



## Press Release – immediate publishing

### New project “a boost” to Higher Education in the Emirates

**A new agreement between HCT – CERT and the University of Cambridge ESOL Examinations (Cambridge ESOL) will benefit tens of thousands of Higher Education students from the UAE in the next three years.**

From May 2011, UAE-based students at HCT planning to study on Higher Education courses in English speaking environments will be able to prove they have the necessary language skills by taking the newly developed Higher Education Admissions (HEA) Test. Developed by experts from Cambridge ESOL and the Higher Colleges of Technology in Abu Dhabi, the HEA Test will allow students to prove their language ability in line with international standards recognised by universities all over the world.

Dr Mike Milanovic, Cambridge ESOL’s Chief Executive says: “The HEA Test has been put in place to effectively recruit thousands of students wishing to continue further studies at the Higher Colleges of Technology each year. Through the HEA Test the students will be able to prove that they have the required language skills needed to survive in what can be a very demanding environment.”

Starting in May, the project will see several HEA Test sessions run in 2011 with many more planned in 2012 and onwards. The tens of thousands choosing this route will be able to download their results online which show where their skills sit in relation to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), an international benchmark for language skills. The project is the brainchild of HCT’s Vice Chancellor Dr Tayeb Kamali and Cambridge ESOL’s Chief Executive Dr Mike Milanovic when they met back in March 2010.

The HCT – who work to develop a strong national workforce in the UAE – say the new project will be a real boost to Higher Education in the region.

HCT Vice Chancellor Dr Tayeb Kamali said the agreement would help HCT meet the challenge of providing its students with educational experiences that transform school-leavers into highly skilled graduates ready to contribute to the nation-building process.

“Students have to progress through courses and programs using English, which for them is a second language, so the HCT educational experiences must ensure the students are able to communicate effectively using English,” Dr Kamali said.



“We are therefore very pleased to be working closely with such a venerable institution as the University of Cambridge’s ESOL department in addressing the English language skills and needs of HCT students.”

**ENDS**

**NOTES TO EDITORS:**

**About Cambridge ESOL:**

University of Cambridge ESOL examinations is the world’s leading language assessment provider. It provides exams in English language for over 3 million people every year, in more than 130 countries as well as a range of qualifications for language teachers. Around the world, thousands of universities, employers and government ministries rely on Cambridge ESOL certificates as proof of English language ability. A Cambridge ESOL certificate can determine whether the career is progressed or a university place offered, while the broader examination results can help to determine a nation’s education and investment policy.

It is a not-for-profit department of the University of Cambridge and is part of the Cambridge Assessment group, Europe’s largest assessment agency which provides exams and tests covering a huge range of subjects and levels; more than eight million are taken every year.

[www.CambridgeESOL.org](http://www.CambridgeESOL.org)

**About HCT:**

The Higher Colleges of Technology is the largest higher educational institution in the United Arab Emirates with the current enrolment exceeding 18,000 students, all UAE nationals. Since the establishment of its four founding colleges in 1988, the Higher Colleges of Technology have become well respected for innovative learning in the United Arab Emirates. Across the UAE today, in the cities of Abu Dhabi, Al Ain, Dubai, Ras Al Khaimah, Sharjah, Fujairah and the western region of Madinat Zayed and Ruwais, the sixteen HCT men’s and women’s modern campuses offer an impressive range of programs - more than 80 programs at four different credential levels - Diploma, Higher Diploma, Bachelor and Masters. More than 11,000 of the current students are female.

Strong ties to business and industry result in large numbers of HCT graduates finding rewarding employment. Many organisations have entered into partnerships with the HCT to provide training and development programs - these include Department of Health and Medical Services - Dubai, UAE Armed Forces, Standard Chartered Bank, Microsoft, Cisco Systems and Sheikh Khalifa Funds through SME training. Industry links have led to the establishment of HCT’s commercial arm, the Centre of Excellence for Applied Research and Training. The Centre is involved in strategic alliances with a number of multinational organisations to collaborate on a full range of business and technology solutions.



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