

CEO MONTHLY



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MDX IN FOCUS WITH DR. CEDWYN FERNANDES



Dr. Cedwyn Fernandes
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In this edition I am delighted to share my in-depth discussion with Dr. Cedwyn Fernandes, Pro-Vice Chancellor of Middlesex University and Director of Middlesex University Dubai. Dr. Cedwyn has over two decades of experience in Higher Education in the UAE and has played an instrumental role in leading MDX Dubai to outstanding success while driving its reputation as the International University of choice in the region and the largest KHDA institution for student enrollments in 2020-2021 academic year.

- The story behind the University's growing success
- Beyond education – Sustainability as the University's foundation
- Climbing the leaderboard and gaining market share

Friends,

In 2018 Amanat fully acquired Middlesex Associates, which is a joint venture partner of Middlesex University ('MDX') Dubai, the first overseas campus of the renowned MDX London which opened its doors to students in 2005 at Dubai Knowledge Park ('DKP'). Since then, MDX Dubai has become home to over **3,500 students** across foundation, undergraduate and postgraduate programs from **118 different nationalities** across **2 campuses**, having opened its second UAE campus at Dubai International Academic City ('DIAC') in September 2021. MDX Dubai has been a solid contributor to Amanat's bottom line, having consistently delivered a **steady growth** in income from investments and recently contributing 28.7 million dirhams to Amanat's education platform supported by **strong student enrollments**. Perhaps the strongest yet, which is why I am pleased to host **Dr. Cedwyn** in this month's edition and discuss the journey to success and the **key performing indicators** that have led the university to the height of its enrollments and success as an educational institution in Dubai.

Highlights

- Dr. Cedwyn has over two decades of experience in Higher Education in the UAE and has been responsible for setting up innovative programs across universities.
- During his current term, the number of students at MDX increased by 50% and the university was awarded a 5-Star HEC rating which was developed by the KHDA in partnership with QS.
- Dr. Cedwyn has a Ph.D in Economics.

The story behind the University's growing success

We are the **largest UK university in Dubai** because everything we do is focused on the delivery of an **outstanding and unique student experience**. The MDX Dubai student experience incorporates **6 core differentiators** that build upon our value proposition. First, we provide a **quality UK education** that ensures we remain **competitive and resilient** in an evolving, rapidly digitizing, and competitive UAE education market by creating a learning experience that is strengthened by innovative teaching and learning. Second, **academic excellence** is a vital component of this approach, and we are proud to have been awarded a **5-Star rating** in the 2020 Knowledge and Human Development Authority (KHDA) Higher Education Classification. The award demonstrates our global reputation and **world-class standard of education**.

Third, another core differentiator is **student employability**. The University emphasizes experiential learning and helps students secure professional opportunities to work on live projects – **invaluable experiences** that complement their classroom education. Students can also leverage our strong links to local businesses and our comprehensive understanding of regional and global commerce to secure these opportunities.

Fourth, our cultivation of **diversity and inclusivity** continues to be a key priority in making **education more affordable and accessible**. This has enabled us to enrich our campus environment and culture through various initiatives, such as our Inclusivity Champions program and scholarships and grants for students from all backgrounds.

Fifth, **industry partnerships** are also a core part of our offering. Our goal is to create a positive lasting impact on the world through knowledge and learning by **partnering with leading organizations** in the UAE, the wider region and across the globe. We connect our students with hundreds of partners worldwide. Our centers of excellence and research institutes channel our outreach through collaborative research projects between academia and industry. Finally, we offer our students the opportunity to train in **competitive and recreational sport** and social activities in line with international standards, allowing them to diversify their interests and skillsets.

This multi-faceted strategy has enabled us to stand out from the crowd and be rewarded for our visible excellence. The backing from Amanat and the company's understanding of the complexity of the **UAE's higher education sector** has supported Middlesex University Dubai to be positioned where it is today. In such a competitive sector, the only way to succeed is to be **agile and responsive**.

Beyond education – Sustainability as the University's foundation

Middlesex University Dubai adopts an **Environmental, Social and Governance ('ESG')** approach, both from a staff and student perspective. We are increasing sustainability across our campuses by working to **reduce our overall carbon footprint**. We will continue to adapt our campus-wide infrastructure to ensure that we meet our ESG objectives.

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-Dr. Cedwyn Fernandes-

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Our **Institute for Sustainable Development (ISD)** leads these efforts. We are the first University in the region to introduce this kind of institute, which works to foster the advancement of sustainability in the University, wider community and in **global best practice**. We are also the first University in Dubai and the second in the UAE to sign up to **the UN Global Compact**, the world's leading voluntary corporate citizenship initiative.

We see our journey to becoming a **'green campus'** as a vital part of our overall **growth strategy**. This means we not only need to integrate these principles into our education but also across our wider operations. We have already put into practice a series of initiatives, including reducing the University's carbon footprint through the provision of public transportation services for students and integrating ideas such as ethical design practices. In terms of education, our passionate lecturers incorporate **sustainable practices** into their teaching.

Climbing the leaderboard and gaining market share

We were recognized in October 2021 as **the largest KHDA-accredited University for total student enrollments**. This is a testament to our commitment to providing a **world-class academic and student experience**; education through **professional practice**; and **excellent scholarships** as a long-standing UK higher education institution in the UAE.

Against the backdrop of a saturated domestic market as the UAE positions itself as a global **higher education hub**, we have achieved an **18% growth in enrollments year-on-year** and we are also gaining market share. Having also seen a **surge in international applications by 190% and enrolments by 145% year-on-year**, it is clear the world is changing. Students want to return to some form of normality and study in markets such as the UAE that are safe, stable and recovering successfully from the pandemic.

We continue to go **from strength to strength** with our ambitious plans for the future. Alongside the **launch of our second campus in DIAC in September 2021**, our expansion into **new markets** is a strategic move, building upon our existing longstanding **brand presence**. The introduction of **new programs** in line with **industry demand** continues to be a main driver of growth. We are committed to supporting the **UAE's Vision 2021** and to remain a key player in the country's **education sector** for providing future-ready graduates. We are focused on securing more partnerships to ensure we remain the largest UK university in Dubai.

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