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**Institutional Standards Assessment of**

**College of Banking and Financial Studies**

**Stakeholder Notification**

**General Information for CBFS Staff, Students and Stakeholders**

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| **Institutional Standards Assessment Key Information** |
| **HEI** | **College of Banking and Financial Studies** |
| **ISA Visit Dates** | May 05, 2025 – May 08, 2025 |
| **Visit Venue** | CBFS |
| **Panel Chairperson** | Prof Bastian Baumann  |
| **Panel Member(s)** | Dr Maha Khamis Al Balushi, Dr Alma Gamido Enriquez |
| **Review Director** | Dr. Kiran Gopakumar Rajalekshmi |
| **Assistant Review Director** | Dr. Khadija Darwish Al Balushi |
| **HEI Contact Person** | Dr. Yousuf Mohamed Al Balushi |
| **HEI Contact Email** |  |
| **Further Information:** | [www.oaaaqa.gov.om](http://www.oaaaqa.gov.om)  |

**What is an Institutional Standards Assessment (ISA)?**

The Oman Authority for Academic Accreditation and Quality Assurance of Education (OAAAQA) has convened an Institutional Standards Assessment (ISA) Panel to undertake an ISA (Institutional Reaccreditation) of CBFS. The ISA evaluates whether CBFS meets the OAAAQA’s academic Standards and Criteria, which have been set to reflect international standards for higher education institutions. The OAAAQA’s Standards, embedded in Part B of the ISA Manual v2, are available on the OAAAQA website ([www.oaaaqa.gov.om](http://www.oaaaqa.gov.om)).

**What are the outcomes of ISA?**

The ISA involves a comprehensive self-assessment by CBFS, resulting in an ISA Application. This is followed by an external review by an ISA Panel appointed by the OAAAQA. The process results in the CBFS being given ratings against the Standards and Criteria, and an overall Accreditation Outcome. The ratings and the Accreditation Outcome are then published on the OAAAQA’s website.

**Who are the ISA Panel Members?**

The ISA Panel comprises senior academic, professional or industrial experts, resident both in Oman and internationally.

**What does the ISA Panel do during a Panel Visit to an HEI?**

As part of its work, the ISA Panel conducts a Visit during the dates shown above. During the Visit, the Panel will meet a wide range of people, including staff and students and external stakeholders, such as employers and external examiners. Mostly, these meetings are in formal interview sessions, but some random interviews may also be conducted.

**What are interview sessions?**

Some staff, students and other stakeholders (e.g. alumni) have been requested to participate in formal interviews with the ISA Panel. Staff may be invited to be interviewed individually or in groups of up to eight interviewees in sessions conducted in the Panel rooms. Staff may meet with the whole Panel or with part of the Panel. Students and alumni are invited to attend a one-hour long group interview session. Students and alumni are not interviewed individually but in groups of five in a more informal ‘round table’ setting with a single Panel Member.

The Panel may also conduct ‘random’ interviews with staff and students on campus in order to help the ISA Panel Members gain a broad perspective. At some stage during the Visit, an ISA Panel Member may approach you on campus and ask whether you would be willing to spend a few minutes with them responding to some questions. All ISA Panel Members are clearly identifiable from their name badges. You are under no obligation to participate, but it is hoped that you will assist in order to help the ISA Panel gain as full an understanding of CBFS as possible.

**What types of questions does the Panel ask in interviews?**

Panel Members ask questions about staff and student’s experience at CBFS, including teaching and learning experience, support provided to students and staff, resources and facilities available on campus, research and other areas from the ISA Standards. The Panel may seek comments on a broader range of matters, some of which may be general, and others may be more specific. Interviewees are expected to answer honestly and based on their personal experience. There are no right or wrong answers, and the interview is not a test of the interviewees.

**Should staff and students prepare for interviews?**

Panel questions are based on this Application. Interviewees may not bring pre-planned answers to the interview. Panel Members examine a wide range of evidence during the ISA process and use the lived experience or knowledge of interviewees about the institution as part of their analysis of this information.

**Are interview sessions during the ISA Visit confidential?**

All interviews are confidential in the sense that although the Panel needs to be able to use the information provided, it will not do so in a way that attributes the statements to anyone in particular. In other words, the ISA Panel may reveal what was said, but not who said it. Your name will not be mentioned anywhere. The OAAAQA expects that all participants in ISA will respect this rule and will not report on what they or other people say during the interview.

Thank you very much for your participation in this important exercise