

Sharjah Maritime Academy and Heriot-Watt University Sign MoU to Advance Academic Cooperation and Research Excellence



Sharjah, United Arab Emirates Nov 6, 2025 ([Issuewire.com](https://www.issuewire.com)) - Sharjah Maritime Academy (SMA) and Heriot-Watt University have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to strengthen academic collaboration, research development, and professional training between the two institutions.

The MoU was signed at the Sharjah Maritime Academy campus in Khorfakkan by Dr. Hashim Al Zaabi, the Chancellor of SMA and Professor Dame Heather McGregor, Provost and Vice Principal of Heriot-Watt University Dubai, in the presence of senior leaders from SMA, Prof. Syamantak Bhattacharya, Provost & Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, Prof. Saud Aldajah, Dean of International Transport and Logistics College, and Heriot-Watt University, Professor Chris Turney, Professor Lynne Jack, Dr. Shereen Nassar and Dr. Ross Curran. The agreement establishes a framework for cooperation in faculty development, research supervision, teaching exchange, and joint academic initiatives, supporting the UAE's vision to enhance innovation, education quality, and sustainable industry partnerships.

Under this agreement, Heriot-Watt University faculty will support staff development sessions at Sharjah Maritime Academy, while both institutions will explore opportunities for joint research, co-supervision of

projects, and teaching collaboration. The partnership further reflects both institutions' commitment to identifying additional areas of mutual benefit in the future.

Dr. Hashim Al Zaabi, Chancellor of Sharjah Maritime Academy, stated:

"This MoU reflects SMA's commitment to building international academic partnerships that enhance learning outcomes and applied research in the maritime field. Our collaboration with Heriot-Watt University—an institution globally recognized for academic excellence—supports our mission to prepare future maritime professionals equipped with the knowledge, leadership, and innovation skills required to serve the UAE and the wider region."

Professor Dame Heather McGregor, said:

"We are pleased to collaborate with Sharjah Maritime Academy, a pioneering institution in the region's maritime education landscape. At Heriot-Watt University, we value partnerships with organisations that share our vision for excellence in innovation and real-world impact. This collaboration brings together the strengths of both institutions to advance research exchange, faculty collaboration and professional development in line with the UAE's vision for sustainable, knowledge-based growth. We look forward to building on this partnership and seeing the positive outcomes it will create for our students, our faculty and the wider community." The signing reinforces Sharjah Maritime Academy's growing role as a national hub for maritime education and research. Based in Khorfakkan, SMA is the UAE's first specialized higher education institution dedicated to maritime studies, offering Commission for Academic Accreditation (CAA)-approved bachelor's programs in Maritime Transport, Marine Engineering, and Maritime Logistics and Supply Chain Management. Through partnerships with international universities and industry organizations, SMA continues to develop pathways that connect academic excellence with real-world industry experience.

Heriot-Watt University was founded in the UK in 1821 and in 2005 became one of the first international universities to set up in the UAE. The University bringing more than two centuries of heritage in research-led education. Its collaboration with SMA underscores a shared vision of empowering students, fostering innovation, and driving impactful research that supports national priorities in education, technology, and sustainability.

The MoU signing marks the beginning of a series of joint initiatives that will further enhance academic exchange, professional training, and innovation-driven collaboration between both institutions.



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