

ACTVET

Abu Dhabi Centre for
Technical and Vocational
Education and Training

مركز أبوظبي
للتعليم والتدريب
التقني والمهني



INNOVATION IN LICENSING

Policy, mission, transformational
and sustainable innovation



LICENSING

ACTVET 2020

Table of Contents

1.	Background	8
2.	Introduction	11
3.	Policy, Mission, transformational and sustainable innovation	12
4.	Policy, enhancement, optimising and sustaining innovation	14
5.	System, anticipatory, transformation and disruptive innovation	16
6.	Process, adaptive, disruptive and optimising innovation	20
7.	Process, enhancement, optimising, sustaining innovation	21
8.	Conclusion	22



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Our reliance upon knowledge and scientific thinking to achieve total development is the only way to bring our nation ahead to the stage of qualitative, non-oil production, a lesson learnt from nations with little or no natural resources”.

His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan,
Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme
Commander of the UAE Armed Forces.

Director General Message



H.E. Mubarak Saeed AlShamsi
Director General ACTVET

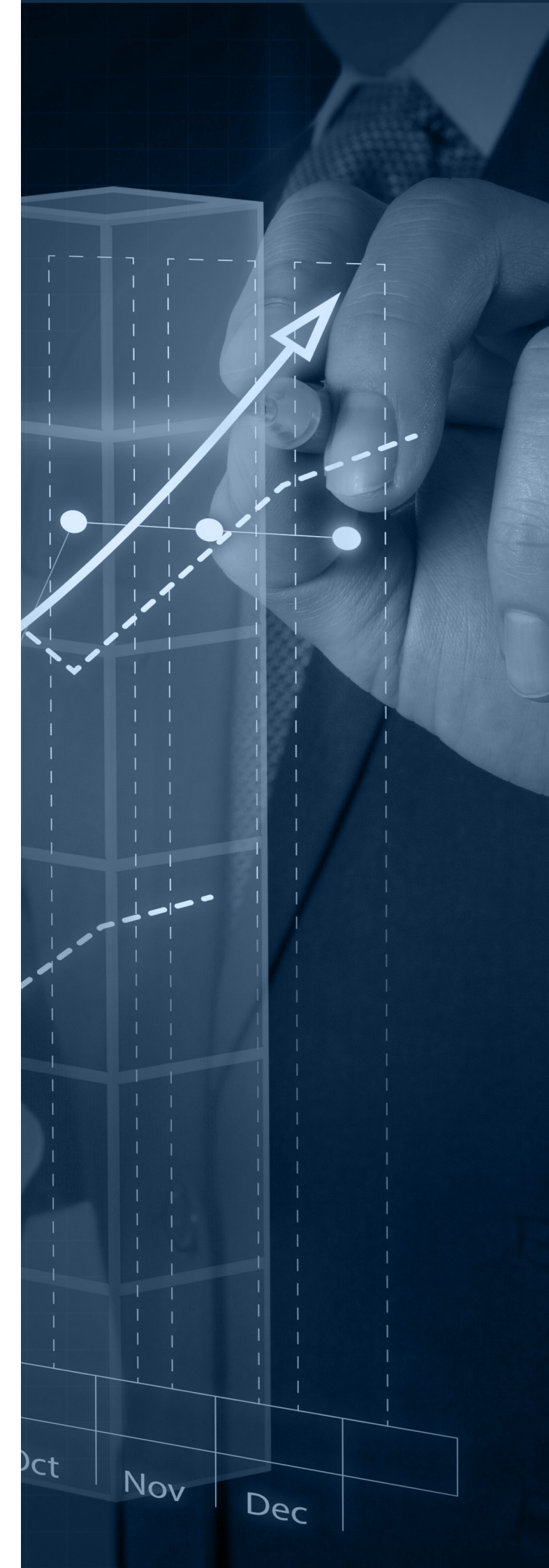
The mission of Abu Dhabi Centre for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (ACTVET) is to regulate the TVET sector in the Emirate of Abu Dhabi to build a national workforce that is capable of effectively participating in the sustainable development of the country. ACTVET strives to create an environment that encourages TVET institutions to innovate and reach their goals contributing to the achievement of Abu Dhabi Vision 2030.

The great success achieved by ACTVET is attributed to the guidance of His Highness Sheikh Khalifa Bin Zayed Al Nahyan, President of the UAE and His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE, Ruler of Dubai, His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed Forces, and members of the Supreme Council of Rulers of the Emirates; for joint national action to raise skilled generations who can lead the way towards sustainable, industrial and economic development.

Technical and vocational education is one of the key pillars to sustainable development due to its effective role in building capable people equipped with the necessary skills. With this in mind, ACTVET's top priority will always be to continuously strengthen and reinforce this system.

To achieve our mission, ACTVET will continue to build strategic partnerships with government and private institutions to ensure educational development which enables the youth to successfully contribute to the economic and social advancement of the country.

We hope the digital services package will provide tools that inspire all partners and customers to engage with us, in order to continuously enhance our educational services, leading to excellence and innovation.



Background

Abu Dhabi Centre for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (ACTVET) Licensing Department has been in operation for 10 years and has, over the time, continually applied quality assurance measures to improve licensing services. Recently, the ACTVET Director General, following other Ministries leads, aimed to ensure issuance of a License Training Provider (LTP) license within 15 minutes. As a result of the Director General instruction, the length of time taken to issue a license, needed to be drastically reduced. Therefore, the process needed to change, and in the process of change, seven novel innovative approaches were introduced for greater customer happiness. Innovation for the UAE has been defined as:

Pavitt's definition considers innovation at the higher level of company and country (Pavitt 2005, p. 86).

“The aspiration of individuals, private institutions and governments to achieve development by generating creative ideas and introducing new products, services and operations that improve the overall quality of life” (NIS, 2015).

The UAE's government strategy aims to innovate all aspects of the government's work. To make clear the government has a specific main aim, of requiring all government entities to reduce spending by one per cent. Further, to prepare individuals for innovation, concentrations are on Science, Technology, Engineering Mathematics (STEM), and development of educational material in partnerships with public, private and media sectors.

In clarification, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Oslo Manual (2018) makes a clear difference between improvement of the same process as opposed to innovation of an old process into a new process. On this bases, innovation in this report will identify innovations and associated improvements.

The UAE's aim is to embed innovation among individuals, companies and governments mainly the priority sectors, of which education is one, to drive future innovation (NIS 2020).

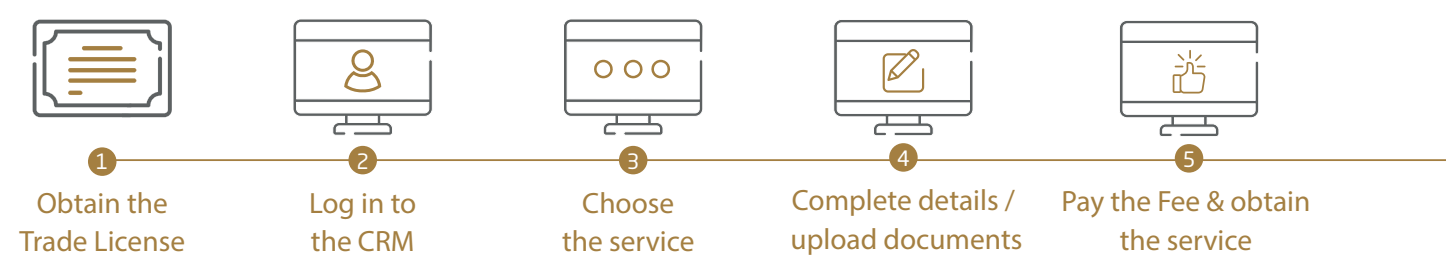
The UAE government clearly has an ambition to improve the overall life of citizens utilising innovative approaches. In October 2014, His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, launched the UAE National Innovation Strategy with the aim of making the UAE, within seven years, one of the most innovative nations in the world.





Introduction

Customer Journey To Obtain Licensing Services



The purpose of this report is to consider how ACTVET has innovated change to provide an efficient and effective service to meet the government's aims, whilst meeting customer expectation and improving customer happiness. Innovation was considered under four levels of detail. The first level was whether it was a policy, process or system; the second level was the type of innovation whether it was mission, anticipatory, adaptive, or enhancement; the third level was whether it was transformational, disruptive, optimising, or sustainable and the fourth level was the direction in which innovation was considered on two spectrums, whether directed from a point of uncertainty to certainty; or from top down externally directed mandatory introduction or a bottom up quality improvement. Each innovation has been discussed under a set of four criteria.

Policy, mission, transformational and sustainable innovation.

The first initiative was policy initiative to change the length of time taken to issue a license. Being a mission innovation, it was a top-down directed innovation, in this case by the ACTVET Director General, to change licensing issuance time. A clear goal was set with the objective being to transform the licensing process to reduce the time to less than 15 minutes and be able to sustain the practice. Previously the team had used reactive processes waiting for documents to be completed before issuing the license, taking up to 5-7 days to issue a license. By pre-empting

requirements, proactive processes were applied, to issue the license prior to all documentation being supplied. The caveat being that licenses would be suspended if all required documentation were not provided within a three month period. This mission innovation led to having 70 new training providers licensed in 2019. The process has now been in place for several months and has been sustained. Further, it has shaped the advertising policy, by pre-empting customer requirements, reducing the time from 2 to 3 days down to minutes.

Optimising provision attracted blue-chip customers to license their centers. Major international training providers such as:



Licensing process to reduce the time to less than
15 minutes



70 New
Training Providers
in 2019

were attracted to secure a license from ACTVET. Further, partnerships were developed to collaborate with LTP's to create new market opportunities in subjects such as:

- **ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE**
- **ROBOTICS**
- **DRONES**
- **3D PRINTING**

thus widening the market provision.

Policy, enhancement, optimising and sustaining innovation

The second policy initiative was regarding utilisation of ACTVET training provider classification of maturity. ACTVET Licensing Department had previously enhanced their classification of training institutes to grade the level of operational maturity. So successful was the classification policy that the Government utilised the classification grading for selection of LTPs to optimise the outsourcing of vendors for their own training tenders. This enhancement resulted in higher quality training vendor delivery for government departments. Originally, in 2016 five government agencies were in partnership with

ACTVET, which has now risen to nine in 2020. Additionally, ACTVET Licensing Department had managed the work of other government departments. However, building partnerships with other government agencies has cut down the reliance on the Licensing Department to accommodate their work resulting in a simplified customer journey which concentrates on training license requirement only. The outcome has changed the policy for issuing a license, has enhanced the service, optimising the customer journey, and has led to faster issuance of a training license.

2016 **FIVE** government
agencies were in partnership
with ACTVET



2020 **NINE** government
agencies were in partnership
with ACTVET

System, anticipatory, transformation and disruptive innovation



The **THIRD**
innovation

The third initiative was a change in the system of how LTP's were quality assured for delivery of performance. This innovation required a change in the system for processing and handling the quality assurance of LTP's performance. The change in process was transforming from the regulatory point of view, to the participant's point of view, the recipient of the training. This initiative involved the reviewing of LTP performance through the student's voice, recording their experience of programmes delivered at the training provider. Students' rating were then recorded and published on the ACTVET website. There was uncertainty as to whether this disruption to reviewing training provider performance would be accepted or not. However, quality reviews of LTP performance is used by the public, who wish to select quality training courses from the highest rated provider.

The result of using learners, feedback increased levels of satisfaction rising from 90.43% in 2017 to 94.20% in 2020. This has resulted in two major outcomes; first instead of a licensing inspector going out to inspect LTP's, the student voice and perception is used to grade the LTP performance, resulting in a saving of time and cost for the Licensing Department of 494,240 dirhams. Secondly, it has created competition between LTP's which in turn has improved quality of provision. The percentage of training providers with good and above in inspection results has risen from 10% in 2016 rising to 47% in 2020. By disrupting the process, transformation has resulted in improved quality of delivery of LTP training programmes, with less cost and effort from the ACTVET Licensing Department.

Good and above in
inspection results has
risen from

10%
2016



47%
2020

Customer Happiness

80%
2015



91.5%
2020

The fourth innovation was a system change to the license process. The change aimed to respond positively to customer dissatisfaction with a licensing service apology. Although customer happiness was on average 91%, and a government mystery shopper result was 74%, further improvements could be made. When customers reported online of their dissatisfaction, automatically an apology letter from ACTVET Director General was sent to the customers to apologise for the less than satisfactory service. The apology was followed up by a Customer Happiness Representative contacting the customer to discuss their enquiry. By transforming the service, it was found that customers appreciated the extra length that ACTVET Licensing Department Customer Happiness Representative had gone, to satisfy customers. As a result, the percentage of unsatisfied customers dropped from 9% in 2017 to 4% in 2019. Conversely, the percentage of customer service index rose from 80% in 2015 to 91.5% in 2019.

Further, the fifth initiative was introduced where the customer rated the Happiness Center Representative on how they had resolved issues. Where a customer had graded a representative in previous conversations highly, the next time

the same customer had an issue, they were given the same representative, thus improving the quality of responses to customers. Alternatively, where a customer had rated less than satisfactory service from a Customer Happiness Representative in anticipation, their service would be transferred to another representative to ensure the best possible resolution to the customer's enquiries. Although there was disruption to the original licensing system, the result was a higher quality of customer service reflected in the ACTVET Customer Happiness Index rising from 80% in 2015 to 91.5% in 2020. Further, the average ratio cost of issuing or renewing the license against the service fee dropped from 5.72% in 2017 to 2.19% in 2019 showing real value for money.





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حقلك علينا

Dear Valued Partner,

Thank you for the time and the effort you took to fill in the survey

I am sorry to learn that your experience with us has not been up to your expectations.

We seek not only to meet your expectations, but also to exceed them.

Therefore, please do not hesitate to contact me or visit me in person, for any further concerns you might have. I will be very happy to assist you personally with anything you need.

Best Regards,

شريكنا العزيز،

نشكركم على المشاركة في تقييم مستوى الخدمة المقدمة لكم.

يؤسفنا أن تجربتكم معنا لم تكن بمستوى تطلعاتكم، رغم سعينا الدائم لتقديم خدمات تفوق التوقعات.

يرجى عدم التردد في الاتصال بي شخصياً لتلبية طلباتكم والرد على أي استفسار لديكم.

نعمل من أجل إسعادكم، ونؤكد لكم بأنكم على قمة أولوياتنا.

وتفضلوا بقبول فائق الاحترام والتقدير،

H.E. Mubarak Saeed AlShamsi
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The average ratio cost of issuing or renewing the license against the service fee dropped from

5.72%
2017



2.19%
2019

Process, adaptive, disruptive and optimising innovation



January and March 2019, income of 446.323 dirhams was recorded, as opposed to 618,824 dirhams in 2020 for the same period, recording a 22% increase income.

The sixth innovation, was to change the process for the renewal of LTP’s training license before ACTVET offices locked down operations due to the global pandemic. By using agile thinking, the process was conceived and implemented by the licensing team. Customers were encouraged to renew their license during January, February and early March instead of throughout the year, although all services would still remain in operation. The new process was tested for a changing

operational environment, customers were informed and recommended to renew their license. As a result, a record 341 of the 2019 institutes or 25% of LTP’s renewing their license in the first three months with little disruption to licensing performance. The net result was in three months between January and March 2019, income of 446.323 dirhams was recorded, as opposed to 618,824 dirhams in 2020 for the same period, recording a 22% increase income.

Process, enhancement, optimising, sustaining innovation

Revenue increased

1,185,903
in 2016



2,025,585
in 2019

70% increase revenue

The seventh initiative was to change the process for the licensing issuance from manual to digital. Use of digitalisation improved the customer journey and enhanced the process by simplifying and reducing the time taken to receive

a new license. Firstly, for the customer, digitisation led to a customer saving of increased saving of 1,091,466 dirhams. Secondly, for ACTVET savings increased from 82,412 dirhams in 2017 to 1,624,513 dirhams in 2019. By changing the process, the licensing system was enhanced and optimised leading to a saving for both the customer and the Licensing Department whilst sustaining the digital service. As a result, there has been an increase of digital transactions from 160 in 2016 to 1250 in 2019 which has been accompanied by an increase in customer happiness.



Digitised savings for ACTVET increased from 82,412 dirhams in 2017 to 1,624,513 in 2019.

Conclusion

ACTVET Licensing Department has introduced many innovations into the licensing process to result in a more effective service, greater cost and time efficiencies, an improved customer journey, and increased customer satisfaction. The journey continues with the aim of introducing more innovation to further improve the customer experience and happiness by offering services on a 24/7 basis, without human interaction but with increased quality inspections every three months.

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