



University of  
**KURDISTAN**  
Hewlêr



UKH Alumni  
Association

# UKH ALUMNI ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

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## LAVIN HUSSEIN

### People Operations Manager at Talabat

UKH had a pivotal role in shaping my journey, and it cannot be overstated. It equipped me with invaluable skills that not only secured me a job immediately after graduation but also paved the way for an ongoing, enriching career trajectory.



Being a people person, my passion has always been for human resources. Embarking on this path, I've held diverse positions in different organisations, starting from Swedo as an NGO to BAT in the FMCG industry, and now I proudly serve as the People Operations Manager at Talabat Iraq in the tech industry.

Reflecting on my journey thus far fills me with immense pride, recognizing that my achievements stem from a foundation of acquired skills. The language proficiency, business acumen, and adept presentation skills gained during my time at UKH have proven invaluable in every job interview, and they have never failed me. Yet, this success only means I need to do even more! I am currently pursuing a higher diploma/master's in HR, driven by a commitment to continue my growth and advancement in my career. So, the journey doesn't end here.

## GOVAR HARIS

### Director of Public Relations and Media at Rwanga Foundation

Growing up, my childhood seemed no more exceptional compared to others', yet it laid the foundation for who I am today. However, it was a transformative opportunity that altered the course of my life entirely when I was accepted into the University of Kurdistan Hewlêr (UKH).

My journey at UKH began with a curious blend of excitement and uncertainty. Struggling to communicate in English, I vividly remember the confusion I felt during my initial days. The word "quiz" was foreign to me, and when my teacher mentioned a

pop-up quiz, I found myself grasping for understanding, scribbling on paper with no comprehension.

But as time unfolded, so did my abilities. Within two years, I had metamorphosed from a student struggling to utter a single English word to someone translating movies from English to Kurdish. Not only did I earn a Bachelor of Science in Mineral Resources Engineering, but I also graduated as a first-class student in my cohort.

Yet, the significance of my time at UKH extended beyond academic achievements. The university equipped me with invaluable skills and connections, setting the stage for my future endeavors. Post-graduation in 2016, I embarked on a career journey that led me back to UKH, this time as a professional in marketing and later as a member of the Public Relations and Communication team.

Being part of the institution that had transformed my life was a profound experience. It became not just a place of education but a source of growth and inspiration. This journey culminated in my current role as the Director of Public Relations and Media at the prestigious Rwanga Foundation, where I am also the youngest board member.

Simultaneously, I am continuing my academic pursuits at UKH, where I am studying for an Executive Master of Business Administration (EMBA). Reflecting on the trajectory of my life, I realize that nearly half of my 31 years have been intimately intertwined with UKH; an institution that not only educated me, but also shaped me into the person I am today.



## AREZH SAMIR

### Financial Contract Management Specialist

My name is Arezh Samir, and I am excited to share a part of my journey from a student at the University of Kurdistan Hewlêr to where I stand today as a Financial Contract Management Specialist at one of Germany's largest international agencies.

After completing 12th grade, I embarked on my academic path with a sense of uncertainty, having not achieved the results I had hoped for. Following in my sister's footsteps, who had also studied at UKH, I decided to enroll at the University of Kurdistan Hewlêr. Little did I know that I was making one of the best decisions of my life, which would shape my future in profound ways. In 2016, I proudly graduated with a bachelor's degree in Mineral Resources Engineering. Like many of my fellow graduates, my main goal was to pursue a career in the oil and gas industry. However, the challenging circumstances in Iraq diverted my path. Nonetheless, thanks to the diverse skills obtained at UKH, I secured positions with both local and international organisations, laying the foundation for my career pathway.

After progressing in my career, I discovered a passion for the support and operations department. Recognizing the need to align my educational background with this evolving direction, I seized the opportunity to pursue an Executive MBA (EMBA) programme offered by UKH. Graduating with a master's degree in 2022 marked a significant milestone in my journey.



Balancing studies, professional responsibilities, and being a mother to my newborn was a challenge, and I am immensely grateful for the unwavering support and encouragement of my husband, without whom I wouldn't have reached my current position. Nevertheless, those two years provided me with invaluable lessons that helped me grow personally and professionally.

I am thankful for being a UKH alumnae, and for all the skills and opportunities UKH constantly provides to its students.

## MASOUD AHMED

### HR Manager at Mercedes-Benz Iraq



As the first generation of students to walk through the halls of the University of Kurdistan - Hewlêr (UKH), I embarked on a journey that not only equipped me with knowledge but also instilled in me the confidence to navigate the twists and turns of the professional world. Studying Business Management Science during my undergraduate years and later pursuing a Master of Arts in Business Management, UKH became more than just an educational institution; it became the crucible in which my confidence was forged, and my career trajectory set.

At UKH, the learning experience goes beyond traditional classroom boundaries. Through a cutting-edge curriculum and a variety of teaching methods including research projects, workshops, seminars, and debating activities, I was exposed to a dynamic learning environment that nurtured both academic excellence and practical skills. These experiences not only widened my horizons but also boosted my self-esteem, empowering me to tackle challenges head-on.

Equipped with the lessons learned at UKH, I stepped into the professional arena with confidence. Today, I hold the position of Human Resources Manager at Bright Castle Motors, Mercedes-Benz Iraq. The sleepless nights spent poring over textbooks and the dedication poured into every assignment during my academic years had prepared me for the rigors of the corporate world. As I navigated through the complexities of my role, I often found myself drawing parallels between the challenges faced at UKH and those encountered in my professional life.

Reflecting on my journey, I often recall the words of the legendary boxer, Muhammad Ali, who famously said, "I don't count the sit-ups. I only start counting when it starts hurting because those are the ones that count. That's what makes you a champion." Just as in the ring, where every blow endured builds resilience and strength, the challenges faced at UKH were integral to my growth. I often share this wisdom with my team, emphasizing the value of hard work and dedication in achieving success. The sleepless nights and the sacrifices made during my academic years were not in vain; they were investments in my future, shaping me into the professional I am today.

As I look back on my journey from a wide-eyed student at UKH to a seasoned professional leading a team at Bright Castle Motors, I am filled with gratitude for the role the university has played in shaping my career trajectory. UKH not only provided me with the knowledge and skills necessary for success but also instilled in me the confidence to navigate the ever-evolving landscape of the business world.

In conclusion, my experience at UKH serves as a testament to the transformative power of education and the value of perseverance. Just as every challenge conquered at UKH propelled me forward, so too do the challenges I face in my professional life serve as opportunities for growth and development. To my alma mater, I extend my heartfelt gratitude for laying the foundation upon which my success stands—a foundation built on hard work, dedication, and unwavering confidence.



## NEWS

# THE RELEASE OF UKH ALUMNI ASSOCIATION'S MOBILE APPLICATION

The long-awaited UKH Alumni Mobile Application has been officially launched, providing our alumni with a platform to connect with each other and with the university. Packed with a variety of features including discounts, job listings, announcements, event updates, and newsletters, the app is now available for alumni to download and explore. Furthermore, plans are underway to enhance the mobile app with additional features soon.

The mobile app is now accessible to users of Android, iOS, and Huawei devices. Through the following links, the app can be easily downloaded.

- **App Store:**  
<https://apps.apple.com/us/app/ukh-alumni-association/id6474238004>
- **Google Play:**  
<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.ukhalumni.com&hl=en&gl=US>
- **Huawei App gallery:**  
<https://appgallery.huawei.com/app/C109379759com&hl=en&gl=US>

We welcome your feedback and suggestions. Please feel free to send them to us at:  
[alumni@ukh.edu.krd](mailto:alumni@ukh.edu.krd) or [alumni.support@ukh.edu.krd](mailto:alumni.support@ukh.edu.krd)

## NEW STUDY ABROAD ANNOUNCEMENT WITH HUDDERSFIELD UNIVERSITY

UKH has signed a progression agreement with the University of Huddersfield, located in the UK.

The partnership will enable our students to study at the University of Huddersfield, advancing their education and earning dual degrees at the end of their studies.

We were delighted to receive a delegation today to discuss the implementation of this partnership and opportunities that will be available for our students.

We held an information session for students progressing to the University in the next academic year.

The University of Huddersfield has been rated Gold in all three aspects of the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) 2023 according to UK education standards. It was the only university in Yorkshire and the Humber and the Northwest to achieve gold ratings in all three aspects of the TEF among those announced in September 2023. Their academic staff rank in the top three in England for the proportion who hold doctorates, who have higher degrees, and hold teaching qualifications (HESA 2022).

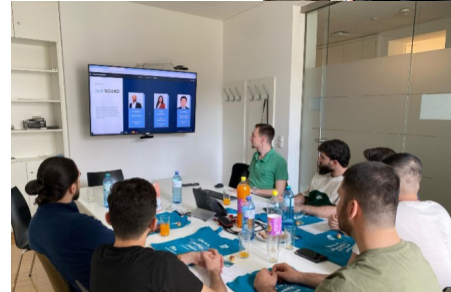
We would like to recognize the support and services of Britannia Educational Services and Consultancy for enabling this partnership, and for supporting our students as they continue their studies in the UK.



## THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE EXCHANGE PROGRAMME FOR UKH PETROLEUM ENGINEERING STUDENTS WITH MONTANUNIVERSITÄT LEOBEN

Petroleum Engineering students at UKH started their final semester at Montan Universität Leoben with glittering passion. This is the first batch of UKH students going to this university and aiming to make the most out of it. The programme offers students the opportunity to earn internationally recognized credits toward their degree. Our students can participate in this programme annually, allowing them to attend a semester or a year at Montan University of Leoben. "This experience not only helps them accumulate internationally recognized credits but also broadens their academic and cultural horizons," said Mr. Ramyar Adnan, Programme Director of Petroleum Engineering at UKH.

This exchange programme has been widely welcomed by the petroleum engineering students at UKH. "We are very thrilled to take on such a prestigious opportunity. We believe this can be a steppingstone for our future engagements with the real world of petroleum engineering. We will do our best to make the most out of this enlightening programme," stated senior Petroleum Engineering students.



## THE INAUGURATION OF THE EXCHANGE PROGRAMME BETWEEN UKH CIVIL ENGINEERING STUDENTS AND UNIVERSITY OF CIVIL ENGINEERING IN BUCHAREST

In February 2024, the Civil Engineering Department launched an Exchange Students Programme in partnership with the University of Civil Engineering in Bucharest (UTCB), Romania. UKH students are now spending a full semester to one year in Bucharest. Our undergraduate students have smoothly integrated into their courses at UTCB, showcasing adaptability and excitement for this international academic opportunity.

This exchange initiative provides our students with a range of advantages, such as academic enhancement, real-world application of their skills, hands-on learning experiences, and invaluable cultural immersion. This endeavor underscores our department's commitment to fostering future global engineering leaders.





## LAYLAN LOAI

Head of the Science  
Department at Montessori  
International School



I can proudly say that I was in the second group of students that was accepted to UKH, and I was among the first students in the Petroleum Engineering Department. Starting from the early years of my education and progressing through my undergraduate studies, every day was a learning experience. My journey at UKH introduced me to different aspects of education that I never thought mattered. It changed my whole perspective on how lectures, classes, and lessons should be conducted. The confidence that UKH gave me encouraged me to start working at IFP company before graduating. Starting as an intern there, driven by my passion and the sense of leadership that UKH had implanted in me, I was promoted three times within four years (office administrator, team leader, ending up as operations management coordinator). Throughout the years, the vision of UKH, and the values and concepts we were taught were accompanying me in every step. Passing the concepts learned at UKH to other generations felt so joyful and productive, and I found the perfect platform to do that.

Starting my job at the Montessori International School marked the beginning of a very special period in my life. While teaching various science topics, including physics, biology, chemistry, and geology, the knowledge and experience that I acquired from UKH made applying the famous Montessori teaching methods easy and enjoyable for me. It felt great to be able to spread leadership skills among young individuals, guiding them to discover their

hidden talents, improve their skills, and face their insecurities. During any of the Montessori student-centered classes, I could sense the effect of giving enough confidence to students to participate in discussions, brainstorm, and share their thoughts, mirroring what UKH achieved with its students. Becoming the Head of the Science Department there enabled me to focus more on practical activities and experiments, organizing debates and presentations to prepare a group of brilliant public speakers who can hold the microphone fearlessly and express their opinions out loud, similar to our experiences on the stage of the UKH auditorium.

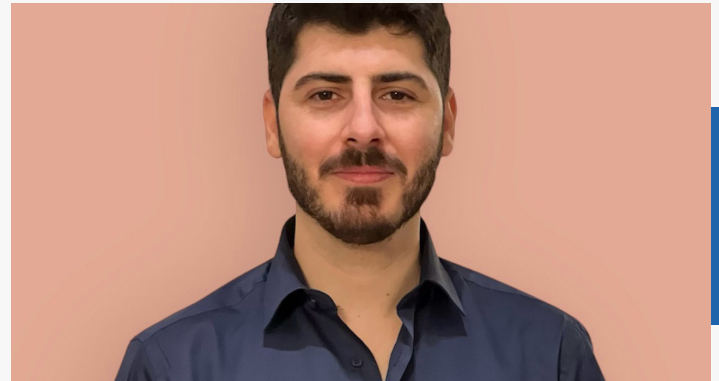
Additionally, in a discussion panel at an international book fair about the Montessori Approach and its influence on developing future leaders, I was pleased to highlight the parallels between the innovative teaching methods we employ and those I learned at UKH. Currently, my dual roles as a teacher in the morning and a student in the afternoon, while completing my first year as a master's student in the Petroleum Engineering Department at UKH, have significantly enriched my educational perspective. Continuing my journey at UKH has empowered and motivated me further to pursue my future goals.

## ZHIR NAZHAD

### Senior Employment & Assessment Supervisor at Korek Telecom

In the ever-evolving landscape of technology, I found myself embarking on an unexpected yet rewarding journey; one that seamlessly blended my engineering background with the intricacies of recruitment. As the Senior Employment & Assessment Supervisor at Korek Telecom, I discovered firsthand the fusion of algorithms and empathy, where data-driven decisions coexisted with personal aspirations. With a master's degree in Information Technology Management from the University of Kurdistan - Hawler and a bachelor's degree in Communication & Computer Engineering, my journey began with a passion for understanding the complexities of 5G technology and its deployment obstacles. Little did I know that this technical expertise would pave the way for a career in recruiting.

At Korek Telecom, I uncovered a unique unity between my analytical prowess and the art of understanding people. Armed with the mantra, "find a way or make one," I seamlessly integrated my technical acumen into the fabric of recruitment, bridging the gap between technology and the needs of businesses. With over seven years of experience spanning various industries, I unexpectedly found myself in the recruiting industry, decoding resumes, and matching skills with precision. This journey exemplifies the power of embracing change and leveraging diverse skill sets to carve out new and unexpected professional territories.



In a world where human connection remains irreplaceable, my story stands as a testament to the importance of embracing change and leveraging diverse skill sets to carve out new professional territories. It's a reminder that success knows no bounds when we dare to break free from conventional norms and embrace the unknown. Throughout my journey, I've come to realize the significance of continual learning and the willingness to explore new avenues. By blending my analytical prowess with empathy, I've not only navigated the complexities of recruitment but also contributed to bridging the gap between technology and human needs. I hope my experience serves as a beacon of inspiration for those seeking to forge unconventional paths and find fulfillment at the intersection of passion and perseverance.

## REZHNA MAJIDI

### Administration and Operation Specialist at GIZ



My time at the University of Kurdistan Hewlêr (UKH) was more than just an academic journey; it was a transformative experience that profoundly shaped my personal and professional life. From the moment I stepped onto campus, I sensed I was embarking on a path that would lead to lasting friendships and countless growth opportunities. In addition to theoretical studies, UKH provided ample opportunities for practical learning, preparing me effectively for the competitive job market.

One of the pivotal moments in my academic career occurred during my transition to UG1 when I began working as a PTE trainer for over two years alongside one full-time job. Balancing these commitments was challenging, but it underscored my determination to excel academically while gaining invaluable practical experience.

However, it was during my internship programme at UG3 that my academic journey took a significant turn. Through this internship, I had the privilege of working for the German Cooperation Agency, an experience that profoundly shaped the trajectory of my career. I am deeply appreciative of Ms. Nivein, my internship supervisor, whose guidance and support were instrumental in my professional development during this period.

Joining the German Cooperation Agency during its nascent stages in Erbil was a challenging yet rewarding experience, especially as I was still a student at the time. Witnessing the organisation's exponential growth to over 400 staff members across Iraq, and collaborating with fellow UKHians, provided me with invaluable insights and opportunities to enhance my skills through international training Programmes and observation periods abroad.

Reflecting on my time at UKH, I recognize that every obstacle I faced served as a step-

ping-stone to personal and professional growth. The resilience and perseverance cultivated during those years have been invaluable assets in my professional journey. I am grateful for the foundation laid by UKH, which instilled in me the belief that with determination and hard work, any goal is attainable.

Above all, the friendships formed at UKH have been profoundly impactful. From classmates to professors, mentors to colleagues, each person I encountered played a significant role in shaping my journey. It was at UKH that I had the privilege of meeting friends who became like family to me, and even finding my life partner.

As a proud UKH alumnae, I carry with me the lessons learned and memories made during my time there as I continue to pursue my aspirations with confidence and determination.

## MOHAMMED RZGAR GANJO

**Director of Quality Assurance at Aynda Private Technical Institute - Assistant Lecturer**

As a UKH alumnus, I am eager to share my story and career path. I achieved a Bachelor of Arts (Hons) in Politics and International Studies in September 2016. Afterward, I went abroad and successfully completed my studies, earning a Master of Arts (MA) at Cyprus International University (CIU) as one of the top students.



Throughout my master's studies, I gained many experiences by interacting with multicultural people. The skills and language proficiency I developed during my Access Foundation Programme and bachelor's degree at UKH were instrumental in making my higher education journey easier. However, consistency and discipline were always my motivations for tackling upcoming tasks. During my master's degree, I focused on developing various skills in my area of study, including evaluating potential political systems, understanding international relations theories, exploring contemporary politics in the Middle East, selecting and implementing analytical skills, addressing challenges of new political order in the world, identifying and analyzing state relations and their problems, examining critical international relations theories, and delving into issues in European Union integrations and policies.

After completing both my bachelor's and master's degrees, I chose the academic path. I successfully completed a pedagogical training course at Lebanese French University (LFU) as required by the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research.

The competencies I gained from UKH have made me a highly motivated and responsible individual, skilled in communicating with impact and respect. I am reliable, trustworthy, rigorous, flexible, creative, and an innovative strategic thinker. My excellent organisational skills, attention to detail, and ability to prioritize tasks are complemented by strong analytical skills and knowledge of advanced statistical analysis and surveys. I can work independently and with limited supervision in challenging environments and can work under pressure, for extra hours, and in multicultural settings. Additionally, I have experience conducting interviews, focus group discussions, data collection, and assessments, and I am proficient in encoding qualitative and quantitative data into simple databases. I can work effectively and harmoniously with colleagues from varied cultural and professional backgrounds.

## OSAMA SINJARY

**Senior Programme Assistant - UNHCR**

After graduating in 2013, I had planned to immediately start my master's studies, but fate led me to engage directly in humanitarian work thereafter. Strangely enough, just several months later, a major humanitarian crisis occurred in June 2014. In August, I witnessed the heartbreaking exodus from my hometown of Sinjar and the subsequent humanitarian disasters. I found myself neglecting my dream of pursuing a master's degree as events unfolded rapidly, particularly with the intensifying battles against the terrorist organisation ISIS. This dream was replaced by a job that required an urgent response to humanitarian needs, especially with the onset of liberation operations.

Things dramatically changed; instead of engaging in master's classes, I provided training to numerous frontline workers in humanitarian response, focusing on providing urgent psychological support and protection for the most vulnerable groups. Instead of holding research supervisor meetings, I contributed to training dozens of youths to work in the humanitarian field. I then took on urgent tasks supervising the first healthcare project in northern Sinjar after its liberation by Peshmerga forces, where we established the first comprehensive hospital for returnees, marking a pivotal moment.

After that, my greatest opportunity came when I started working with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) as a senior programme assistant.

Did I truly forget my dream? Absolutely not. Despite all the pressures and difficulties, it remained a constant obsession, and it did come true, albeit with a set of challenges. Foremost among them was the conflict between my full-time job and my master's studies. You can imagine the shape of my day: it started with long work hours, extensive commitments, continuous meetings, field visits, and extensive discussions with governmental and local partners on optimal programme management.

The University of Kurdistan Hewlêr provided me with a unique opportunity, as it did for all my colleagues who were in the middle of their professional careers. Most of them were working in significant institutions and would not have been able to achieve what they did in their master's theses and maintain their professional progress without UKH.

I still believe it wasn't just a coincidence that I engaged in humanitarian work before starting my master's thesis. I presented my thesis titled "The Role of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in Protecting Refugees in Iraq," which was the first scholarly contribution on this topic at the regional and Iraqi levels.

Thus, I earned a master's degree in International Law and Diplomacy, which will enhance my research capabilities, reinforced by fieldwork to find appropriate solutions to the escalating humanitarian crises in the region. This experience provided me with a new perspective to understand the broader future needs of Kurdistan and the overall region.

