

Abu Dhabi University Secures First APM Academic Accreditation in MENA

January 30, 2026



Abu Dhabi University has become the first institution in the UAE and the Middle East to receive Academic Accreditation from the Association for Project Management for its Master of Project Management programme, marking a significant step forward for project leadership education in the region.

The accreditation, awarded to ADU's College of Engineering, confirms that the programme aligns with the APM Body of Knowledge and meets internationally recognised standards for quality, ethics and professional competence. From a project management perspective, this signals a deliberate shift toward embedding globally benchmarked frameworks into academic delivery, ensuring graduates are prepared to operate within structured governance, risk and assurance environments.

Students enrolled on the programme will receive complimentary APM Student Membership, providing access to professional networks, publications and development resources. Graduates will also benefit from an accelerated route to Full APM Membership after three years of experience, rather than the usual five, strengthening the link between academic study and professional recognition.

For the wider market, the move supports the development of a more consistent and standards-driven talent pipeline. As the UAE continues to deliver large-scale infrastructure, energy and digital transformation programmes, the demand for professionally grounded project leaders is increasing. Accreditation helps align university curricula with industry expectations, reducing the gap between theory and applied delivery.

The milestone also supports ADU's Vision 2027, which focuses on global accreditation, employability and industry integration, while contributing to national ambitions to strengthen project capability across strategic sectors.

Jan Lonnen, Senior Accreditation and Assessment Manager at APM, described the development as a positive step for both organisations and for the profession in the UAE, highlighting the importance of raising standards and aligning education with international best practice.

Dr Hamdi Sheibani, Dean of the College of Engineering at ADU, said the achievement reinforces the university's commitment to delivering programmes benchmarked against global professional standards and equipping graduates with recognised credentials and real-world competencies.

As project complexity continues to increase across the Middle East, formal alignment between academia and professional bodies will play a critical role in ensuring future leaders are not only qualified, but delivery-ready.