Shatt Al-Arab University

جامعة شط العرب

BASRAH · IRAQ · EST. 1993

Times Higher Education
Impact Rankings



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS · UNIVERSITY COMMITMENT

SDG 4: Quality Education

4

4
QUALITY EDUCATION

Quality Education

Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all — across our students, graduates, and the people of Basra.

TIMES HIGHER EDUCATION IMPACT RANKINGS
Sustainable Development Goals · Evidence Submission

2026

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Sustainable Development Goal 4, Quality Education · Evidence Submission, Times Higher Education Impact Rankings 2026.

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Executive summary

This report sets out the strategic contribution of Shatt Al-Arab University to Sustainable Development Goal 4 (Quality Education). It serves a dual purpose: it constitutes the university's evidence submission to the Times Higher Education (THE) Impact Rankings 2026, and it functions as an institutional strategy document that locates the university's educational mission within a coherent, measurable framework for the period to 2030.

Scope and approach. The analysis covers four interlocking domains recognised by the THE methodology — the quality of teaching, lifelong learning, inclusive access, and educational research — and reads the university's performance in each against the relevant SDG 4 targets. Rather than cataloguing activity in isolation, it interprets evidence, identifies the institutional capabilities that evidence reveals, and translates those capabilities into strategic priorities.

Key findings. The university's record across the reporting period is substantial. It produced 804 graduates in the reporting year, 533 of them qualified to teach at primary school level; enrolled 4,537 students starting a degree within a total student body of 10,575, of whom 2,142 — some 47% — are first-generation entrants; supported 874 students on hardship scholarships; and delivered an extensive programme of public lectures, vocational and legal training, school outreach, and community engagement across Basra Governorate. Its research base — 179 Scopus-indexed documents from 59 authors, mapped to the Sustainable Development Goals by Elsevier — provides an evidentiary foundation for continued contribution. Education-quality indicators show steady gains in tertiary attainment, adult learning, and digital skills, alongside a clearly identified priority for intervention in foundational science attainment.

Strategic direction. These findings describe an institution whose strengths lie in community-facing lifelong learning, inclusive access, and applied technological education, and whose principal opportunities lie in deepening education-focused research, consolidating its monitoring systems, and closing measurable attainment gaps. The roadmap set out in the closing sections translates this assessment into prioritised objectives, indicative key performance indicators, and a governance and evaluation framework designed to sustain progress toward 2030.

Introduction

How does Shatt Al-Arab University deliver inclusive, equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning for all?



Figure 1. A four-step delivery approach.

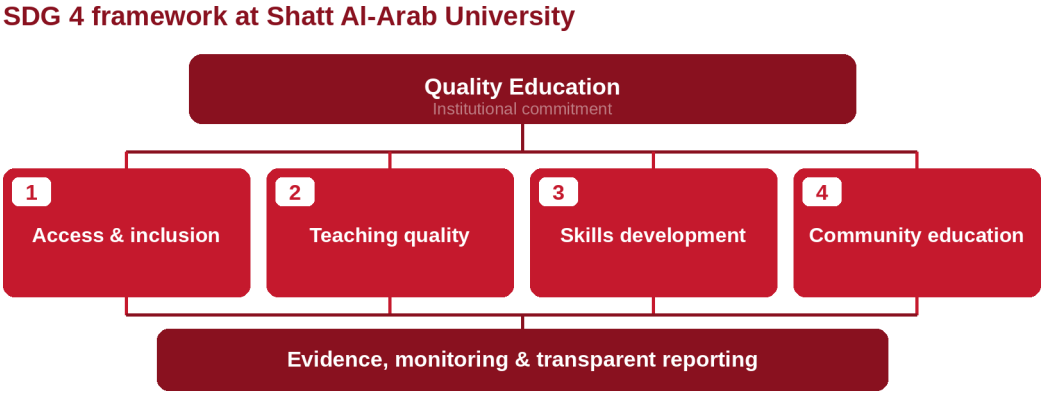


Figure 2. Institutional framework and reporting.

Sustainable Development Goal 4 is among the most far-reaching of the global goals: it calls for inclusive and equitable quality education and for lifelong-learning opportunities open to everyone. Education underpins sustainable development as a whole, helping to reduce poverty, advance social equity, and drive economic growth.

Universities carry a particular responsibility for this goal. By improving the quality of teaching, strengthening research, and contributing to the development of their communities, they turn the promise of quality education into practice. This report sets out how Shatt Al-Arab University has done so, following the structure of the Times Higher Education (THE) Impact Rankings.

For a university in Basra, this responsibility carries particular weight. Southern Iraq is rebuilding its human capital after decades of disruption, and the region's young and rapidly growing population makes the expansion of equitable, high-quality education both an economic necessity and a social imperative. Higher-education institutions are, in this context, among the most effective instruments available for converting demographic potential into skilled employment, civic participation, and resilient communities.

The scholarly literature on education and development reinforces this view. Quality education is widely described as a "multiplier" right — one whose realisation enables individuals to access and exercise a wide range of other rights and opportunities. It is also a principal driver of human-capital formation and social mobility, and a precondition for progress across the other Sustainable Development Goals, from health and gender equality to decent work and reduced inequalities.

A strategic, not a reporting, commitment. Shatt Al-Arab University frames its engagement with SDG 4 as a strategic commitment that shapes

institutional planning, rather than a retrospective reporting exercise. The goal is treated as a lens through which teaching, research, and community service are planned, resourced, and evaluated together. This integrated posture reflects a broad consensus in the higher-education literature that universities advance sustainable development most effectively when their academic core and their public mission are aligned, so that classroom learning, knowledge production, and outreach reinforce one another.

Conceptual framework. The university's approach rests on four mutually reinforcing pillars: inclusive admission and equitable access; high-quality, labour-market-relevant teaching; skills development and vocational training; and lifelong community learning. These pillars are bound together by a commitment to evidence, monitoring, and transparent reporting, as illustrated in the institutional framework above. Each pillar maps onto specific SDG 4 targets and onto the indicator domains used by the THE Impact Rankings, allowing the university to align its internal priorities with an externally validated benchmark.

Structure of this report. Accordingly, the report adopts an analytical structure. For each area of activity it presents the evidence, interprets that evidence against the relevant SDG 4 targets and THE indicators, and draws out the strategic implications for continued progress. The closing sections consolidate this analysis into an explicit assessment of strengths and challenges, a prioritised roadmap, and a governance and evaluation framework. The aim is to convey not only what the university has done, but what its record reveals about institutional capability and the priorities that should guide future investment.

THE Impact Rankings methodology

The THE Impact Rankings assess universities by their contribution to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, including SDG 4. Rather

than measuring academic performance alone, the methodology looks at real-world impact through a set of indicators:

- research in education and its global reach;
- lifelong-learning initiatives, including training programmes and continuing education;
- student-support systems, particularly for disadvantaged groups;
- community engagement through educational outreach.

This focus on impact, rather than reputation, is what sets the THE Impact Rankings apart from traditional league tables.

Indicator domains. Within SDG 4, the THE methodology distributes its assessment across four broad domains: the volume and influence of a university's research on education; its commitment to lifelong learning through training and continuing education; the measures it takes to support students, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds; and the proportion of graduates who go on to gain a teaching qualification. Institutions are scored on the evidence they supply against each domain, and the resulting profile rewards demonstrable public impact over reputation or selectivity.

Data sources. The evidence presented here is drawn from institutional records maintained by the university's academic departments, the Continuing Education Unit, the Learning and Development Center, and the Quality Assurance Department, together with bibliometric data indexed in Scopus and mapped to the Sustainable Development Goals by Elsevier — the same source the THE Impact Rankings use for their research metric. Quantitative indicators are reported for the most recent available period and cross-referenced, where possible, against documented events and partnerships.

Interpretation and limitations. As with any impact framework, the indicators capture some dimensions of educational contribution more readily than others. Well-documented outputs — qualified graduates, indexed publications, recorded events — are more visible than diffuse but important effects such as shifts in community attitudes or long-term graduate outcomes. The university therefore treats the THE indicators as a structured starting point for self-assessment rather than a complete account, and complements them with the qualitative evidence and strategic analysis that follow.

Performance analysis

Quality of education

The university has worked to raise the quality of its teaching by updating curricula to match the needs of the labour market and by adopting modern methods such as e-learning and blended learning, which have improved learning outcomes.

These reforms respond directly to SDG 4's emphasis on relevant and effective learning. By aligning programme content with the skills sought by employers in the energy, engineering, health, legal, and technology sectors that shape Basra's economy, the university works to ensure that quality is measured not only by completion but by the capabilities graduates carry into the labour market. The adoption of e-learning and blended delivery has also widened the reach of teaching and strengthened institutional resilience in the face of disruption.

Lifelong learning

A wide range of training courses and workshops has been offered to students, graduates, and the wider community, putting the principle of continuous learning into practice.

This provision extends the university's educational role well beyond its enrolled student body, addressing SDG 4's call for lifelong-learning opportunities for all. By opening courses and workshops to graduates and community members, the university positions itself as a continuing educational resource for the governorate rather than a closed academic institution, and creates pathways through which working adults can refresh and extend their skills.

Inclusiveness

The university has worked to build an inclusive learning environment, supporting students from low-income backgrounds and ensuring equal access to education.

Inclusiveness is treated as a condition of quality rather than a separate concern. The university's support for students from low-income backgrounds, and its tracking of first-generation participation, reflect a recognition that equitable access is integral to the goal's central promise of education for all. These measures are reinforced by the institution-wide access policy examined later in this report.

Research in education

Faculty have contributed research in the field of education that engages with current challenges and proposes practical, innovative solutions.

Education-related and applied research strengthens the university's contribution to the knowledge dimension of SDG 4 and feeds back into teaching practice. While the institution's indexed output is concentrated in computing, engineering, and health, there is clear strategic scope to expand research that examines pedagogy, access, and educational outcomes directly — an opportunity reflected in the priorities set out in the closing sections.

4.1 Research in education

Shatt Al-Arab University's research is indexed in Scopus and mapped to the UN Sustainable Development Goals by Elsevier - the same data source the THE Impact Rankings use for their research metric. The university currently records 179 documents from 59 authors (Scopus ID 60109790; last updated May 2026). The chart below shows how this output is distributed across the goals.



Figure. Scopus-indexed publications by SDG (data source: Scopus).

The following publication is mapped to SDG 4 in the Elsevier/Scopus SDG dataset (1 document):

#	Publication title	Source & year
1	**Intelligent pizza vending machine intelligence via cloud and IoT** *Al-Shareeda, M.A., Manickam, S., Saare, M.A., Sari, S.A., Alazzawi, M.A.*	CSCTIT Int. Conf. on Recent Trends in Information Technology, 2022

4.2 Proportion of graduates with teaching qualification

In the reporting year the university produced 804 graduates across all levels of study. Of these, 533 — some 66% — gained a qualification that entitles them to teach at primary school level. This is the measure the THE Impact Rankings use to gauge how far an institution helps to resource early-years and primary education, and it speaks directly to SDG 4 target 4.c, the supply of qualified teachers.

Graduates with a teaching qualification (2025)	Number
4.2.1 Number of graduates (all levels)	804
4.2.2 Graduates qualified to teach at primary level	299
Proportion qualified to teach at primary level	37.19%

Table. Graduates qualified to teach at primary school level, 2025 (THE SDG 4 indicator 4.2).

Programmes that prepare graduates to teach. The qualification to teach at primary level is gained through the university's education and teacher-preparation pathways — initial teaching degrees together with subject programmes that carry a recognised teaching qualification, and postgraduate teaching qualifications where applicable. These programmes are designed to prepare graduates for the classroom, extending the university's impact beyond its own campus into the schools of Basra and the surrounding region.

Strategic significance. The preparation of qualified teachers speaks directly to SDG 4 target 4.c, which identifies a sufficient supply of trained teachers as a foundation for quality education across the wider school system. By equipping graduates to teach, the university extends its impact beyond its own campus into the schools of Basra and the surrounding region, contributing to a virtuous cycle in which better-prepared teachers raise attainment among the next generation of potential students.

4.3 Lifelong learning measures

Lifelong learning sits at the heart of the university's contribution to SDG 4. The sections below answer the THE Impact Rankings questions on how Shatt Al-Arab University opens its resources, events, and expertise to people who are not enrolled as students.

4.3.1 Educational resources for those not studying at the university

Does the university provide access to educational resources — computers, library, online courses, lectures — for those not studying at the university?

Shatt Al-Arab University actively promotes lifelong learning by opening educational resources and opportunities to people who are not formally enrolled. Its public resources and initiatives include the following.

Public lectures and free community courses: throughout the academic year the university runs free educational events open to the public, among them:

- "Professional Proficiency in Microsoft Office (Word, Excel, and PowerPoint)", held on 3–6 November 2026 to build digital literacy;
- "Cisco CCNA Certification for a Professional Networking Career", held on 10–14 December 2026 on the role of network systems across sectors;
- "Foundations of English Conversation", held on 2 February 2026 to strengthen English-language skills;
- "Advanced Computer Skills Programme", held on 2 March 2026 to develop computer skills.

These sessions run on campus with the necessary learning tools, and participants receive certificates on completion.

Free access to digital libraries: the university opens its digital-library collections — e-books, academic papers, and interdisciplinary reports — to the general public without restriction, at https://sa-uc.edu.iq/ar/Electronic-library.

Learning and Development Center (LDC): the LDC offers free training programmes and workshops for graduates and other community members; current opportunities are listed at https://sa-uc.edu.iq/ar/continuing-education-unit.

Together, these efforts reflect the university's commitment to educational inclusivity, social responsibility, and continuous learning for all parts of society.

4.3.2 Public events and community education

Does the university host events open to the general public — public lectures and community educational events?

The public is welcome at a wide range of events and educational programmes. A leading example is the series of specialised legal workshops for law graduates and for legal and jurist consultants working in government departments across Basra Governorate, organised with the Continuing Education Center at the University of Basra to strengthen participants' professional skills.

Key features of the programme:

- delivered by qualified faculty from the university's Law Department;
- held in the evening (3:00–5:00 PM) to suit working professionals;
- accredited certificates issued on completion, recognised for professional promotion;
- all participation fees covered in full by Shatt Al-Arab University.

The accredited six-day courses were:

No.	Course Title	Duration
1	State and Public Sector Employees Discipline Law No. 14 of 1991 (as amended)	Six days (20–25 April 2026)
2	Drafting Government Contracts and Rules for Their Implementation	Six days (27 April–2 May 2026)

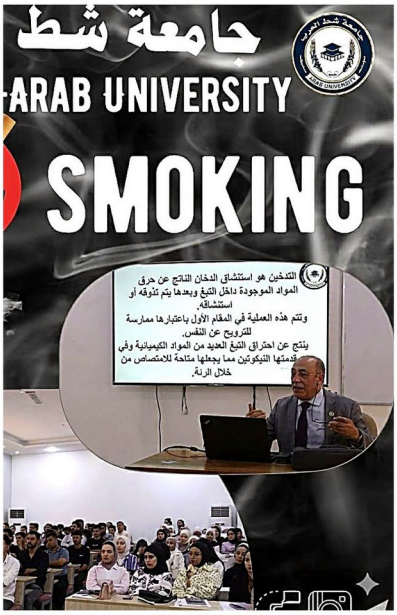
A further set of one-day intensive courses was also delivered:

No.	Course Title	Date
1	The system of wealth distribution in the Iraqi constitution	23-11-2026
2	The importance of guarantees and letters of credit, and the difference between them	2-3-2026

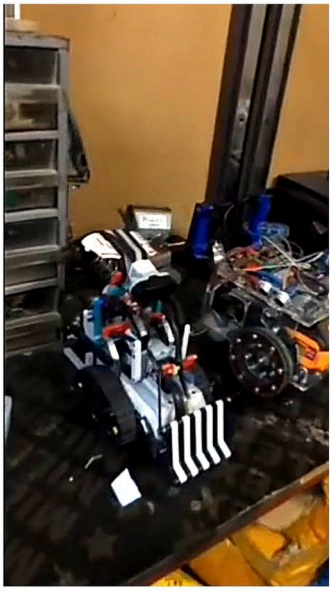
The first was held with the Iraqi Council of Representatives and the European Foundation for Dialogue and Development; the second in partnership with the Director of the Economic Bank.

Seminars, lectures, and workshops: the university has convened seminars and scholarly lectures on themes including healthy nutrition, physical activity, mental well-being, disease prevention, and substance control, fostering a culture of health awareness among students, faculty, and staff. They included:

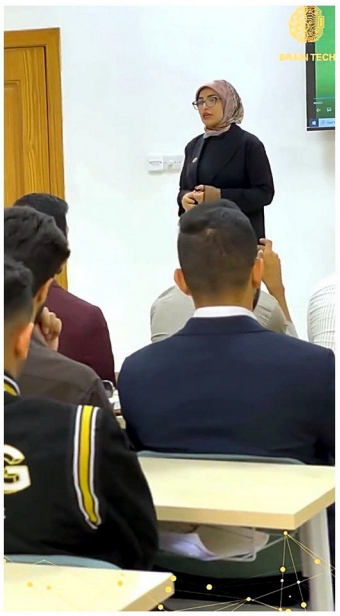
- "Understanding Autism Spectrum Disorder", with the Al-Taqwa Association for Women and Children, delivered by psychotherapist Dr. Nidal Badr Sultan, covering the disorder's definition, history, behavioural symptoms, complications, and treatment approaches;
- "Tobacco Harms and Smoking Cessation", by Assistant Professor Dr. Aqeel Mohammad Jassim, on the health risks of tobacco and evidence-based strategies for quitting;
- "Breast Cancer: Early Detection, Prevention, and Diagnosis", by Dr. Wafaa Abdel Kareem of the Basra Health Department, on risk factors, early warning signs, screening, and advances in diagnosis and treatment;
- "Remarks on the Application of the Jaafari Jurisprudence Code", a Law Department workshop on 30 October 2026 by Assistant Lecturer Dr. Rifaat Hamoud Thajeel, on the practical implications of the Jaafari Code within the legal system.


جامعة شط
ARAB UNIVERSITY
SMOKING
التدخين هو استنشاق الدخان الناتج عن حرق
المواد الموجودة داخل التبغ وبعدها يتم تذوقه أو
استنشاقه.
وتتم هذه العملية في المقام الأول باعتبارها ممارسة
للترويح عن النفس.
ينتج عن احتراق التبغ العديد من المواد الكيميائية وفي
مقدمتها النيكوتين مما يجعلها متاحة للامتصاص من
خلال الرئة.









Scientific research in public health: faculty are encouraged to publish research on public health and well-being that informs effective policy. Recent work includes:

1. The Impact of Demographic and Lifestyle Factors on Irritable Bowel Syndrome in Basra — Zahraa Saad Mansour, Dawood S. Mahdi, and Ihsan Edan Alsaimary.
2. The Legislative Position on Offences Against People with Special Needs: A Comparative Study — Sara Moayed Salim Abdul Qader Al-Sharida.
3. A Secure Patient Authentication System in Healthcare Using Symmetric Cryptography.
4. A Privacy-Preserving System for Secure Data Management in Healthcare.
5. A Secure Authentication System to Preserve the Privacy of Electronic Health Records — Naba Majid Hamed Abood Al-Sakr.

Community engagement: within the Scientific Care Forum of the Basra Youth Directorate (Ministry of Youth and Sports), and with the College of Arts, the university ran a series of English-language training workshops for

forum members in the Directorate's hall, building reading, speaking, and presentation skills through interactive sessions:

No.	Workshop	Focus Area	Date
1	English Reading and Comprehension	Understanding, analysing, and interpreting English academic texts	25-12-2026
2	Preparing and Delivering Presentations in English	Structuring presentations, using PowerPoint, and public speaking	20-1-2026
3	English Speaking and Communication	Fluency, confidence, and real-life conversation	30-1-2026
4	Learning English through Stories	Storytelling to build vocabulary and comprehension	3-2-2026

These workshops support youth capacity-building and continuous learning, advancing SDG 4 (Quality Education) and SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals) through cooperation between youth institutions and the College of Arts.

Supporting schools in disadvantaged areas: the university has extended its support to schools in under-resourced villages, donating school desks to Hamdan Secondary School for Boys in the village of Abu Al-Khaseeb — a contribution that reflects its commitment to social responsibility and educational equity.





4.3.3 Executive education and vocational training

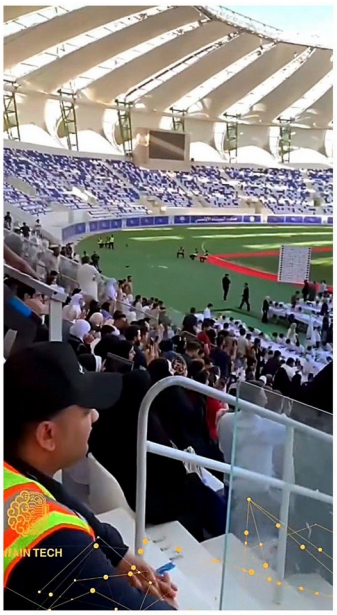
Does the university host executive-education or vocational-training events open to the public (short courses for non-students, excluding programmes such as the MBA)?

Vocational training programmes: the university supports personal and professional development through continuous learning, organising vocational-training events at national and international level. These build entrepreneurial skills and practical expertise across information technology, computer science, engineering, healthcare, media, the social sciences, and vocational education.

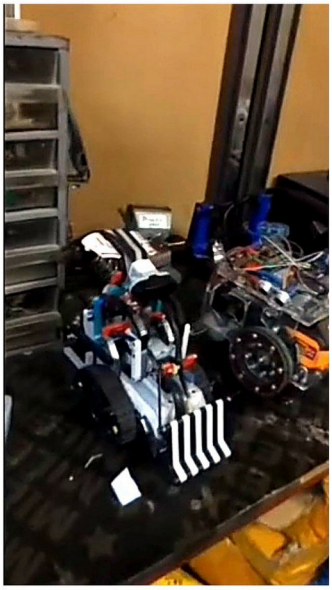
"Entrepreneurship in Vocational Education" workshop: to support youth entrepreneurship and innovation, the Unit of Rehabilitation, Employment, and Follow-up invited students to take part in Iraq Competition 2026, which promotes small and medium-sized enterprises. Held under the auspices of the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research, the competition brought together 38 universities from 15 governorates and welcomed participants from every discipline and level, including recent graduates. Its aim was to identify the most promising,

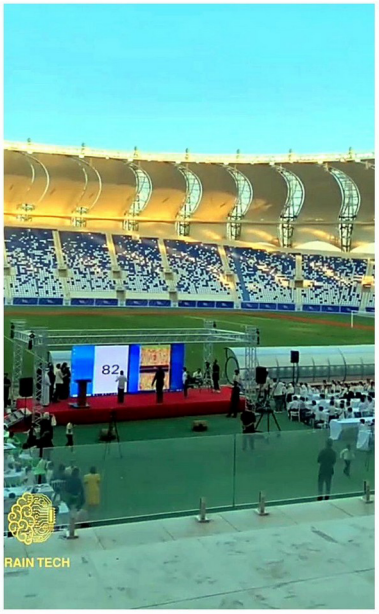
implementable project idea; the winning project received funding to bring it to life.

National Information Challenge Competition: with the Basra Scientific Care Department (Ministry of Youth and Sports), the College of Computer Science has organised and taken part in scientific competitions and knowledge challenges that build analytical thinking, problem-solving, and practical ICT skills through algorithmic problems, data analysis, programming challenges, and information-retrieval tasks under time constraints. These events strengthen scientific culture and help bridge the gap between academic learning and the needs of the labour market.









4.3.4 Educational outreach beyond campus

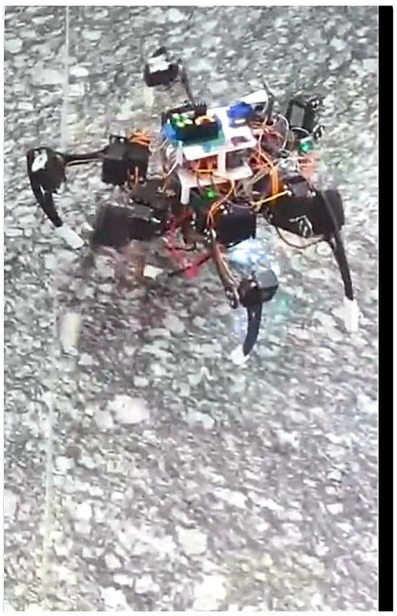
Does the university undertake educational outreach beyond campus — tailored lectures or demonstrations in local schools and the community, including voluntary student-run schemes?

The university's outreach reaches schools, community groups, and the wider public across Basra. Its initiatives include the following.

Robotics courses for schoolchildren: to widen children's access to technical education, the Department of Computer Science delivered foundational robotics courses to primary pupils aged 10–12 as part of the university's annual programme for 2025–2026, drawing on the programming expertise of its cadres to support Basra's school system.

Virtual Reality in education: the Department of Computer Science ran basic training courses for primary pupils aged 10–12 with local schools — introducing modern educational technologies, using immersive Virtual Reality (VR) environments, supporting digital transformation in Iraqi education, and strengthening the link between university expertise and public schools.

Scientific visit to the Robot Factory: through its Student Activities Unit, and with the Scientific Care Department and the Department of Astronomy and Meteorology, the Department of Computer Science visited the Science Camp (Robot Factory), where students saw a range of robots and devices and heard an introductory talk by Dr. Nawres Aref. The trip was led by the Head of the Student Activities Unit, Fatima Nizar Hamza, with lecturer Muhammad Asaad and a group of Computer Science students.







Workshop on AI and autonomous control in drones: on 17 March 2026 the Student Club held a workshop, “The Integration of Artificial Intelligence and Autonomous Control in Drones”, delivered by Assistant Researcher Huda Nasser. It covered machine-learning applications in drone navigation, real-time data processing, and decision-making, with practical examples and a closing discussion of future research.





Brain Tech Student Club — awareness and capacity building: the Brain Tech Student Club uses its social-media platforms, especially Instagram, to share simplified scientific content and guidance on digital skills, and runs workshops and training sessions — combining knowledge with practical learning in fields such as artificial intelligence and programming.

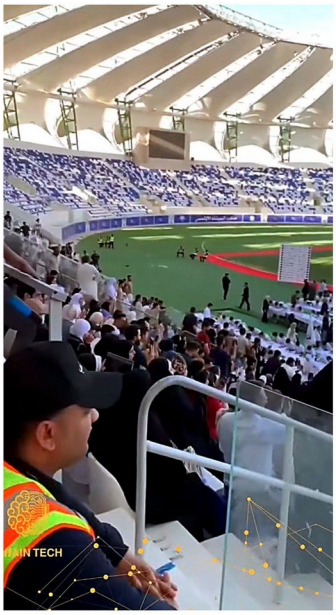
Mental Arithmetic Competition: the Brain Tech team, led by Ms. Tabarak Mohammed, organised a Mental Arithmetic Competition at the Olympic Port Stadium in Basra that drew more than 800 students from schools across the city, developing rapid-thinking and mental skills in a stimulating setting.


قاعة البصرة الأولمبية
Olympic Hall of Basrah
Vs

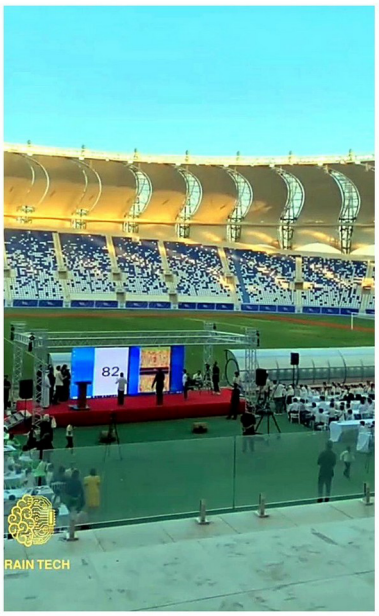

RAIN TECH













Brain-computer interfaces and EEG: with the Department of Mechatronics Engineering at the University of Basra's College of Engineering, the Brain Tech team held a specialised lecture, "Brainwave Analysis Using EEG Sensor Technology", delivered by founding member Hussein Sameer on 9 January 2026 at Al-Shaheed Asaad Salim Hall, under the patronage of the University President and the Dean of Engineering. It introduced students to brainwave analysis and the practical use of EEG sensors, strengthening interdisciplinary skills in biomedical engineering and AI.









Iraqi Engineers Day: represented by the Brain Tech team, the university took part in Iraqi Engineers Day on 30 May 2026 at the Engineers Syndicate in Basra, presenting innovative student projects in engineering and technology — particularly in artificial intelligence and computer engineering — and exchanging knowledge with professional engineers and academics.

Training courses and workshops: through the Continuing Education Unit, the university runs training programmes and technical workshops in programming, information technology, and digital skills; hands-on training

in modern technologies such as robotics, Arduino systems, and AI; capacity-building courses to improve employability; and workshops that engage school students and the local community — strengthening the link between theory and practice and supporting lifelong learning in Basra.

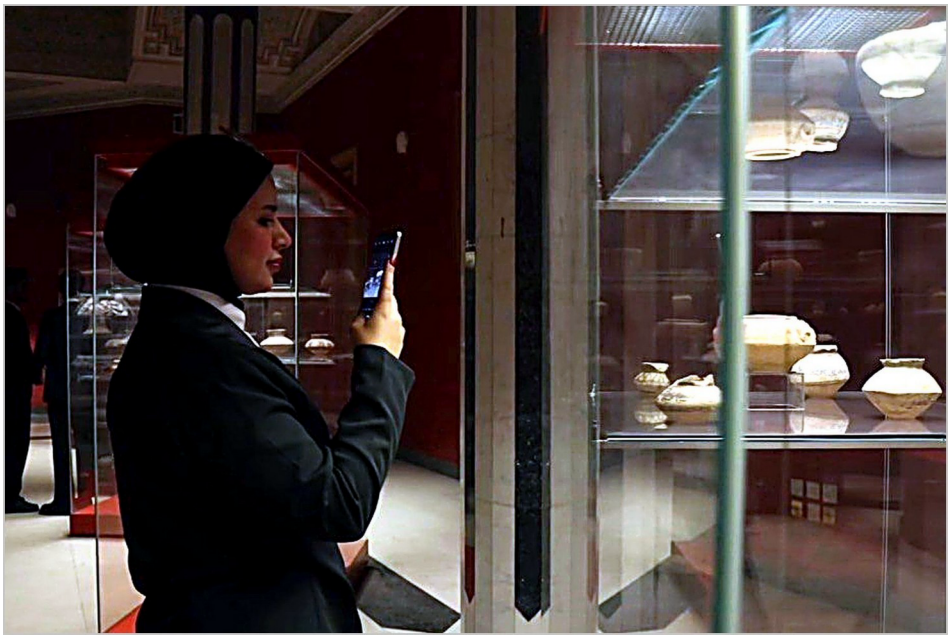
Legal and judicial training: the university runs specialised legal and judicial programmes: preparatory courses for law graduates on public-employee discipline and legal procedure; training in drafting and managing government contracts; continuing legal education for graduates, advisers, and public-sector staff; collaborative initiatives with academic and professional institutions; courses in commercial, international, and emerging legal technologies; training on the use of artificial intelligence in legal practice; and field-based judicial training in civil and criminal courts.

Scopus-indexed research supporting SDG 4: researchers collaborate with national and international institutions on innovative studies in information technology, cybersecurity, artificial intelligence, and IoT systems, including:

1. Huda Mohammed Alsayednoor et al., "A Lightweight Identity Authentication Protocol for Nano-Scale IoT Devices", Engineering, Technology and Applied Science Research, 2025.
2. Huda Mohammed Alsayednoor et al., "Tamper-Resilient and Sensor-Spoofing-Resistant Authentication for 5G-Connected Vehicular Edge Systems", Engineering, Technology and Applied Science Research, 2025.
3. Huda Mohammed Alsayednoor et al., "A Privacy-Preserving Framework for IoT Using Behavior Obfuscation and Differential Privacy in Blockchain–Cloud Architectures", Journal of Robotics and Control (JRC), Vol. 6, Issue 6, 2025.

Scientific field trips and experiential learning: the university organises field trips that connect study to practice, including a College of Arts

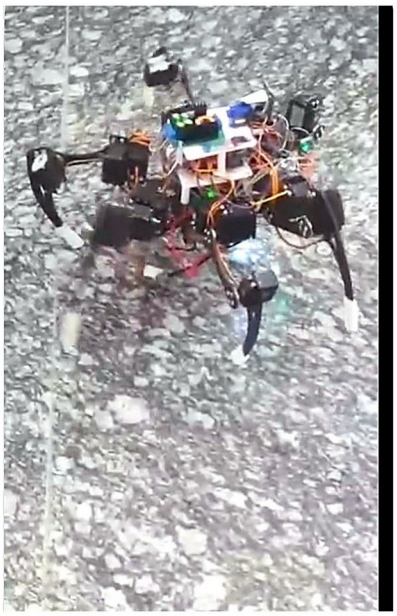
(English Language) visit to a museum; a Medical Instrumentation Engineering Technologies visit to a children's hospital; a Fuel and Energy visit to the South Refineries Company; Civil Engineering visits to active construction sites; and, on 4 November 2026, a College of Law visit by 20 students with Dr. Ali Karim Abd to the Presidency of the Basra Court of Appeal, where students observed court procedures and legal administration first-hand.

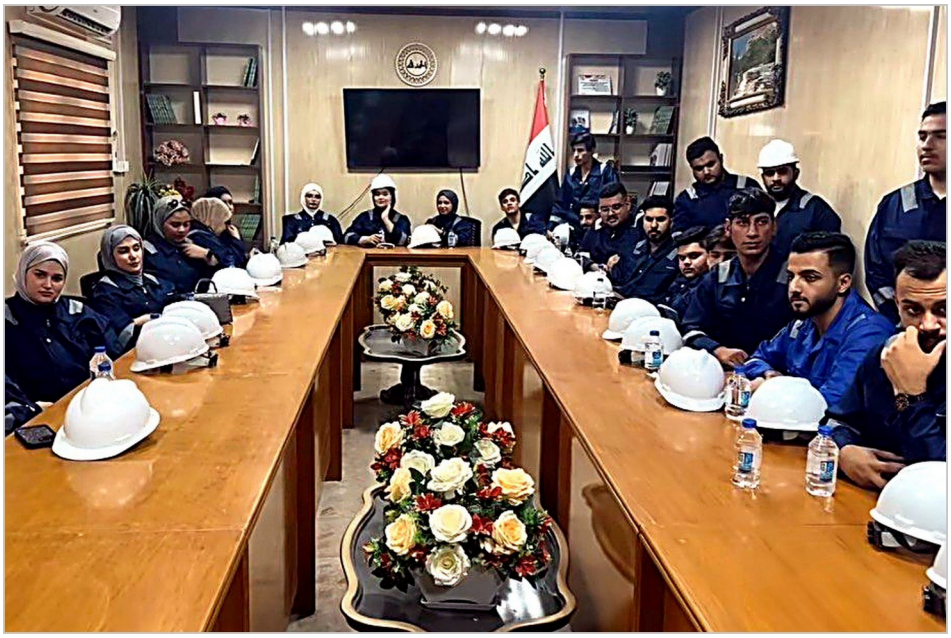


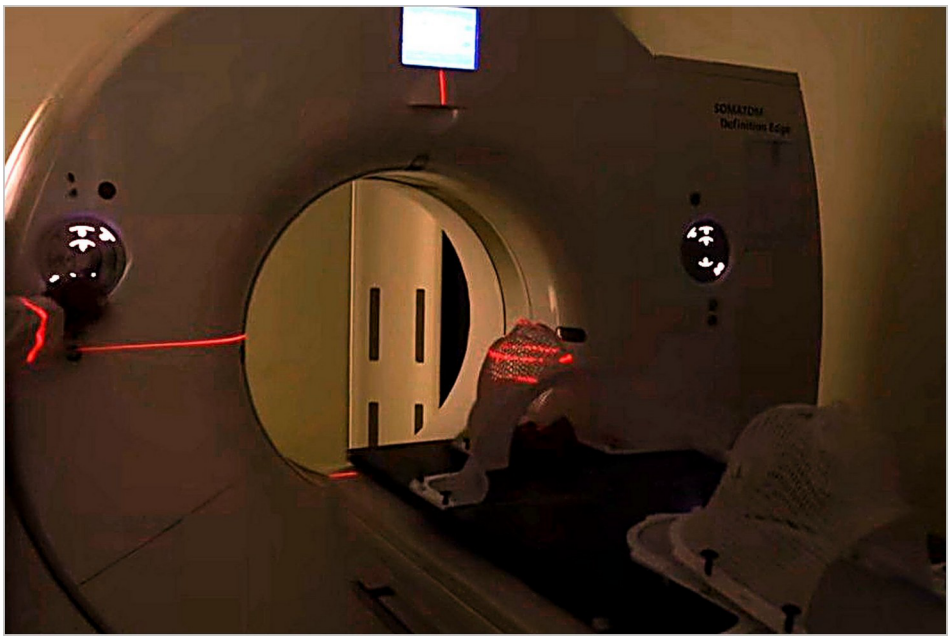






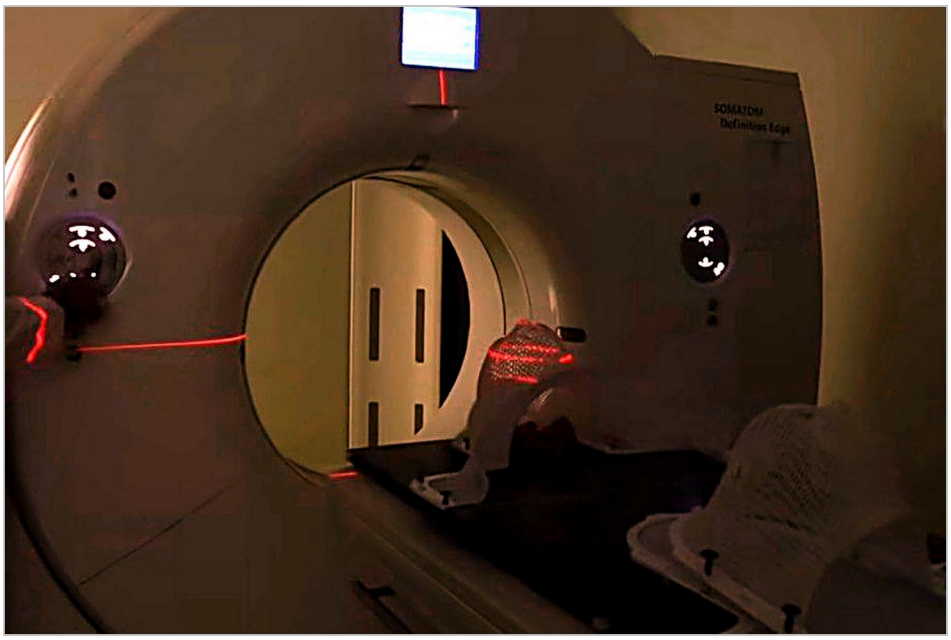





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شركة مصافي الجنوب
قسم مصفى البصرة ٣/
الوحدة الفنية





Charitable and community sports: the university also links sport with social responsibility through:

- a long-distance run with other universities under a humanitarian theme of peace and unity, encouraging participation and cooperation;
- a charity marathon supporting low-income families and orphaned students through registration fees and donations;
- friendly matches and tournaments whose proceeds aided patients and disadvantaged individuals, building teamwork and a culture of giving;
- open community sports days of football, basketball, and recreational games for students, staff, and the wider community.

Through these initiatives the university integrates sport with social responsibility, promoting solidarity, compassion, and active citizenship while supporting community well-being.

4.3.5 Lifelong learning access policy

Does the university, as a body, have a policy that ensures access to its lifelong-learning activities is open to all, regardless of ethnicity, religion, disability, immigration status, or gender? Yes. Shatt Al-Arab University

maintains a formal Lifelong Learning Access and Inclusion Policy that governs every public course, workshop, event, and educational resource described in this report.

> *Inclusive, quality education is a "multiplier" right — one that enables people to access and realise their other rights, with the power to transform lives and help individuals fulfil their aspirations.* — after the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

Purpose and scope. The policy commits the university to a balanced, inclusive, and diverse learning environment that is open and welcoming to all students, staff, apprentices, visitors, and members of the wider community. It applies to admission to and participation in every form of lifelong learning the university offers — continuing-education courses, public lectures and seminars, vocational and professional training, community outreach, and access to libraries and digital resources — whether delivered on campus, in the community, or online.

Protected grounds. The university upholds equal opportunity and non-discrimination. No person is refused access, treated unfairly, or given preferential treatment on the basis of ethnicity or national origin; religion or belief; disability or health condition; immigration, nationality, or residency status; gender or gender identity; age; marital or family status; socio-economic background; or any other protected characteristic. Access is determined by interest and eligibility alone, never by identity or background.

Equal access in practice. The policy is backed by concrete measures that remove the barriers most likely to exclude people from learning:

- physical accessibility — an accessible campus, teaching spaces, and facilities for participants with disabilities;

- digital accessibility — remote and online delivery and open digital-library access, so that participation does not depend on being physically present;
- financial accessibility — free and low-cost community courses, scholarships, and fee reductions so that cost is not a barrier to participation;
- cultural and religious accommodation — flexibility in dress, respect for prayer times, and reasonable adjustments for individual needs;
- language and communication support — provision made, where needed, for participants across the Arabic- and English-speaking communities the university serves.

Reporting, redress, and a safe environment. The university maintains a zero-tolerance stance toward discrimination and harassment in all its forms. Anyone who believes access has been denied or that they have been treated unfairly may raise the matter through the university's complaints and grievance channels, and cases are handled confidentially, fairly, and without fear of retaliation.

Governance, publication, and review. Responsibility for the policy sits with senior leadership, supported by the Women's Affairs Division, the Continuing Education Unit, and the Quality Assurance Department, which monitor its application across the university's public programmes. The policy is published and available to students, staff, and the public through the university's official channels. First established in 1993, it was most recently reviewed and updated in 2024 and is maintained on a rolling review cycle, ensuring it remains current, enforceable, and aligned with the university's obligations and with international good practice.

4.4 Proportion of first-generation students

The university also tracks the participation of first-generation students — those who are the first in their immediate family to attend university, and one of the clearest measures of how far an institution reaches beyond the already-advantaged. In 2025 the university enrolled 4,537 students starting a degree within a total student body of 10,575; of the new entrants, 2,142 were first-generation students — some 47% of the entering cohort. A first-generation share approaching half of new entrants is high by international standards and reflects the university's inclusive admissions, community outreach, and financial-support measures. The table below sets out first-generation participation on the definitions used by the THE Impact Rankings (SDG 4 indicator 4.4).

First-generation students (2025)	Number
4.4.3 Number of students (total, all levels)	10,575
4.4.1 Number of students starting a degree	4,537
4.4.2 First-generation students starting a degree	2,142
First-generation proportion of new entrants	47.2%

Table. First-generation student participation, 2025 (THE SDG 4 indicator 4.4).

Access to higher education is underpinned by a substantial programme of financial support: between 2022 and 2025, 874 students received free or semi-free scholarships or tuition reductions on grounds of hardship, each formalised through university and ministerial orders. In 2024–2025 the university granted 20% fee reductions to limited-income students, awarded full scholarships and 25–75% reductions, and operated a flexible instalment facility so that no student need interrupt study for a short-term financial constraint. Through its Poor Family Fund it reduced or waived tuition for a further 36 students that year at a cost exceeding 53.7 million Iraqi dinars, and its free Applied Workplace Training Programme places students in industry for two months; support extends beyond fees to food,

housing, transport, and legal services for students from low-income families.

Supporting graduate enterprise: the Training Unit in the Quality Assurance Department ran a workshop on Small Business Design and Management for graduates of colleges and institutes across Basra Governorate, helping them gain the skills to set up and run small businesses and create employment.

To monitor progress toward SDG 4, the university also tracks a set of education-quality indicators. The 2025 picture shows steady gains in higher education and digital literacy alongside areas that still need attention:

Indicator (2025)	Value	Change
Tertiary educational attainment (aged 25+)	49.2%	+1.7% from 2024
Adult learning (aged 25–64)	13.4%	+1.5% from 2024
Adults with at least basic digital skills (16–74)	56.8%	+6.0% since 2020
Low achievers in Mathematics (secondary)	9.7%	sharp fall from 2024
Low achievers in Arabic (secondary)	26.8%	−1.6% from 2024
Low achievers in Science	88.5%	critical area for action

Two findings stand out. The fall in low achievement in mathematics — from nearly a third of students in 2024 to under 10% in 2025 — is a significant result of curriculum reform. By contrast, the sharp rise in low achievement in science marks the most pressing area for intervention. Overall, the data show steady progress in tertiary education, adult learning, and digital literacy, while underlining the need to close achievement gaps in foundational science to meet the 2030 SDG 4 targets.

Beyond these indicators, the university has begun to measure educational outcomes directly. As part of its work on education for sustainable development (SDG 4 target 4.7), it surveyed students' sustainability literacy — their grasp of the global goals and of their own role in advancing them. The first survey, drawing ninety responses, is best read as indicative

of student awareness rather than a statistically representative measure, and the university plans to repeat it on a larger sample as a standing measure of educational impact.

4.5 Quality education across the university's wider SDG work

Sustainable Development Goal 4 is a cross-cutting enabler: progress on almost every other goal depends on people who have been taught, trained, and informed. The university's evidence submissions for the other sixteen Sustainable Development Goals document a large body of educational activity — courses, workshops, seminars, school and community outreach, scholarships, and curriculum integration — that directly advances quality education. This section consolidates that evidence by theme and maps each goal's educational contribution back to SDG 4.

4.5.1 Training, skills, and employability

Much of the university's anti-poverty and decent-work activity takes the form of education and training. Acting on the principle that education and training belong together, the Continuing Education Unit offers free courses across a range of disciplines; low-income students in their final year receive intensive English classes and free computer-skills training, and the free Applied Workplace Training Programme places students in industry for two months to ready them for the labour market (SDG 1).

This is reinforced by structured work-based learning. During 2026 the university placed students from across its departments — including 129 in Business Administration and 161 in Accounting — in public- and private-sector institutions for practical experience, alongside an annual programme of professional seminars and field visits (SDG 8). The Career Qualification and Employment Division delivers free workshops and training courses that equip students and graduates with the skills the labour market

demands, helping to close the skills gap and ease entry into fair employment (SDG 10), while skills-improvement agreements extend the university's training to workers in the public and private sectors (SDG 9).



Hands-on practical training in a university workshop, linking academic learning to applied skills (SDG 7).

4.5.2 Health, gender, and inclusion education

A sustained programme of workshops, seminars, and public campaigns keeps students, staff, and the wider community informed on nutrition, physical activity, mental health, disease prevention, and the dangers of substance abuse (SDG 3). For zero hunger, the university ran the educator-focused workshop "Building the Zero Hunger Generation: Resources for Educators" delivers nutrition-awareness sessions in schools and kindergartens, and trains nursing, pharmacy, and nutrition students through service-learning placements (SDG 2).

Education is also central to the university's work on gender equality. A structured mentorship programme paired 120 new students with 35 senior mentors through monthly sessions and faculty-led workshops; the "STEM Her Way" and "Future Women in STEM & Beyond" initiatives bring high-

school girls onto campus for laboratory visits, guest lectures, and academic advising; and the "Women in Leadership Track" develops women faculty through leadership workshops and one-to-one mentorship (SDG 5). Inclusive provision extends to students with disabilities, supported by an accessible campus and dedicated services (SDG 10).



An awareness and education seminar for students, part of the university's wider SDG programme (SDG 5).

4.5.3 Environmental and sustainability education

The environmental goals are pursued in large part through teaching and public awareness. Regular educational workshops, seminars, and campaigns build a culture of careful water use (SDG 6). On-campus renewable-energy systems serve as living laboratories whose real-time generation data is built into the curriculum, and in March 2026 the university ran a hands-on renewable-energy systems workshop — open to engineering students and the local community — on installing and maintaining small-scale solar and wind technologies (SDG 7). Public lectures and campaigns explain responsible consumption and production to students and the wider community (SDG 12), and the campus solar array

doubles as a teaching tool, supported by clean-energy lectures and a proposed platform that would display live system data for students (SDG 13).

On the land and in the water, education is the university's declared first line of action. An environmental-education programme of workshops and lectures reaches schools and local communities, and scholarships and research grants support students in marine science (SDG 14). For life on land, afforestation campaigns carried out with students, agricultural and dialogue workshops, scientific symposia, desertification seminars, and cooperation with schools build the knowledge and habits that responsible land use depends on (SDG 15).



Students taking part in a campus afforestation campaign — environmental education in practice (SDG 15).

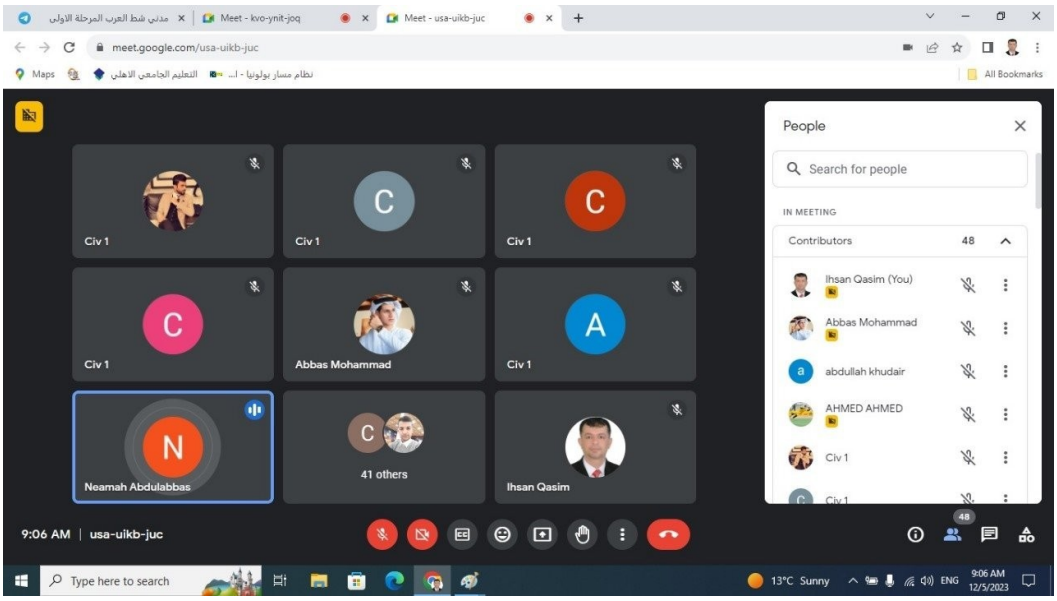


The university's research and training laboratory, where students learn marine and environmental science through direct practice (SDG 14).

4.5.4 Education for the Sustainable Development Goals, justice, and citizenship

Several goals are advanced through the university's teaching of the development agenda itself. Electronic lectures are embedded across every college and stage of study, allowing teaching and learning to continue remotely and extending the university's reach beyond the campus (SDG 11). Through the College of Law, the university delivers training courses for government employees, runs emergency first-aid courses for the community, and — up to the 2025–2026 year — integrated sustainable development and the seventeen goals into the human-rights course taught to all students (SDG 16).

Education for the Sustainable Development Goals is, finally, a formal commitment in its own right: the university embeds the goals in final-year graduation projects and in dedicated energy and computing courses, opens free professional and children's courses to the community, and measures its students' sustainability literacy directly through survey (SDG 17). Each of these activities both draws on and strengthens the university's core educational mission.



Electronic lectures delivered remotely across all colleges and stages of study (SDG 11).

The table below summarises how the university's work on each of the other goals contributes, through education and training, to SDG 4.

Sustainable Development Goal	Educational contribution that advances SDG 4
SDG 1 – No Poverty	Free training courses, computer-skills and English classes, and a two-month workplace training programme for low-income students.
SDG 2 – Zero Hunger	Educator workshop on hunger, school and kindergarten nutrition awareness, and service-learning training for health students.
SDG 3 – Good Health	A continuous programme of health workshops, seminars, and awareness campaigns for students, staff, and community.
SDG 5 – Gender Equality	Mentorship programme, STEM outreach for high-school girls, and a leadership-development track for women faculty.
SDG 6 – Clean Water	Educational workshops, seminars, and campaigns on water conservation and responsible use.
SDG 7 – Clean Energy	Renewable systems as living laboratories, curriculum-integrated data, and a hands-on energy workshop.
SDG 8 – Decent Work	Work-based training placements across departments and professional seminars and field visits.
SDG 9 – Industry	Specialised training and skills-improvement agreements for public- and private-sector workers.
SDG 10 – Reduced Inequalities	Free workshops and training courses through the Career Qualification and Employment Division.
SDG 11 – Sustainable Cities	Electronic lectures embedded across all colleges and stages, and public access to libraries.
SDG 12 – Responsible	Public lectures and campaigns on sustainable consumption and

Sustainable Development Goal	Educational contribution that advances SDG 4
Consumption	production.
SDG 13 – Climate Action	The campus solar array as a teaching tool, with clean-energy lectures and a planned data platform.
SDG 14 – Life Below Water	Environmental-education programmes for schools and communities, and marine-science scholarships.
SDG 15 – Life on Land	Afforestation with students, agricultural and dialogue workshops, and symposia and school cooperation.
SDG 16 – Peace and Justice	Training for government employees, first-aid courses, and SDG content in the human-rights course.
SDG 17 – Partnerships	Dedicated SDG courses, SDGs embedded in graduation projects, community courses, and literacy measurement.

Table. Educational contributions to quality education drawn from the university's wider SDG work.

Taken together, this evidence shows SDG 4 operating as the connective tissue of the university's sustainability work. Nearly every goal is pursued, in part, through teaching, training, and public education — activity that both draws on the university's core educational capacity and continually renews it.

4.6 Strategic alignment with the SDG 4 targets

The activities documented in this report can be read against the specific targets that make up SDG 4. The table below maps the university's principal areas of contribution to the most relevant targets, giving a structured view of where institutional effort is concentrated and where it might be deepened.

SDG 4 target	Focus of the target	How Shatt Al-Arab University responds
Target 4.1	Free, equitable primary and secondary education	School outreach in under-resourced areas; donation of desks to Hamdan Secondary School; robotics and Virtual Reality courses for pupils aged 10–12.
Target 4.3	Equal access to affordable technical, vocational and tertiary education	Inclusive admission; executive and vocational training; legal and judicial courses opened to graduates and public-sector staff.

SDG 4 target	Focus of the target	How Shatt Al-Arab University responds
Target 4.4	Relevant skills for employment and entrepreneurship	Vocational programmes, entrepreneurship competitions, ICT and AI workshops, and employability-focused courses through the Continuing Education Unit.
Target 4.5	Eliminate disparities and ensure access for the vulnerable	Institution-wide inclusive-access policy; support for low-income and first-generation students; charitable and community sports initiatives.
Target 4.7	Knowledge and skills for sustainable development	Health-awareness and well-being seminars; civic and community education; partnerships advancing SDG 4 and SDG 17.
Target 4.a	Inclusive and effective learning environments	Public access to digital libraries; e-learning and blended infrastructure; immersive Virtual Reality in teaching.
Target 4.c	Supply of qualified teachers	533 graduates qualified to teach at primary level (of 804 graduates), extending educational impact into the regional school system.

Table. Mapping of university activity to the relevant SDG 4 targets.

The mapping shows a contribution that is broad across the access, skills, and lifelong-learning targets, anchored by a substantial teacher-preparation output. It also identifies education-focused research as the dimension with the greatest scope for strategic deepening over the period to 2030.

4.7 Strategic assessment: strengths, challenges and opportunities

A candid reading of the evidence supports forward planning. The following synthesis identifies the institutional strengths on which the university can build, the challenges it must address, and the opportunities available to it.

Strengths. The university's most distinctive strengths are its deep community engagement and the breadth of its lifelong-learning provision. Extensive school and community outreach, vocational and legal training, strong applied-technology activity in robotics, Virtual Reality, and

artificial intelligence, substantial first-generation participation (about 47% of new entrants), an established and periodically reviewed inclusive-access policy, and a growing indexed research base together form a solid platform for continued contribution.

Challenges. Several challenges temper this record. Education-focused research remains limited relative to the institution's output in other fields; the critical gap in foundational science attainment identified in the indicator set requires sustained intervention; and the documentation of long-term outcomes — graduate trajectories and the downstream effects of outreach — is still developing.

Opportunities. The opportunities are correspondingly clear. The university can convert its strong outreach footprint into a structured pipeline that raises school attainment and widens access; expand pedagogical and access-focused research; deepen the national and international partnerships it has already established with youth, legal, and engineering institutions; and build on its digital infrastructure to scale open educational resources across the governorate.

Risks. Principal risks to sustained progress include resource constraints, the dependence of some initiatives on individual departments or champions, and the difficulty of maintaining consistent data across a growing portfolio of activity. The governance and evaluation arrangements described below are designed to mitigate these risks.

4.8 Strategic priorities and roadmap to 2030

Building on this assessment, the university sets out five strategic priorities for its continued contribution to SDG 4, together with indicative actions, key performance indicators, and time horizons. The priorities are designed to consolidate existing strengths while addressing the challenges identified above.

Strategic priority	Key actions	Indicative KPIs	Horizon
Strengthen teaching quality and relevance	Continue employer-informed curriculum review; expand blended and e-learning provision.	Graduate employment rate; programmes reviewed each year.	2026–2027
Expand education-focused research	Incentivise pedagogy and access research; create an education-research focus within Quality Assurance.	Education-mapped Scopus outputs; number of funded studies.	2026–2028
Deepen inclusive access	Scale first-generation support; formalise scholarships for low-income students.	First-generation enrolment; retention of supported students.	2026–2028
Scale lifelong learning and outreach	Structure the school-outreach pipeline; grow CEU and LDC provision; open further resources.	Participants reached; courses offered; schools engaged.	Ongoing to 2030
Embed monitoring and governance	Consolidate a single SDG 4 data system; conduct an annual strategic review.	Indicators reported on time; review completed annually.	2026, then ongoing

Table. Strategic priorities and indicative roadmap to 2030.

Taken together, these priorities form a coherent trajectory: near-term consolidation of teaching quality, access, and data systems; medium-term growth in education-focused research and outreach capacity; and a sustained drive through to 2030 to close measurable attainment gaps and widen participation across Basra.

4.9 Monitoring, evaluation and governance

Governance. Responsibility for the university's SDG 4 strategy is shared across academic departments, the Continuing Education Unit, the Learning and Development Center, and the Quality Assurance Department, with senior leadership providing oversight and direction. This distributed model embeds the goal within day-to-day operations while preserving institutional accountability.

Indicators and data. Progress is tracked against a defined set of indicators spanning teaching quality, lifelong-learning participation, inclusive access,

and research output, drawing on institutional records and Scopus/Elsevier bibliometric data. Consolidating these into a single, regularly updated SDG 4 dataset is a near-term priority, intended to improve consistency and reduce reliance on ad hoc reporting.

Review cycle. The strategy is subject to an annual review in which evidence is assessed against the priorities and indicators set out above, targets are adjusted in the light of results, and emerging opportunities are incorporated. The access policy, created in 1993 and last reviewed in 2024, illustrates the institution's established practice of periodic policy review, which the SDG 4 framework now extends to its wider educational strategy.

4.10 Conclusion and strategic outlook

Shatt Al-Arab University's engagement with Sustainable Development Goal 4 is both substantial and strategically coherent. Across teaching, lifelong learning, inclusive access, and research, the institution has built a record of demonstrable public impact in Basra and the wider region — preparing qualified teachers, opening its resources to the community, supporting first-generation and low-income students, and applying technological education to local needs.

The analysis in this report indicates that the university's task to 2030 is less one of redirection than of consolidation and deepening: sustaining the breadth of its community contribution while strengthening education-focused research, closing identified attainment gaps, and embedding the monitoring systems that will allow progress to be measured and managed.

Approached in this way, SDG 4 functions for the university not as an external benchmark to be met but as an organising principle for its core mission — an inclusive, high-quality education that equips the people of Basra to shape a more prosperous and equitable future. The priorities and governance arrangements set out here are intended to carry that

commitment, with clarity and accountability, through to the end of the decade.