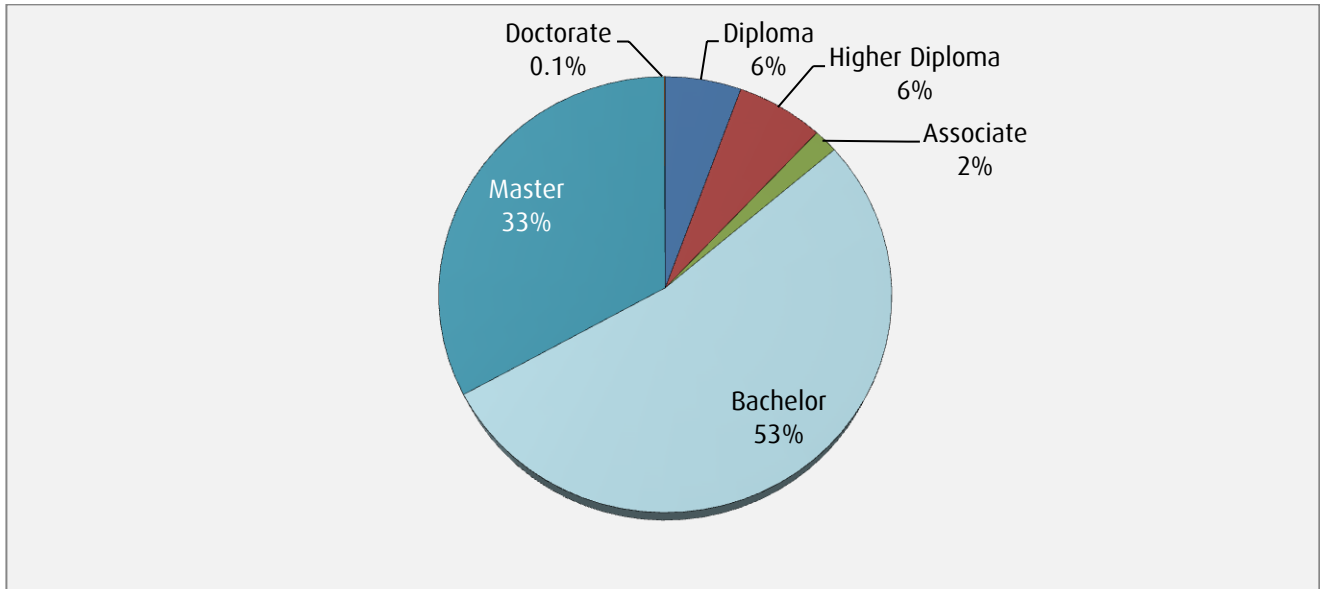
In the academic year 2010/11, there were 8,451 graduates from Dubai’s higher education institutions. There were more male graduates (56%) than female (44%) (see Graph 10). Compared to the previous academic year (2009/10), there was a 5% increase in graduates overall and an 8% increase in male graduates.

**Graph 10:** Percentage of male and female graduates, 2010/11



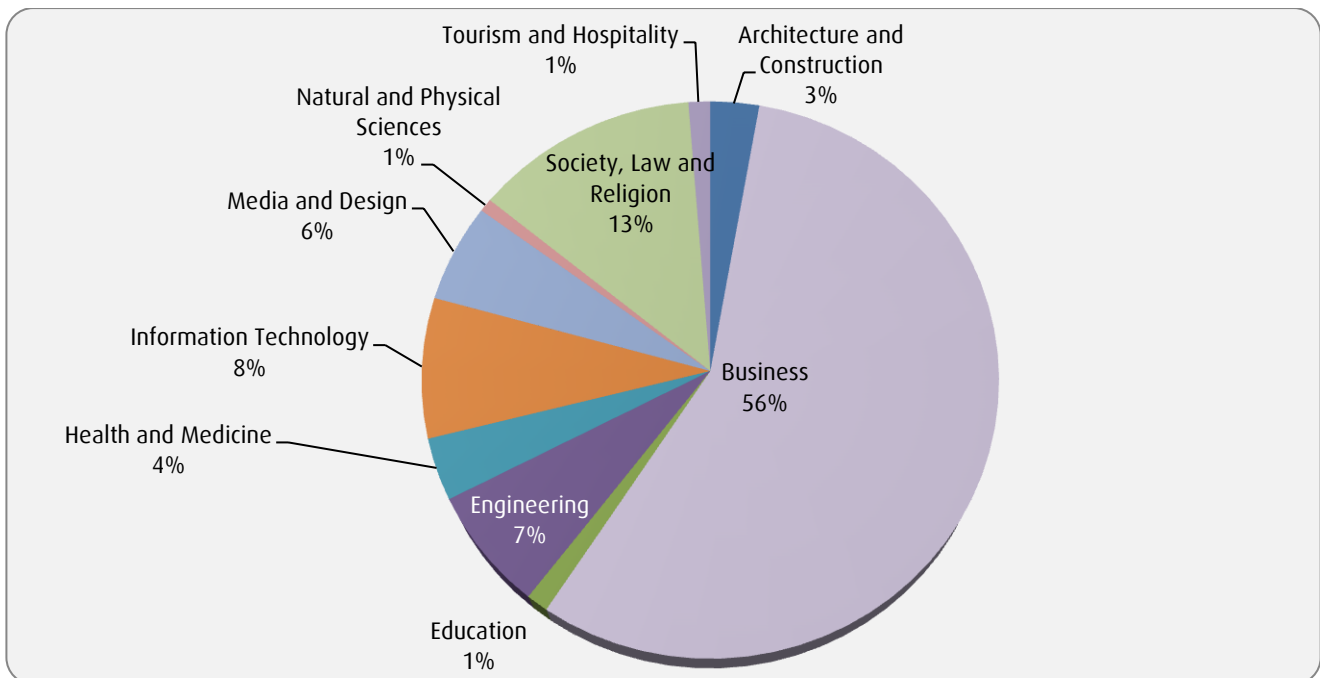
Most of the graduates (53% or 4,495) were awarded a Bachelor’s degree, 33% (2,782) obtained a Master’s degree and 7 graduates obtained a Doctoral degree (Graph 11).

**Graph 11: Degrees awarded to all Dubai graduates, 2010/11**



More than half of the graduates (56% or 4,475) were in a range of Business programmes, followed by those who graduated in Society, Law and Religion (13% or 1,097). The numbers of IT graduates (8% or 687) was slightly greater than those in Engineering (7% or 591). There were relatively few graduates in Natural and Physical Sciences (1% or 65), Education (1% or 102) and Tourism and Hospitality (1% or 106). See Graph 12 for further details.

**Graph 12: Fields of study of all Dubai graduates, 2010/11**



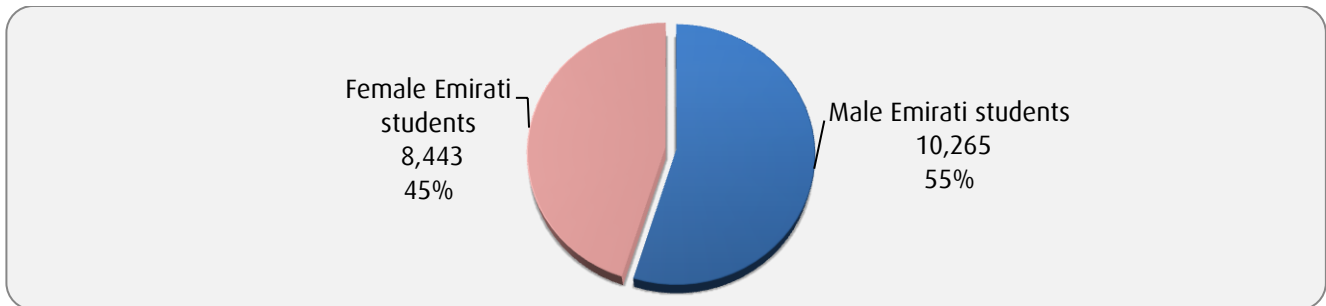


## Emirati participation in higher education

One of the goals of the Dubai government and KHDA is to increase the enrolment of Emirati students in Dubai. Emirati students make up 43% (18,708) of the total student population in Dubai (Graph 6). This is an 11% increase in enrolment of Emirati students since October 2010.

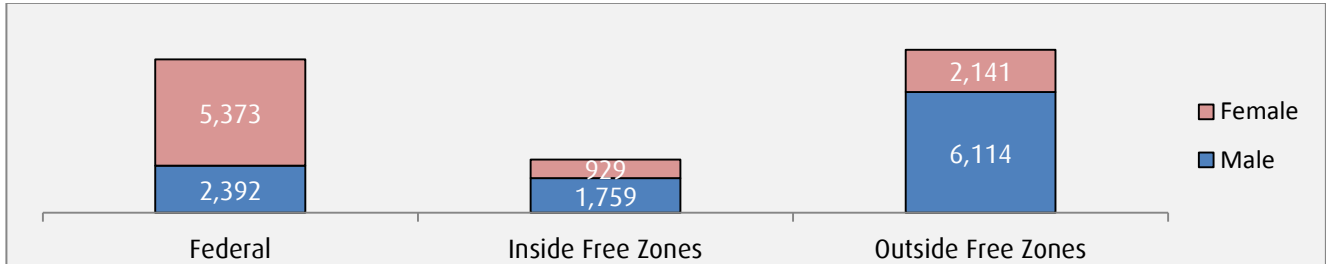
There are more male Emirati students (55%) than female students (45%) studying in all of Dubai's higher education institutions (Graph 13). The ratio of male to female students has increased over the past year; since 2010, there has been an 18% increase in Emirati males in higher education, compared with a 4% increase in females.

**Graph 13:** Percentage of male and female Emirati students, October 2011.



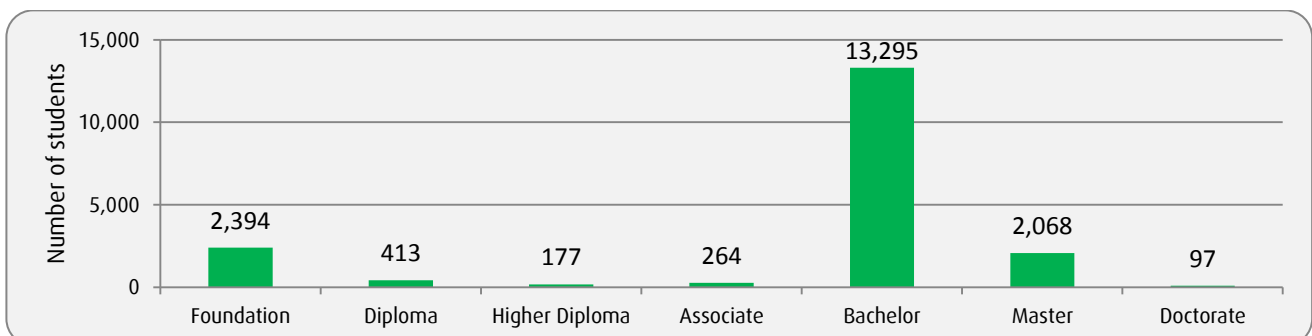
The location of study of Emirati students has not changed significantly since last year. The largest number of Emirati students (8,255 or 44%) is attending private universities outside the Free Zones. Federal institutions attract 42% (7,765) of Emirati students, and 14% (2,688) of Emiratis are attending institutions in Dubai's Free Zones (Graph 14).

**Graph 14:** Location of study of Emirati students, October 2011



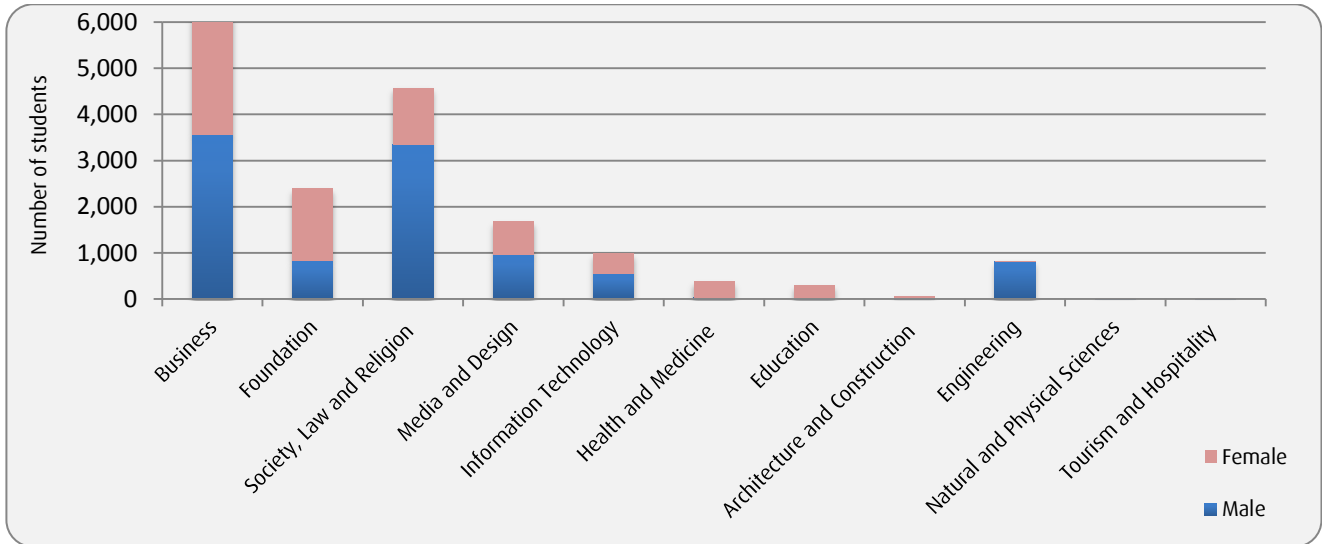
The majority (71%) of Emirati students are studying Bachelor's programmes, and 11% are studying for Master's degrees (Graph 15).

**Graph 15:** Types of programme studied by Emirati students, October 2011



Graph 16 shows the fields of study of Emirati students in all higher education institutions in October 2011. The most popular field of study with Emirati students is Business (41%), followed by Society, Law and Religion (31%). Around 13% of Emirati students are taking foundation programmes. Media and Design (11%), Information Technology (7%) and Engineering (6%) are also selected by many Emirati students. There are small numbers in Education (2%) and Health and Medicine (2.5%), and very few Emiratis are choosing Tourism and Hospitality (22 students) and Natural and Physical Sciences (19 students). There are very few male Emirati students studying programmes in Education (3) and Health and Medicine (28), and very few female Emirati students in Engineering programmes (14).

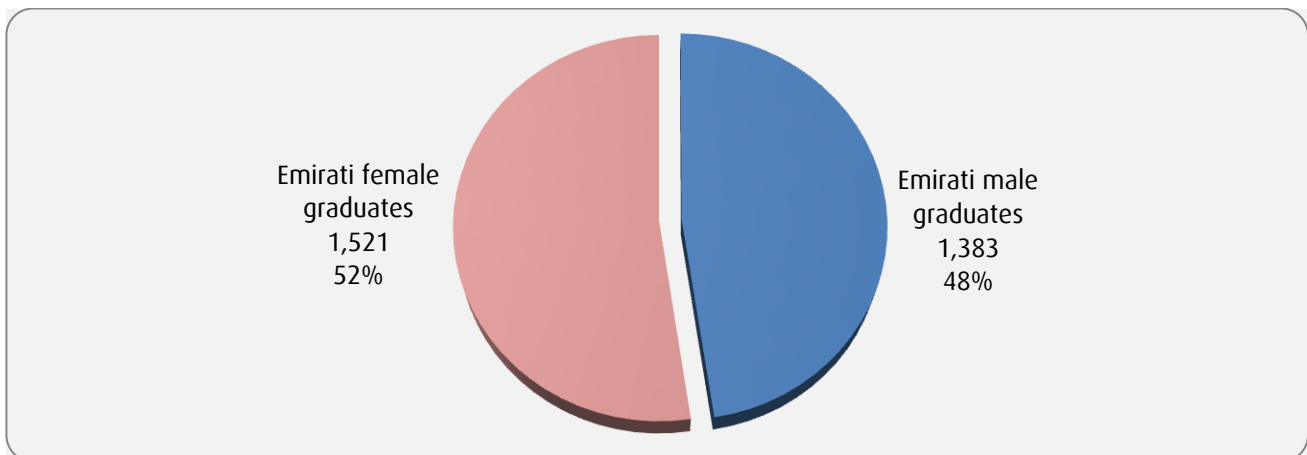
**Graph 16: Fields of study of male and female Emirati students in Dubai, October 2011**



## Emirati graduates

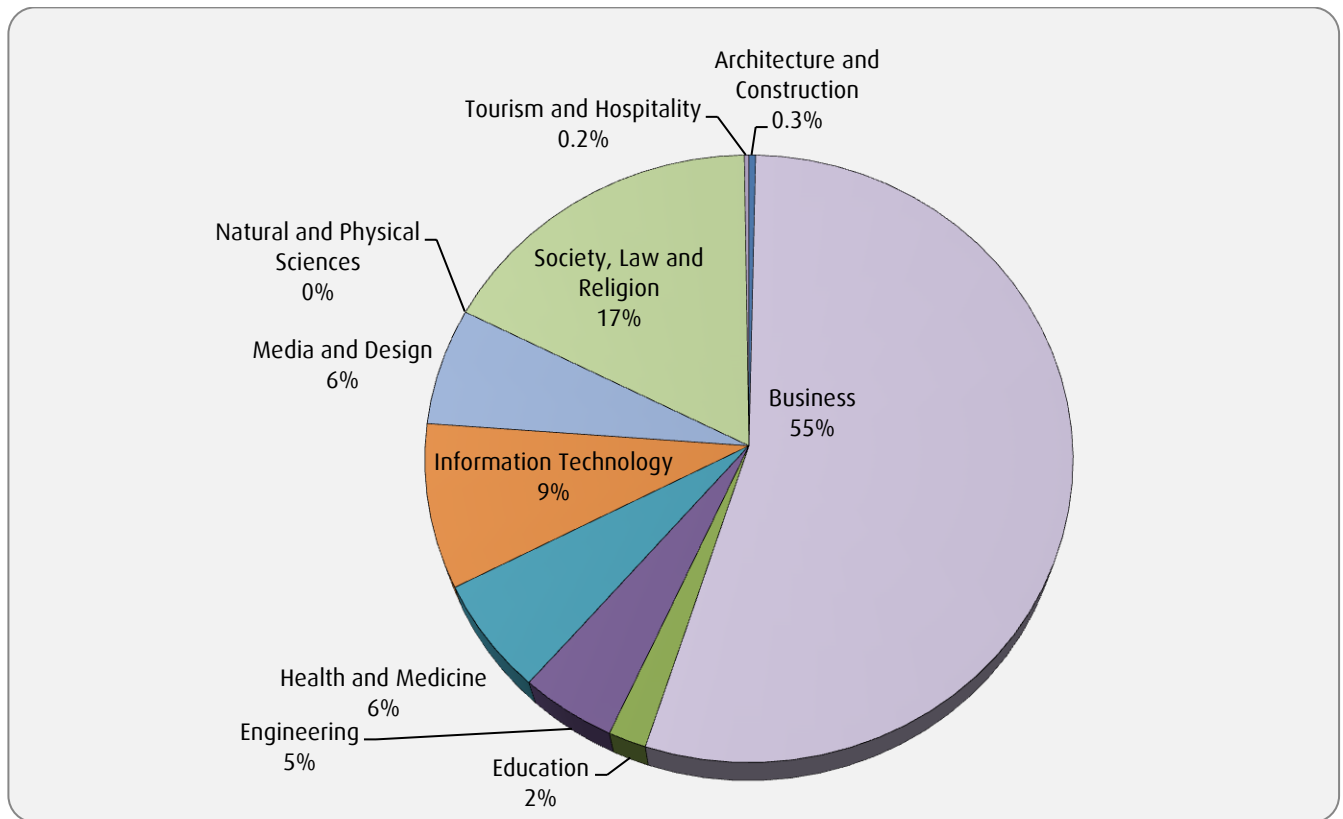
There were 2,904 Emiratis graduating in 2010/11, 34% of the total graduates. There were slightly more Emirati female graduates (52%) than male (48%), which is the same as 2009/10.

**Graph 17: Percentage of male and female Emirati graduates, 2010/11**



Most of the graduates (55% or 1,586) were in Business programmes, followed by 17% (504) in Society, Law and Religion. 6% (176) of the Emirati graduates were in the field of Health and Medicine and 2% (53) in Education. There were very few graduates (7) in Tourism and Hospitality and no graduates in Natural and Physical Sciences (see Graph 18 for more details).

**Graph 18:** Fields of study of Emirati graduates from Dubai's higher education institutions, 2010/11



## Further information

Further information about higher education institutions in the Free Zones, and the approved programmes, can be found on the KHDA website: [www.khda.gov.ae](http://www.khda.gov.ae)

## Appendix

### List of Higher Education Providers in Dubai 2011

#### Inside Free Zones (31 institutions)

Institution	Website	Location
American University in the Emirates	<a href="http://www.aue.ac.ae">www.aue.ac.ae</a>	DIAC
Amity University	<a href="http://www.amityuniversity.ae">www.amityuniversity.ae</a>	DIAC
Birla Institute of Technology and Science (BITS Pilani)	<a href="http://www.bitsdubai.com">www.bitsdubai.com</a>	DIAC
Boston University Institute for Dental Research and Education	<a href="http://www.budubai.ae">www.budubai.ae</a>	DHCC
British University in Dubai	<a href="http://www.buid.ac.ae">www.buid.ac.ae</a>	DIAC
Cambridge College International	<a href="http://www.cambridgecollegeinternational.com.au">www.cambridgecollegeinternational.com.au</a>	DKV
CASS Business School (City University)	<a href="http://www.cass.city.ac.uk">www.cass.city.ac.uk</a>	DIFC
ESMOD	<a href="http://www.french-fashionuniversity.com">www.french-fashionuniversity.com</a>	DIAC
European University College	<a href="http://www.dubaipostgraduate.com">www.dubaipostgraduate.com</a>	DHCC
Exeter University	<a href="http://www.exeter.ac.uk">www.exeter.ac.uk</a>	DKV
Heriot-Watt University	<a href="http://www.hw.ac.uk/dubai">www.hw.ac.uk/dubai</a>	DIAC
Hult International Business School	<a href="http://www.hult.edu">www.hult.edu</a>	DIAC
Imam Malik College	<a href="http://www.malikcol.ae">www.malikcol.ae</a>	DIAC
Institute of Management Technology - Dubai	<a href="http://imtdubai.org">http://imtdubai.org</a>	DIAC
Islamic Azad University	<a href="http://www.iau.ae">www.iau.ae</a>	DKV
London Business School	<a href="http://www.london.edu/dubailondon.html">www.london.edu/dubailondon.html</a>	DIFC
Manipal University	<a href="http://www.manipal.edu">www.manipal.edu</a>	DIAC
Manchester Business School	<a href="http://www.mbs-worldwide.ac.uk">www.mbs-worldwide.ac.uk</a>	DKV
Michigan State University Dubai	<a href="http://www.dubai.msu.edu">www.dubai.msu.edu</a>	DKV
Middlesex University	<a href="http://www.mdx.ac">www.mdx.ac</a>	DKV
Murdoch University	<a href="http://www.murdochdubai.com">www.murdochdubai.com</a>	DIAC

Institution	Website	Location
National Institute for Vocational Education	<a href="http://www.nive.gov.ae">www.nive.gov.ae</a>	DIAC
Rochester Institute of Technology Dubai	<a href="http://www.dubai.rit.edu">www.dubai.rit.edu</a>	DSO
Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland	<a href="http://www.rcsidubai.com">www.rcsidubai.com</a>	DHCC
S.P. Jain Centre of Management	<a href="http://www.spjain.org">www.spjain.org</a>	DIAC
SAE Institute	<a href="http://www.sae-dubai.com">www.sae-dubai.com</a>	DKV
Saint Petersburg State University of Engineering and Economics (ENGECON)	<a href="http://www.rudubai.ru/en">www.rudubai.ru/en</a>	DKV
Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto Institute of Science and Technology (SZABIST)	<a href="http://www.szabist.ac.ae">www.szabist.ac.ae</a>	DIAC
University of Bradford in Dubai	<a href="http://www.brad.ac.uk">www.brad.ac.uk</a>	DKV
University of St. Josephs (USJ)	<a href="http://www.usj.edu.lb/dubai">www.usj.edu.lb/dubai</a>	DIAC
University of Wollongong in Dubai	<a href="http://www.uowdubai.ac.ae">www.uowdubai.ac.ae</a>	DKV

### Federal Institutions (3 institutions)

Institution	Website
Dubai Men's College	<a href="http://dbm.hct.ac.ae">http://dbm.hct.ac.ae</a>
Dubai Women's College	<a href="http://dwc.hct.ac.ae">http://dwc.hct.ac.ae</a>
Zayed University	<a href="http://www.zu.ac.ae">www.zu.ac.ae</a>

### Outside Free Zones (18 institutions)

Institution	Website
Al Ghurair University	<a href="http://www.agu.ae">www.agu.ae</a>
American College of Dubai	<a href="http://www.centamed.com">www.centamed.com</a>
American University in Dubai	<a href="http://www.aud.edu">www.aud.edu</a>
Canadian University in Dubai	<a href="http://www.cud.ac.ae">www.cud.ac.ae</a>
Computer College	<a href="http://www.cc-uae.com">www.cc-uae.com</a>

Institution	Website
Dubai Medical College for Girls	<a href="http://www.dmcg.edu">www.dmcg.edu</a>
Dubai Pharmacy College	<a href="http://www.dpc.edu">www.dpc.edu</a>
Dubai Police Academy	<a href="http://www.dubaipolice.gov.ae">www.dubaipolice.gov.ae</a>
Dubai School of Government	<a href="http://www.dsg.ae">www.dsg.ae</a>
Emirates Academy of Hospitality Management	<a href="http://www.emiratesacademy.edu">www.emiratesacademy.edu</a>
Emirates Aviation College	<a href="http://www.emiratesaviationcollege.com">www.emiratesaviationcollege.com</a>
Emirates College for Management and Information Technology	<a href="http://www.ecmit.ae">www.ecmit.ae</a>
Hamdan bin Mohamed e-University	<a href="http://www.hbmeu.ac.ae/en/home">www.hbmeu.ac.ae/en/home</a>
Islamic and Arabic Studies College	<a href="http://www.islamic-college.ae">www.islamic-college.ae</a>
University of Dubai	<a href="http://www.ud.ac.ae">www.ud.ac.ae</a>
University of Jazeera	<a href="http://www.uojazeera.com">www.uojazeera.com</a>
University of Modern Sciences	<a href="http://www.buc.ac.ae">www.buc.ac.ae</a>
University of Strathclyde Business School-UAE	<a href="http://www.gsb.strath.ac.uk">www.gsb.strath.ac.uk</a>



## CONTACT US

P. O. Box: 500008, Dubai

United Arab Emirates

Tel: +971 4 364 0000

Fax: +971 4 364 0001

[www.khda.gov.ae](http://www.khda.gov.ae)