

Case Study Higher Education

Chemistry Program /
Academic Accreditation



RSC Accreditation of a Chemistry Program in Lebanon

BACKGROUND

With more than 54,000 members, The Royal Society of Chemistry (RSC) is the leading organization in Europe for advancing chemical sciences and the largest in the world to provide global program accreditation. RSC serves the public interest through the dissemination of knowledge, advancement of professional standards of qualification and consultations related to the practice of chemistry.

A Chemistry program encompasses the latest methodologies and applications, and provides students with access to advanced instrumental techniques, particularly through the integration of information technology solutions for chemical applications. Ultimately, Chemistry students graduate as well-rounded individuals with a broad knowledge of the field, hence well prepared for the local, national and international job markets in the education, industry and health sectors. Moreover, a solid Chemistry program prepares students for postgraduate study in scientific fields such as Chemistry, Chemical Engineering, Biomedical Sciences and Medicine.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Client Challenges

- In a highly competitive market for employment, the need for international recognition through program accreditation is more important than ever
- Students graduating from non-accredited schools will have limited opportunities for employment and higher education (Master or PhD programs)
- Without school or program accreditation, recruitment of reputable faculty in the field becomes more difficult
- Chemistry laboratories must adhere to high QA standards in order to ensure the safety of students and faculty; as such, the latest advances in safety-based technological tools must be installed.

Our Solution

Recommended and lead the following Chemistry program accreditation steps:

- Revised Chemistry curricula and program educational objectives (PEOs)
- Revised course learning outcomes (CLOs) and mapped them to the PEOs
- Developed a program assessment plan and self-review report for the purpose of continuous program improvement
- Invited program reviewers to complement internal efforts
- Modified the curricula based on the reviewers' and self-study reports
- Ensured that the program organizational structure is in compliance with accreditation standards.

Our Intervention's Impact

- The Chemistry program obtained RSC accreditation
- Improved faculty morale
- Improved both faculty and student recruitment.

Accrediting the Chemistry program enhanced faculty morale, and improved both faculty and student recruitment.

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Key Client Challenge

The need for RSC accreditation of a Chemistry program is essential to establish it as a leader in the field and ensure that it attracts both top faculty and students.

Our Solution

Governance and Management

- *Planning*

- Established a Curriculum Committee to develop guidelines for curriculum development
- Recruited a consulting team to help faculty determine criteria, identify weaknesses of the established programs, and create program benchmarks
- Promoted faculty governance.

- *Curriculum*

- Revised the Chemistry curriculum.

Educational and Professional Development

- *Faculty Development*

- Established teaching and learning workshops to improve teaching skills of faculty
- Provided financial support for all program faculty and coordinators to attend RSC-related conferences
- Recruited a program assessment officer to support program assessment activities.

- *Students*

- Established a mentoring and writing center to support students in academic jeopardy.

- *Accreditation*

- Obtained 5-year RSC accreditation for the Chemistry program
- Implemented a continuous program improvement plan to ensure that all programs continue to meet accreditation standards
- Revised the program every year to ascertain compliance with new or revised Chemistry programs as approved by the RSC
- Ensured that the organizational structure is maintained to continue compliance with accreditation standards
- Developed a cyclic process (3-4 year cycles) for program evaluation.

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