



University of  
**KURDISTAN**  
Hewlêr



UKH Alumni  
Association

# UKH ALUMNI ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 3  
JUNE 2023

[WWW.UKH.EDU.KRD](http://WWW.UKH.EDU.KRD)

# UKH ALUMNI ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

## MOHAMMED FATIH

Sales executive at Talabat

I, Mohammed Fatih, am currently working as a sales executive at Talabat, one of the largest online food ordering companies in the Middle East. Growing up in my family, obtaining a degree was considered a mandatory step in the pursuit of education.



However, I never anticipated that I would reach the position I hold today. Throughout my journey, I have had the opportunity to explore diverse fields such as linguistics, the oil and gas sector, and sales. I share these experiences to emphasize the significance of my education at UKH. In 2016, I obtained my bachelor's degree and pursued an executive master's in business administration at the UKH. It was during my time at UKH that I acquired crucial skills in English, academic research, and critical thinking. Selecting UKH was undoubtedly one of the best decisions I have made in my life.

My tenure at UKH was quite extensive, allowing me to fully understand my learning style and process. The UKH played a pivotal role in shaping my success today. I owe much credit to the institution for instilling in me a creative, meticulous, and organized approach to work. Learning how to effectively execute tasks became an integral part of my life during my time at the UKH. I continually question how I can improve my work by employing critical thinking and analyzing the execution. To this day, I maintain a notebook to stay organized, recording assignments, contacts, reminders, schedules, and task lists.

Reflecting on my experiences, I take immense pleasure in being a former student of the UKH. The institution provided a platform where immensely talented and experienced faculty members shared their knowledge and expertise with the students. My seven-year journey at the UKH remains the most cherished period of my life, filled with precious moments spent alongside my classmates. I express my gratitude to everyone involved!

## BASHAIR FARAJ

HR & Contracts Manager at Erbil Manpower Company Ltd.

Back in 2007, when I joined UKH, I had no idea of the profound impact this institute would have on my life, both personally and professionally. It all began with the improvement of my English language skills, which opened numerous doors for me. Even before the first academic year concluded, I had the privilege of being accepted into the Iraqi Young Leaders Exchange Program in the United States, an opportunity that significantly contributed to my knowledge and personal growth, courtesy of UKH. This was just the beginning, as I went on to participate in the Global Change Makers Summit in Jordan in 2009 and in Lebanon in 2010, once again owing thanks to UKH. These instances are just a few among the many international and local youth programs I was fortunate to be a part of.

The experience and knowledge I gained from UKH surpassed mere academics; it was a life-altering journey. These qualities enabled me to secure summer jobs in both 2010 and 2011. A few months before graduating in 2012, I received an offer for my first full-time position at Erbil Manpower Company Ltd. as an Administration Assistant. Within three months, I was promoted to the role of Admin and HR Coordinator. In 2013, I returned to UKH to embark on my Master's program, which I successfully completed in 2015. This further enriched my expertise in HR, leading to another promotion to Account Manager that same year. Today, I hold the position of HR & Contracts Manager, and I owe a significant portion of my success to UKH. It not only provided me with academic education but also instilled in me a unique way of thinking and a fresh perspective.

UKH is undoubtedly a crucial element in individual success. I became acutely aware of this fact when I witnessed my fellow colleagues and friends flourishing as successful entrepreneurs or securing important positions in both private and public sectors. My gratitude goes to UKH, its professors, and its staff for facilitating this incredible journey. Thank you for everything!



## HANGAW QADER OMAR

Founder of EU IT Experts (EU ITEX)

As a proud alumnus of the University of Kurdistan Hewlêr (UKH), I am delighted to share my story. My name is Hangaw Omar, and I had the privilege of earning a BSc and MSc in Computer Science from UKH in 2014. Looking back, I am filled with pride and gratitude for the transformative experiences that have shaped me into the person I am today.

During my time at UKH, I was academically challenged and supported by the dedicated faculty and staff. I want to express my sincere thanks to the Computer Science department for their unwavering support, guidance, and encouragement throughout my studies at UKH. Being recognized as one of the top students in both my BSc and MSc programs and earning a place on the Dean's Honour Roll for my academic achievements was a great honor.

The university also provided me with travel grants, enabling me to participate in prestigious conferences such as the IEEE EMBS 2016 conference in Malaysia and the Undergraduate Research Conference on Applied Computing 2014 in the UAE. These experiences broadened my horizons and allowed me to contribute meaningfully to my field.

After graduation, I entered the workforce with a solid foundation of knowledge and skills acquired at UKH. I quickly secured a job



at an international non-profit organization, and today I am based in the Netherlands as the IT Manager of an international NGO. In addition, I founded EU IT Experts, a company specializing in providing enterprise software solutions for organizations in the Netherlands and worldwide.

I am immensely grateful to the University of Kurdistan Hewlêr for providing me with a world-class education and a supportive community. The education I received has been instrumental in my professional success and personal growth. The memories I made during my time at UKH will always hold a special place in my heart.

## HELINE BAKER

The CEO of Emaar Designs



I am Heline Ali Baker, currently serving as the CEO of Emaar Designs, located in Erbil-Dream City. Although born in Iraq, my education took place in Canada, and the journey to my current position has been filled with both triumphs and tribulations. Growing up in Canada and returning to Kurdistan in 2006, I have had the opportunity to learn five languages through travel and family connections. I graduated from York University with a degree in Political Science, and my diverse work experiences eventually led me to the field of construction and design.

Upon my return to Kurdistan, I worked as the head of the Media and Relation Department at the University of Kurdistan for a year. Later, I moved back to Canada to raise my wonderful children and came back to Kurdistan in 2013. During my time here,

I decided to pursue further education and successfully completed my master's degree at Kurdistan University in 2015, achieving top honors in my class.

The experience of studying at Kurdistan University was amazing and distinct from Canadian universities. I made many fantastic friends, and the campus, professors, students, and staff were incredibly warm and welcoming. While I did consider applying for positions at UKH due to my love for education, I chose other opportunities that have led me to where I am today.

Two years ago, as my children were nearing adulthood, I made the decision to return to the workforce and establish a design company based on the growing needs of Erbil's expanding and developing landscape. Alongside my husband, Maher Akrawi, who serves as the CEO of Emaar Al Hadeth construction and investment company, we started doing design and construction work. This presented an excellent opportunity for me to pursue another passion of mine, design, by establishing my own company within 'Emaar Al Hadeth' named 'Emaar Designs.' I assembled a talented team of new graduates and embarked on this entrepreneurial journey, aiming to create more opportunities for Kurdish youth. Last summer, I had the pleasure of welcoming numerous UKH students for summer training in our office, allowing me to combine my passions for design and education.

Our company, Emaar Designs, always keeps its doors open for UKH students seeking summer training opportunities, and personally, I would love to engage with UKH in any way possible to show my gratitude for the incredible two years I spent pursuing my master's degree.

## UKH EXPO 2023

On May 4, 2023, the UKH Expo 2023 event brought together 19 UKH students, 24 UKH alumni, and 3 refugees who own their own businesses with hundreds of visitors.

The event was also attended by diplomats, officials, businesses, students, and academics who were excited to engage with the business owners.

The annual UKH Expo aims to provide a platform for students and alumni to showcase their entrepreneurial skills and expand their professional network. With the inclusion of refugee entrepreneurs, the event highlighted the importance of supporting diverse communities and promoting economic empowerment.

Participating businesses varied between law firms, digital production and art, handcrafts, furniture, trade, mobile applications, academic institutions, medical services, petroleum services and local agricultural products.

The UKH Expo 2023 is sponsored by Hawax Corporation and 4 Bridges Company.





## SALAR AL-SOFI

Wellsite Supervisor and  
Engineer at TAQA

I am Salar Jaladet Mohammed Saleh Al-Sofi, currently employed as a Wellsite Supervisor and Engineer in the Drilling & Completion Department at Abu Dhabi National Energy Company, also known as TAQA Group. I work alongside a team of local and international experts. My responsibilities involve leading daily drilling and completions operations in the field, ensuring safety and adherence to QHSE policies and regulations. I am also involved in planning, organizing, managing, and executing projects, as well as controlling costs and maintaining operational records.

Prior to my current role, I worked as an operator and Intern Engineer at Secure Drilling Services (SDS), now known as Managed Pressure Drilling (MPD) Service, with Weatherford. My educational journey began in 2010 when I joined the University of Kurdistan Hewlêr (UKH). I completed my B.Sc. and M.Sc. in Petroleum Engineering at UKH, where I received comprehensive training and education. The university equipped me with a strong foundation in engineering, English language proficiency, study skills, public speaking, time management, stress management, and self-presentations.

After obtaining my B.Sc., I worked as a Teacher and Lab Assistant in the Petrochemical Engineering Department at Polytechnic University in Duhok while simultaneously pursuing my higher education.

UKH provided an environment that supported working professionals by setting clear objectives, facilitating proper planning, fostering commitment, and employing advanced teaching and learning methods that adapted to dynamic changes. Many successful examples of students balancing education and practical work further demonstrated the university's ability to accommodate individuals in full-time employment.

Being a UKH student not only expanded my knowledge and engineering skills but also equipped me with the necessary tools for success. It also provided me with opportunities to undergo training and internships with international oil and gas companies such as MOL Group/Kalegran, OiLSERV, and Weatherford. These experiences have played a significant role in shaping my career and have ultimately led me to my current position.

The dedication and support I received from UKH enabled me to become the first person in Kurdistan and Iraq to conduct research on Multi-Phase Managed Pressure Drilling, an advanced drilling technique. I am incredibly honored and fortunate to have had the opportunity to study and learn at UKH, and I attribute my achievements to the university's guidance and the grace of God.

## SPEDA HAZIM

### Documentary Filmmaker

“My only wish is to see him once again, that’s all.” This is what Amsha, the protagonist of the BBC documentary film, told me, before she burst into tears.

It was one of the most unforgettable moments in my career, for the bond I created with Amsha when making the documentary.

It was within the walls of University of Kurdistan Hewlêr that I started my first steps as a 17 years old freshman majoring in Politics and International Relation, an academic pursuit that set the stage for my career.

For me, UKH was a vibrant community that embraced students from all corners of Kurdistan, and Iraq. It was a shared journey of knowledge, lots and lots and lots of research papers, and lifetime friendships. Together we intertwined our lives through the tapestry of challenges, triumphs, tears and laughter. I forever cherish the moments we experienced as a community.

After my graduation in 2018, I carved a path in the field of journalism and filmmaking, to shed the light on the untold stories in my Kurdish community and amplify the voices of the marginalized.

I started working in a production company producing a local documentary series named Deng telling society related stories through beautiful short films, but that all ended during the pandemic.

After that, I decided to live paycheck to paycheck and be a full time freelancer because I wanted to take these local stories to the international community, and so I did. For almost two years, together with a work partner we traveled around Kurdistan, spoke to people, and dug

for unique stories. The journey took me to remarkable places allowing me to collaborate with BBC and VICE News. I have been privileged to create impactful international films that delved into pressing social issues. From shedding the light on faith healer scammers in Kurdistan to abusing dogs for dogfighting for VICE news.

The closest to my heart is the story of the young Yazidi girl Amsha who is

healing from the trauma of her captivity through cleaning her homeland, Sinjar, from the mines planted by ISIS, but still waiting for her missing brother who was also held captive. The film was published by BBC our world in 2021.

These films were not made without challenges apart from the technical, logistical challenges, and the potential cost of freedom of expression in this country. “Every Kurdish girl has her own battle to fight behind the walls, before even stepping out of the house” this is a quote from my speech in the prestigious Rory Peck Awards where I was nominated for a journalism award in November 2021 in London. It was an unforgettable moment and an honor to be internationally recognized.

Looking ahead, my journey continues to unfold as long as I am driven by my passion and purpose. I continue to push boundaries, break barriers, and paint vibrant narratives that have the potential to improve my community. As I reminisce on the path, I am grateful for every detail, but UKH remains the foundation that helped me build up on.



## RAMYAR JAMAL

### Assistant Lecturer at Catholic University in Erbil



In 2011, I joined UKH and embarked on a two-year access program before choosing to major in International Relations. During my second year in the access program, I took on the role of an extra classes teacher, where I taught English language and its skills to first-level students. Throughout my five years at UKH, I remained an active and engaged student. In 2014, I co-founded the Politics Society Club, organizing various events, inviting politicians, and hosting exhibitions. That same year, I received the Dean’s Honor Roll recognition for being a top student.

My dedication and involvement led to a remarkable opportunity in 2015. Recognized as a top and active student, I was selected as one of the three participants in a funded exchange program to study at the University of Sciences Po in Reims, France. I spent six months there, immersing myself in a new academic environment. Upon returning in February 2016, I received another award for my high academic achievement.

My experience in France ignited a passion for pursuing a master’s degree in Europe. After extensive efforts, I gained admission to the University of Milan in Italy, where I was selected as one of the 50 best international students to receive the prestigious “Excellence Scholarship.” Throughout my studies in Italy and France, I continued to actively represent Kurdistan, sharing insights with foreigners, participating in interviews with master’s degree projects, and even attending an international conference in Venice.

In 2019, I returned to Iraq and joined the American University in Iraq-Sulemaniya’s Gender Center, collaborating with UKRI and LSE. My work there involved collecting, analyzing, translating, and transcribing

data on masculinities, gender studies, and gender-based violence (GBV). I conducted interviews, literature reviews, pop culture analyses, and reviewed proverbs and political party bylaws, delving into extensive research.

After three years at AUIS, I transitioned to Knowledge University, initially as an assistant lecturer in the International Relations department. Within six months, I was promoted to the position of Head of Academic Unit in the Quality Assurance Directorate. During my tenure at Knowledge University, I achieved several milestones, including publishing a scientific paper, presenting at an international conference, teaching various modules, supervising thesis projects, and organizing a language course for 100 religious leaders. In recognition of my volunteer work for running the course, I received an award from the KRG Minister of Religious Affairs.

Currently, I am working as an assistant lecturer in the International Relations department at Catholic University in Erbil, continuing my journey in academia and imparting knowledge to students.

# 4TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RECENT INNOVATIONS IN ENGINEERING (ICRIE) 2023

The University of Kurdistan Hewlêr (UKH) is partnering with the University of Duhok (UoD) to organise the fourth INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON RECENT INNOVATIONS IN ENGINEERING (ICRIE) 2023 (ICRIE 2023) on the 13th and 14th of September 2023. Professor at UKH School of Science and Engineering (SSE) are co chairs of different topics of this conference. SSE is led by national and international faculty who are well trained to educate future leaders in science and engineering fields in computer science, computer engineering, natural resources engineering and management, civil and architectural engineering. The school houses cutting-edge technology and advanced labs across its different programmes. While this is not the first international engagement of SSE, but it is the first ever conference being co-organised by UKH SSE.

This international conference aims to bring together researchers, research scholars, and leading academic scientists to share and exchange their research results and experiences on engineering aspects of research, innovation, and design. It will also offer a premier interdisciplinary platform for educators, researchers, and engineering practitioners to present and discuss the most recent trends, concerns, and innovations as well as practical challenges faced and solutions implemented in the fields of engineering research. This will help Kurdistan Region (KRG) in following the current developments in the world and benefit from its effect on the economic, construction, and industrial fields.

As an endeavor for the College of Engineering and Engineering Research Centre at UoD and UKH SSE to motivate the academic staff to publish their future research in peer-reviewed recognized journals, the idea for holding (ICRIE 2023) international conference at both universities has grown. The task of this proposed conference is represented in internationalising the local experience of academic staff by participating in a conference sponsored by famous associations in many engineering fields Indexed by Clarivate Analytics, Thomson Reuters, Web of Science, Scopus, International Standard Serial Number (ISSN), Directory of Open Access scholarly Resources (ROAD) & Digital object identifier (DOI). This conference will invite professional and distinguished lecturers to be keynote speakers of the conference.

**13 - 14 SEPT, 2023**  
**Duhok, Kurdistan Region - Iraq**

Learn more



## SEBAN HAG IBRAHIM

**Director at SABIS Meltho International School and Assistant Lecturer**

My name is Seban, also known as Sipan. In 2017, I completed my Masters in English Language and Literature at the University of Kurdistan Hewlêr. During my time pursuing my Masters, I served as the Chair of the English Department at SABIS Schools for a period of six years. Following my graduation from UKH, I was promoted to the position of Director at SABIS.

This year, I had the honor of being selected as the Keynote Speaker at the 9th Youth Conference held at Tishk University. Additionally, my research abstract titled "Integrating Online Learning in Kurdistan's Public Schools" was chosen by Tishk University and published in their yearly book of abstracts.

Currently, I hold the position of Director at SABIS Meltho International School in Erbil. Throughout my journey, I have been inspired by numerous factors, but my persistence and passion have been at the core of my success. I have always pursued my true passions, which has allowed me to genuinely thrive.

Despite having the opportunity to pursue my Masters in the UK, I consciously chose to fulfill my dream at the University of Kurdistan Hewlêr due to its esteemed reputation as the premier university in the Kurdistan Region.



## UKH CENTRES

- Career Development Centre (CDC)
- Creativity Entrepreneurship Centre (CEC)
- Centre for Environmental Studies (CES)
- Centre for Peace-building and Dialogue (CPD)
- Professional and Executive Education Centre (PEEC)





# EXCITING NEWS!

UKH PEEC Becomes the First  
**ACCA Registered Learning Partner**  
in Kurdistan & Iraq



## PROFESSIONAL AND EXECUTIVE EDUCATION CENTRE (PEEC)

The world is evolving at an unprecedented pace, and it is essential that the workforce is equipped with the skills and knowledge they need to thrive in this dynamic environment. The Professional and Executive Education Centre (PEEC) has been established as part of the University of Kurdistan-Hewlêr (UKH) to serve as a hub for executive education, professional development, and lifelong learning.

To achieve its goals, UKH-PEEC draws on a collaborative team of professionals who have extensive local and international experience. The centre works with international partners, professionals, and awarding bodies to deliver internationally recognized programmes to enhance the skills, knowledge, and effectiveness of the workforce in the Kurdistan Region and beyond.

UKH-PEEC provides certified training and intensive short educational courses in the following areas: Medical, Engineering, Information Technology, Accounting, Management, Finance, Computer Skills (ICDL), Marketing, Communication, and Skills Development short courses.

Medical courses are accredited by the following organizations: UKH Medicine School, UKH-PEEC, the Council of Ministers-Ministry of Health (MoH), Kurdistan Society of Emergency Medicine (KSEM), the Southwest London Elective Orthopaedic Centre (SWLEOC), the Academic Surgical Unit (AUS) of South West London Elective Orthopaedic Centre, and the Association of Rheumatology and Medical Rehabilitation in KRG (ARMRK).

As a newly established centre, UKH-PEEC has made many great achievements by providing various professional courses to significant partners and clients throughout Kurdistan. UKH-PEEC has provided professional and educational services and deliv-

ered a variety of training courses to many professional companies and more than 100 learners. UKH-PEEC is committed to working hard to help those who want to enhance their knowledge or renew their certificates.

Last but not least, the UKH-PEEC has achieved a remarkable milestone by becoming the first institution in Kurdistan and Iraq to receive accreditation from the prestigious Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA). This momentous achievement reflects our commitment to excellence in the field of accountancy and finance education.

What does this mean for you? As a student or a professional seeking a distinguished qualification in accounting, ACCA accreditation with UKH-PEEC ensures that you will receive a world-class education with globally recognized standards. Our partnership with ACCA opens incredible opportunities for your career growth, giving you a competitive edge in the job market both nationally and internationally.

Whether you are a student embarking on your educational journey or a professional seeking to enhance your skills, UKH-PEEC's ACCA accreditation is your gateway to a successful and rewarding future in the world of finance and accounting.

Whether you are a student, a professional, or an organization, we invite you to join us on this learning journey. Together, we can create a brighter future.