

The 2020 Education sector: hit fast forward on the remote!

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Welcome to our Law Update Education 2020 edition.

We were hoping to shamelessly flog the '2020 vision' pun but then COVID-19 happened. There is no point in sugar-coating it, 2020 has been an horrendous year for the sector as a whole, and in particular, for sub-sectors like nurseries; but there are green shoots emerging.

Before I get into the nitty gritty, you will have seen a number of creative works of art in this edition... With the Education sector forced to 'hit fast forward on the remote' due to the pandemic, we were thrust into home schooling with the implementation of remote learning solutions globally. For those of you with children, you have probably been taken back in time helping out on artistic projects you thought were a distant memory whilst trying to juggle working remotely. In this edition, we wanted to showcase some of the works of art created by the very talented 'Children of Al Tamimi' during the pandemic. A big thanks to my colleagues around the region for sharing so much wonderful content - we hope you enjoy it!

During the summer we ran a series of webinars - EdWeb2020 - where industry experts gave their thoughts on the issues affecting the industry (K-12 and Higher Education focus) ranging from disruption, new models of learning, lessons learned, digital transformation and EdTech, financing/refinancing and landlord-tenant considerations. The links to those webinars are included in this issue as are 'one minute read' key takeaways.

Our Education team has been busy advising education providers on the inevitable consequences of COVID-19 across a range of topics from employment, health and safety, EdTech, M&A and refinancing, across our geographies in MENA.

Notwithstanding the doom and gloom, we remain very bullish about the key emerging markets of Egypt and Saudi Arabia. In fact, the Egypt market remains quite active given the market there is less dependent on expatriates/external cash. For Saudi Arabia, activity levels have fallen but it remains 'the next big thing' with many encouraging developments which make it attractive for investment; it is a case of 2020 being a pause button rather than stop button for that market.

In this edition we look at a range of eclectic topics including PPP in education, a topic we looked at before but which merits an update given what is happening in that space.

Our real estate team looks at the current state of the UAE market regarding educational assets and identifies some possible near to mid-term future trends.

We could not possibly issue this edition without having a piece on EdTech. We also have interesting articles on plagiarism and cyberbullying, unfortunately both of which are highly topical right now.

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.