

# Education in Focus

**Ivor McGettigan** - Partner, Head of Education - Employment and Incentives  
i.mcgettigan@tamimi.com - Abu Dhabi



In this edition of Law Update we focus on the [Education Sector](#) and have interesting reports from across the Middle East over a wide range of topics.

The Middle East remains the number one private education market in the world. As the UAE market moves towards maturity the two most populous Middle Eastern countries- Saudi Arabia and Egypt- are preparing to enter a rapid growth phase. The number of new schools being mentioned for Saudi Arabia is simply breath-taking. The starting pistol has been fired- the new draft PPP law is hot off the press and is sure to attract huge interest (more of which later).

The higher education sector continues to draw the big names into Dubai with a few notable 'scalps' over the last year.

The buzzwords over the last year were 'Vision 2030', 'GDPR' and 'fake news'. In this issue we don't like to disappoint (although it is [fake degrees not fake news](#)).

In the UAE we look at the latest developments in respect of the [Child Rights Law](#) where some significant and welcome changes are imminent in the child protection space. We also delve into the ever more complicated area of educational institutions running [public benefit activities and fundraising](#), an article not to be missed by any schools or colleges thinking of running events/fundraising.

Our tax team takes a look at the [implementation of VAT](#) and considerations from an education institution point of view.

In the area of PPP, construction and real estate we have three articles touching upon different aspects of this. Our real estate team discuss the key issues in completing a ["Build-to-Suit" School Project](#). Our construction and infrastructure team looks at [Procurement in the Education Sector](#) in the Middle East whilst our colleagues in Saudi Arabia discuss [PPP in KSA Education](#) and in particular the new draft PPP law which is newly announced and is a potential game-changer for investors in education in the Kingdom.

Looking regionally our Egypt office provides an interesting insight into the [Challenges of the Egyptian Education Sector](#). It is a very exciting market and many foreign investors are investing heavily there; we have seen a large uptick in interest particularly on the international branch campus front.

Our Bahrain colleagues explore the topic of [establishing foreign higher educational institutions](#) there. Its proximity to the Kingdom, home to the largest number of GCC students, could be the X factor.

The TMT team dares to open the Pandora's box that is [GDPR](#). This article will be of interest to education providers in the region with significant numbers of EU residents as students — particularly those delivering distance education programmes to such students.

Last and not least we take a look at one of the biggest education news stories of the year- fake degrees- and the co-author finds himself asking - how can I get my hands on a mail order PhD in Wizardry (with a free Order of Merlin, First Class)? He then focuses on the employment implications arising from these degree mills; employers are in a high risk group when it comes to damages indirectly caused by fake degrees.

Our colleagues in Kuwait, Oman, Jordan and our other offices continue to support education sector clients in those jurisdictions and will issue updates as they arise over the coming year.

We hope you enjoy this edition and please feel free to share any ideas for future articles or feedback generally with me at [i.mcgettigan@tamimi.com](mailto:i.mcgettigan@tamimi.com). We also publish an email alert In the Know which covers education industry news across the Middle East and if you would like to receive it then please let us know ([same email address](#)).