Strategic Plan
2016 - 2020
College of Economics & Political Science
The College of Economics and Political Science’s (CEPS) Strategic Plan provides a framework of action for CEPS for the years 2016 to 2020. It provides an overall guide to the College where achievement of major goals is considered an indicator of the College’s endeavours to achieve its vision.

In its pursuit of becoming a leading business education provider in the region, CEPS has identified four goals addressing teaching and learning, scholarly research, community engagement, and operational excellence. The achievement of these goals is supported by the following three pillars:

1. **AL-ALAMIIYAH**
   - (GLOBAL PATHWAYS)
   - CEPS Internationalisation

2. **JISR**
   - (BRIDGE)
   - CEPS Corporate Connections

3. **AKHILAQ MASWULIYYAH/AL-MUSTADAMA**
   - ERS
   - Ethics, Responsibility and Sustainability

The plan is a somewhat organic document that is subject to change depending on changing conditions, new challenges, environmental ambiguities and unanticipated requirements. Hence, although it has been adopted by the College, it is subject to future changes whenever necessary.

Responsibility for implementation of the plan remains with the Dean, Assistant Deans and Heads of Departments and their representatives.
To provide a learning and research environment benchmarked to international business and political science standards and engage in national and international strategic partnerships in order to contribute to national development.

This Mission is underpinned by four core strategic goals that form the foundations of CEPS’ purpose and guide all of its activities:

Excellence in Teaching and Learning

careers in line with the needs of the labour market and responsible socio-economic advancement. CEPS’ goal is to follow national and international standards in the delivery of these attributes through continually assessed, student-centred, interdisciplinary programmes based on active-learning and outcome-based teaching methods.

At the postgraduate level CEPS’ aim is to offer senior students and professionals multi-disciplinary opportunities to benefit from integrated research and coursework-based programmes. CEPS’ postgraduate programmes aim to facilitate active faculty-peer-external stakeholder collaborations that foster the acquisition and application of internationally recognised skills based on best practice and ethical, responsible and sustainable business, information system management and policymaking.

Research and Development

CEPS aims to promote a college-wide research culture of engagement among faculty and students in internationally recognised research output that contributes to academic knowledge, applied research, innovation and commercialisation. This research culture is geared towards strengthening collaborative, strategic research endeavours with national and international universities, companies, organisations, and institutes to transform knowledge into value for Oman and the world.
Community Service

CEPS aims to provide service to the community through effective corporate and international partnerships, and by contributing outstanding graduates and research in support of sustainable socio-economic development.

Operational Excellence

Operational excellence in academic and nonacademic activities is essential to achieving the central mission of the university and the College.

CEPS strives to operate at the highest level by optimally aligning its resources to efficiently and effectively accomplish its strategic vision. This is achieved by cultivating a culture of teamwork not only between colleges and academic departments but also alongside the College library, offices of the assistant deanships and through ongoing technical support.
The College of Economics and Political Science intends:

**To be internationally recognised for excellence in business and political science education, research and contributions to socio-economic development.**

Building upon its existing strengths and strategic goals, CEPS intends to pursue the achievement of this Vision through the following three key strategic pillars:

**• Internationalisation Strategic Pillar:**

This involves actioning and advancing the Al-Alamiyyah (Arabic for global) strategy – or ‘Global Pathways’ – in the consolidation and expansion of planning for internationalisation. This strategic pillar is under the leadership and administration of the ADTCS office.

**• Corporate Connections Strategic Pillar:**

This involves advancing the “Jisr” (Arabic for bridge) strategic pillar to form additional ‘bridges’ between CEPS, companies and organisations (locally and internationally). This means building more employment and training opportunities and contributions for CEPS graduates, and to expand the role of CEPS in socio-economic development through effective partnerships with the corporate world.

**• Ethics, Responsibility and Sustainability Strategic Pillar:**

This involves advancing the “Akhlaq wa Masouliyyah” strategy (Arabic for ethics and responsibility) as the guiding principle and lifelong commitment for students’ professional and personal development. In addition, the “Estidama” (sustainability) strategic action is included as the principle perspective and framework in guiding student professional and personal decision-making and leadership activities.

Figure 1 below, depicts the strategic goals and pillars underpinning the strategic plan.
CEPS holds shared values with SQU in terms of excellence, integrity, equity, commitment and collegiality. In addition, CEPS’ values include ethics and agility, which are critical to a modern business school.

**Values**

- **Excellence**
  We expect and foster excellence in student, faculty and staff performance in achieving our Mission.

- **Integrity**
  We expect and promote a college environment, which maintains the highest standards of academic integrity in learning, research and respect for regulations, laws and customs.

- **Equity**
  All members of the CEPS ‘family,’ which includes all students, staff, faculty and alumni – are expected to dispense and receive equal consideration and opportunity in all activities, policies and decisions.

- **Collegiality**
  We foster an environment of positive & professional collaboration in the spirit of collegiality based within Omani traditional values of tolerance, coexistence and understanding.

- **Commitment**
  We expect and positively encourage dedication and commitment to the achievement of CEPS’ Mission.

- **Agility**
  In a changing business & policy-making world, CEPS understands the need to promote the value of intellectual and practical dexterity and agility.

- **Ethics**
  We demand and actively foster awareness and respect for impeccable standards of ethics in the conduct of business, policy-making, research and all other related professional fields.
Strategic Planning Process

To produce a credible, coherent and realistic strategic plan that coordinates and aligns resources and actions with its mission, CEPS follows a formal planning process, formulated on a five-year cycle. As a matter of institutional arrangements, a college-level Strategic Planning Committee oversees the development of CEPS’ strategic plan. In developing its strategic plan, the College seeks input from various stakeholders including faculty, students, Advisory Board members, alumni and other stakeholders at different stages of the strategic planning process. Determining the College’s strategic aims and actions entails assessing the positioning of the College, the available resources, examining strengths and weaknesses, and determining global trends and opportunities. The evidence collected from these positioning analyses is used to develop the goals for each of the strategic domains: Excellence in Teaching and Learning, Research and Development, and Community Service. The College ensures that its strategic goals are in line with SQU strategic goals and that CEPS’ Strategic Plan is conceptualised to guide its contribution to the university’s and Oman’s long-term objectives.

The strategic goals are then augmented with appropriate objectives and tactics defined for each of the five years. The action (or operational) plans are determined annually and updated during the year based on the progress made or challenges encountered, with some actions spanning a period longer than a year. Beside the operational plan, definitions of specific quantitative indicators (KPIs) are prepared and linked with each basic goal in order to monitor the degree of its completion. The final step is to have the strategic plan approved by the College Board, the university administration, and SQU Council.
In line with SQU strategic goals and to achieve its mission and vision, CEPS has identified four goals. The first goal addresses CEPS’ endeavor to provide an outstanding learning environment for its students. The second goal addresses the need to promote and support scholarly research among its faculty. The third goal addresses CEPS’ engagement with the community, and the final goal addresses CEPS’ pursuit of operational excellence.

Following is a breakdown of the four goals; the strategic pillar underpinning each, and strategies identified which lead to the Operational Plan containing objectives and tactics for achieving each strategy.

### Goal 1

To provide outstanding teaching and learning by creating an inspirational environment that fosters intellectual and professional growth.

#### 1a: Undergraduate Strategy

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<tr>
<th>Strategic Pillar</th>
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| Internationalisation Al-Alamiyyah (Global Pathways) | 1. Benchmark all coursework and skills acquisition to international academic standards, industry certifications, and global trends in each programme.  
2. Provide high quality educational programmes that meet international standards and enable students to succeed as professionals in global business environments.  
3. Ensure all undergraduate and postgraduate programmes continue to be taught in English by a high level of international faculty.  
4. Require all undergraduates to complete an internship with the opportunity to work abroad through corporate/CEPS/SQU sponsorships and through international organisations such as the EFMD Global Talent Network.  
5. Continue student participation in international academic conferences and competitions.  
6. Secure external funding and increase internal funding for international internships and for CEPS student work and study abroad scholarships and subsides.  
7. Activate to a greater level existing CEPS international academic exchange partnerships and increasing formal academic exchange agreements.  
8. Significantly influence the CEPS Omani student culture to greater value the pursuit of international internships and study abroad as an essential component of their business education and professional development. |
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<th>Strategic Pillar</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Corporate Connections</strong>&lt;br&gt;Jisr (Bridge)</td>
<td>1. Ensure that each programme includes a summer internship to provide students with direct experience working in leading corporate, government and organisational settings.&lt;br&gt;2. Ensure a constant involvement of the industry in developing existing and new programs.&lt;br&gt;3. Invite leaders from industry and advisory boards to network with students and faculty in and out of classroom settings.</td>
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<td><strong>Ethics, Responsibility &amp; Sustainability</strong>&lt;br&gt;Akhlaq wa Masouliyyah (ethics &amp; responsibility) &amp; Estidama (sustainability)</td>
<td>1. Raise students’ awareness of their social and ethical responsibilities in the business and work environments.&lt;br&gt;2. Recognise and reward the delivery of inspirational teaching that enhances the student experience.&lt;br&gt;3. Incorporate ERS learning outcomes into the curriculum and ensure that students are assessed against these learning outcomes.</td>
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<td><strong>Others</strong></td>
<td>1. Consolidate and integrate interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary content into programmes, to ensure graduates have robust and diverse ‘high skills’ in business, policy and international cross-cultural knowledge.&lt;br&gt;2. Undertake regular review of courses on a semester basis to continuously improve programmes.&lt;br&gt;3. Conduct a formal Peer Review process each semester.&lt;br&gt;4. Continue to support a ‘best teacher’ award in every department through an open comparative process.&lt;br&gt;5. Continue to use the university’s online learning management system (Moodle II) to effectively organise course content, ease accessibility of teaching materials, and to provide additional reading materials.</td>
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1b: Postgraduate Strategy

Currently SQU’s postgraduate programmes’ overall strategic goal is “to produce quality postgraduates capable of providing solutions to societal needs and contributing to knowledge.” Towards this goal, CEPS seeks to:

- Offer postgraduate students and professionals multi-disciplinary opportunities to engage in learning-by-research programmes gained through active faculty-peer-external collaborations that enable the acquisition and application of internationally recognised best practices in support of ethical, responsible and sustainable business management and policymaking.

Table 2: Strategic Pillars to address Goal 1b

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<th>Strategic Pillar</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Internationalisation</strong></td>
<td>1. Benchmark and continuously review all postgraduate programmes to ensure they adhere to curricular standards of leading international business schools and accreditation bodies.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Al-Alamiyyah</strong></td>
<td>2. Include in all courses research and intellectual development activities that examine and analyse national and international situations, challenges, and solutions in comparative contexts.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>(Global Pathways)</strong></td>
<td>3. Continue to present all postgraduate programmes in English language by a high level of international faculty.</td>
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<td>4. Encourage and support all postgraduate students to present at international conferences and events as part of their degree programmes.</td>
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<td>5. Provide the unequalled opportunity to learn about and engage with the wider world through coursework, internships, corporate connections and study abroad opportunities.</td>
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<td>7. Provide continuous support to postgraduate students through various local and international funding opportunities.</td>
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<td>Strategic Pillar</td>
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| **Corporate Connections**<br>Jisr (Bridge) | 1. Maintain an industry-focused, innovative MBA programme with diverse perspectives on innovation, entrepreneurship, management and leadership.  
2. Provide high level training for working professionals, especially in the foreign, defence and security services, as well as other private sector organisations, related to international relations and security in the Sultanate of Oman through the MA programme in International Relations & Security Studies.  
3. Maximise corporate links, in the form of off-campus students, to frame coursework and projects that simulate real world problems they are faced in Omani workplaces, and subsequently produce reports, theses, and research papers aimed at offering constructive management and policy making solutions.  
4. Continuously assess programmes and courses based on feedback from industry (directly and via departmental advisory boards).  
5. Encourage students to collaborate with the industry for joint research projects. |
| **Ethics, Responsibility & Sustainability**<br>Akhlaq wa Masouliyyah (ethics & responsibility) & Estidama (sustainability) | 1. Incorporate ERS-related attributes and learning outcomes in all CEPS graduate programme curricula, with the aim of establishing these attributes as an integral part of advanced research, coursework and professional responsibility.  
2. Leverage the role of the ERS committee in CEPS to plan and promote ERS-related activities in the departments and among postgraduate student groups.  
3. Establish new, and leverage existing, agreements with international organisations that promote ERS. |
| **Others** | 1. Ensure all postgraduate programmes include PLOs aligned with the new SQU Postgraduate Attributes and Curriculum Maps that guarantee a learning environment benchmarked to international standards, advancement of educational excellence and an international research-oriented culture connected to national objectives.  
2. Continuously assess programmes and courses based on feedback student feedback (via the CAT system), Student Liaison Committee representatives, and alumni exit surveys.  
3. Secure research funding for students to support various research activities. |
To enhance CEPS’ reputation & relevance through outstanding scholarly research.

Encourage and enhance CEPS’ faculty research capacities and promote a conducive faculty-student collaborative research culture, particularly at the postgraduate level.

Table 3: Strategic Pillars to address Goal 2:

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<tr>
<td><strong>Internationalisation Al-Alamiyyah</strong>&lt;br&gt;(Global Pathways)</td>
<td>1. Maintain a high level of internationalisation through the appointment of international faculty and Omani faculty members who have earned their terminal degrees from international universities.</td>
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<td>2. Support collaborations through 28-day research leave allocations for faculty and sabbatical leave allocations for Omani faculty that generates engagement with universities worldwide.</td>
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<td>3. Create and foster a research-oriented culture, through collaboration with other students regionally and internationally and through student exchange programs.</td>
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<td>4. Activate to a greater level existing CEPS international research partnership agreements.</td>
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<td>5. Significantly increase CEPS’ portfolio of international research collaborations.</td>
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<td>6. Encourage and support faculty and students’ publications in internationally recognised research outlets.</td>
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<td>7. Continue strong participation of CEPS faculty and students in international conferences.</td>
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| **Corporate Connections Jisr**<br>(Bridge) | 1. Ensure that faculty and postgraduate programme research topics are more relevant to corporate/industry issues and needs through greater involvement of the corporate community. |
|                                           | 2. Collaborate with industry for joint research projects. |
|                                           | 3. Secure corporate funding for research projects that serve national priorities. |
Strategic Pillar

Ethics, Responsibility & Sustainability
Akhlaq wa Masouliyyah (ethics & responsibility) & Estidama (sustainability)

Others

Strategy

1. Conduct research that advances the social and economic well-being of the Sultanate of Oman and its peoples in parallel with Oman’s strategic economic diversification efforts.
2. Provide incentives for research that addresses ERS-related issues.
3. Encourage faculty to incorporate ERS-related topics into their research agendas.
4. Leverage the role of the CEPS ERS committee to plan and promote ERS-related research activities for faculty and students.
5. Establish new, and leverage existing, agreements with international organisations that promote ERS.
6. Raise students’ awareness of ethical and socially responsible research.
7. Emphasise adherence to the recently created university Social Research Ethics Board.

1. Increase focus on postgraduate studies in order to maintain CEPS’ leadership and pioneering role as the provider of high-quality education in Oman through implementing strong graduate attributes.
2. Design a research direction that takes into consideration basic versus applied research, and knowledge generation versus innovation-driven research.
3. Raise awareness among faculty and students of intellectual property matters.
4. Achieve niche research and encourage new and innovative scholarly activities.
### Goal 3
To meet stakeholders’ needs by strengthening relationships with corporate and academic partners, alumni, and community.

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<tr>
<td><strong>Internationalisation</strong> Al-Alamiyyah</td>
<td>1. Significantly increase CEPS’ portfolio of international academic partnerships for student/faculty exchanges.</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Global Pathways)</td>
<td>2. Activate to a greater level existing CEPS international research collaboration agreements.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Corporate Connections</strong> Jisr (Bridge)</td>
<td>1. Leverage corporate links to foster teaching and learning and scholarly research.</td>
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<td>2. Ensure a continuous assessment of programmes based on input from industry.</td>
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<td>3. Implement an industry-focused, innovative programme at the undergraduate and post graduate levels.</td>
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<td>4. Establish a relationship between graduates and the College particularly related to expanding corporate support and involvement in CEPS’ academic activities.</td>
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<td>5. Obtain hands-on business and professional experience through corporate-connected assignments that use advanced educational technologies, such as the Internet, business simulations and multi-media case studies.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Ethics, Responsibility &amp; Sustainability</strong> Akhlaq wa Masouliyyah (ethics &amp; responsibility) &amp; Estidama (sustainability)</td>
<td>1. Conduct research that advances the social and economic well-being of the Sultanate of Oman and its peoples in parallel with Oman’s strategic economic diversification efforts.</td>
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<td>2. Sign formal commitment documentation with ERS- related organisations and initiatives locally and internationally such as the PEARL Initiative and PRME to further promote CSR and business ethics.</td>
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### Goal 3

To provide outstanding operational excellence that underpins goals of teaching and learning, research and community engagement.

Table 5: Strategic Pillars to address Goal 4

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<tr>
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| **Internationalisation**<br>Al-Alamiyyah (Global Pathways) | 1. Consolidate and expand CEPS’ internationalisation planning and administration in the ADTCS Office to advance CEPS Al-Alamiyyah (Global Pathways) strategy and activities.  
2. Sustain faculty and student standards by continuously revising and updating faculty and student selection and evaluation processes.  
3. Establish new academic agreements and connections with leading multinational companies in the region, along with implementing the College’s membership in the EFMD Global Talent Network.  
4. Secure a set of dedicated, funded internships with international companies to enable high-performing CEPS students to engage in meaningful professional learning experiences outside of Oman.  
5. Secure active commitments for dedicated student exchange funds and opportunities, as well as new pathways for international students to come to CEPS to study and experience life in Oman, through a stronger collaboration with the SQU ICO.  
6. Add Advisory Board members who represent international firms to increase international corporate and academic ties.  
7. Broaden the mission and charge of the ERC under the ADTCS to serve as the External Relations and Internationalisation Committee to develop and carry out the CEPS’ Al-Alamiyyah strategic plans and activities.  
8. Develop a three-year plan for internationalisation expansion benchmarked to comparable EQUIS-accredited business schools and QS World Universities rankings.  
9. Establish systems to fully integrate international students and faculty visiting CEPS to study or conduct research into the academic environment and life of the College to allow for impactful inter-cultural exchanges and experiences to flow back and forth to the greater benefit of CEPS’ postgraduate students and international participants. |
1. Seek new and continued funding from SQU and Oman government agencies and, with the assistance of the College Advisory Board and Alumni Network, support full or partial-funded competitive work abroad student internships and training placements annually.

2. Develop joint capacities and activities between CEPS staff-faculty and student advisors with the SQU Career Counselling Services unit to assist students in preparing for successful work abroad and internships with the CEPS-International corporate partner network.

3. Use the internship orientation and other joint CEPS - Corporate Partnership events and venues to re-direct student expectations and interest in favour of preparing for private business over government careers.

4. Extend the CEPS - student connection beyond graduation to create a strong lifelong bond with the College and SQU through the Alumni Association.

5. Promote the achievements of CEPS alumni in and outside of the College.

6. Promote a powerful professional mentoring and communication network among CEPS' current students, alumni, external corporate and community partners, and the College as a whole.

7. Direct corporate involvement in on- and off-campus CEPS activities, e.g. lectures/seminars, workshops, training sessions, joint events, and class projects.

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1. Establish a formal ERS committee under the ADTCS office to plan and promote ERS-related activities in the departments and among student groups, in partnership with and in support of CEPS' corporate and external partners.

2. Identify, include and update ERS-related graduate attributes and learning outcomes in all CEPS programme curricula, with expansion of ERS topics and student learning in the content of both general and specialised courses.

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1. Develop and reinforce the selection process for students to be in line with SQU’s excellence in students’ outcome through improving the program and course intended learning outcomes.

2. Maintain CEPS’ ADUS coordination with the University’s Deanship of Admission & Registrations, the University Academic Council and the University Council in a consultative process that ensures careful consideration and deliberation that supports all decisions related to programme design, which in turn ensures consistency of quality of programmes.

3. Optimise support and guidance from the Innovation and Entrepreneurship Department (IED) in all issues related to innovation, such as awareness and commercialisation, in addition to the handling of intellectual property matters.
In its pursuit to become an internationally recognised school of excellence in business and political science education and research, CEPS has developed its five-year strategic plan covering the years 2016 to 2020. The plan is designed to serve as an overarching guide for CEPS’ actions to achieve its mission and vision. The plan has identified four strategic goals underpinned by three pillars supporting the achievement of these goals. The goals address four areas; namely teaching and learning, scholarly research, community engagement, and operational excellence. It is anticipated that this plan will be subject to modifications depending on emergent circumstances.