

Assessing / Accrediting LIS Programs in the Middle East : Options and Opportunities

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Broader global context

East Asia

Southeast Asia

Existing standards and guidelines (IFLA, ALA)

Existing models (CILIP, ALIA, etc.)

GCC Countries

Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC):

- Saudi Arabia
 - United Arab Emirates
 - Kuwait
 - Qatar
 - Muscat
 - Bahrain
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Middle East LIS Programs

- LIS programs primarily undergraduate-- prevalent model
 - Most programs focused on local/regional issues, weak in structure (Kuwait University an exception)
 - PhD required of faculty; most publish in Arabic
 - Use external evaluators from Western countries
 - No professional certification process for graduates
 - Most incorporated “information science” into curriculum and research
 - Region lacks a professional forum to address quality assessment & accreditation
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Review mechanisms used

- Self-study
- External review—other LIS schools
- Accrediting agencies review

Middle East LIS Assessment Challenges

- Distinctions between undergraduate and graduate programs
- Currently predominantly undergraduate programs
- Weak professional meeting culture within and across the countries in the region

GCC LIS programs— Potential assessment/review options:

- Regional body: Arabian Gulf Chapter of SLA (meets annually)—no current assessment role
- GCC universities forum—too bureaucratic in current form
- Units in ministries of education in the six nations—interest in assessment of curriculum and research
- Regional LIS programs forum—potential as professional culture develops
- IFLA-based accreditation body—existing standards work has potential; anticipates some resistance to outside organization involvement