

Guide to Professional Licensing in Saudi Arabia and UAE for Healthcare Practitioners

Working as a healthcare professional in **Saudi Arabia** or the **United Arab Emirates (UAE)** offers exciting career opportunities and generous benefits, especially for internationally trained staff. This guide provides an in-depth explanation of the *homologation* (licensing and recognition of your credentials) process in Saudi Arabia and in the UAE (focusing on Dubai and Abu Dhabi). We will break down procedures for general and specialist practitioners, outline the **DataFlow** verification and **Mumaris** (Saudi licensing portal) steps, and highlight all associated costs. We also explain the advantages of completing this process with **BookaHospi**, including our partnerships with top employers like the Saudi **National Guard Health Affairs** and **Dr. Sulaiman Al Habib Medical Group**, and the exceptional benefits these hospitals offer to you and your family.

(Note: This guide emphasizes information for all international candidates, with a special focus on Latin American professionals. All content is presented in English.)

Licensing Process in Saudi Arabia (SCFHS)

To legally **practice in Saudi Arabia** as a doctor, nurse, or other healthcare professional, you must obtain a license from the Saudi Commission for Health Specialties (**SCFHS**). This involves getting your qualifications recognized and verified, a process that applies to both general degree holders and medical/dental specialists. Below is a step-by-step overview of the Saudi licensing procedure:

1. Primary Source Verification via DataFlow (Saudi Arabia)

Primary Source Verification (PSV), conducted by the **DataFlow Group**, is a mandatory first step for all healthcare professionals seeking an SCFHS license.. DataFlow verifies the authenticity of your credentials directly from the issuing institutions – for example, your university degrees, professional licenses, and work experience certificates are confirmed by contacting those universities, licensing boards, and employers. This rigorous check ensures that anyone practicing in Saudi Arabia is genuinely qualified and holds valid credentials.

Documents Required: You will need clear, color scans of key documents. These typically include your passport, passport-sized photo, all **educational certificates** (e.g. medical degree, specialty diploma), **academic transcripts**, **internship certificate** (for physicians), **professional license** from your home country, **letters of experience** from employers, and a recent **Certificate of Good Standing** from your medical/nursing council If documents are not in English or Arabic, you must provide official translations. During the DataFlow application, you must also download, sign, and upload a **Letter of Authorization (LOA)** allowing DataFlow to verify your records

DataFlow Application: The SCFHS has integrated DataFlow into its online portal. First, you create an account on **Mumaris Plus** (the SCFHS e-service portal) and start a new “**Professional Classification/Registration**” application. The system will then direct you to the DataFlow interface to enter your details and upload documents. It’s crucial to fill in every detail accurately – any small mistake (e.g. a typo in a name or date) can delay the process or cause a verification failure. You will input personal info, then educational qualifications, license details, and employment history, attaching each corresponding document. Double-check everything before submission.

Costs: The **DataFlow verification fee** depends on the number of credentials you need verified. A typical package (verifying your degree, license, and experience) costs around **800–1100 SAR** (approximately \$210–\$290) for most applicants. If you have additional documents (for example, multiple degrees or many employment certificates), extra charges of about **310 SAR** per additional document may apply. (*Note: some Saudi employers or agencies may cover DataFlow fees as part of your recruitment package; for instance, certain hospitals offer to pay for DataFlow, Mumaris, and exam fees for the candidates they hire.*)

After filling in all information, you will pay the DataFlow fee online by credit/debit card and submit your application. Once submitted, you’ll receive a **DataFlow case number** to track the progress. Verification can take a few weeks up to a couple of months, depending on how responsive your universities and past employers are. On average a straightforward case takes about **25–45 working days**. You can help speed it up by informing your university or workplace that a verification request is coming, so they respond promptly. If DataFlow cannot verify a document (status “Unable to Verify”), you may be asked to assist or provide alternative proof.

Outcome: DataFlow will issue a **PSV report** directly to SCFHS once complete. Ideally, this report is “**Positive**,” meaning all credentials were verified as genuine.. A positive DataFlow report is the foundation of your Saudi license application – without it, you cannot proceed . (If any document is found fraudulent, the report is “**Negative**” and your application will be rejected. Fortunately, for legitimate applicants this is not an issue)

2. Creating a Mumaris Plus Account and Professional Classification

Mumaris Plus is the online platform for all SCFHS services. If you haven’t already, you must **register an account on Mumaris Plus** and initiate the **Professional Classification** process (which you likely began when prompted to do DataFlow). Once DataFlow verification is in progress or completed, you continue with the classification application on Mumaris.

In this stage, you submit additional details and documents required by SCFHS for evaluating your **professional rank**. The SCFHS will determine at what level you can register (e.g. as a General Practitioner, Specialist, Consultant, etc.) based on your qualifications and experience. Generally:

- If you only have an undergraduate degree in your field (e.g. MBBS/MD with internship for doctors, BSN for nurses), you will be classified at a **General** level (e.g. General Practitioner for physicians).

- If you have a specialist qualification (residency or master's degree, board certification, etc.) and some years of experience, you may be classified as a **Specialist** in that field. Higher qualifications and extensive experience (often ≥ 5 years post-specialization) may earn a **Consultant** title in Saudi Arabia.

When submitting your classification application, you will provide: copies of your degrees, internship certificate, transcripts, proof of any postgraduate specialty training, your home country license, and experience letters – many of these you already gave to DataFlow, but SCFHS may require them uploaded in the portal as well. Additionally, **proof of internship** (for medical graduates), and an **equivalency letter** from the Ministry of Education might be needed for degrees earned outside Saudi (this is basically a legalization, but usually if you have a verified degree and DataFlow, this suffices) SCFHS also charges a fee for the classification service – roughly **200 SAR** for the **Mumaris application** and initial classification evaluation

Once SCFHS reviews your credentials and the positive DataFlow report, they will issue you an **Eligibility ID** (if an exam is required for your category) or directly approve you for the next step. This stage is where they “homologate” or recognize your **degree and specialization**: for example, a pediatrician from Latin America would be recognized as a *Specialist Pediatrician* in Saudi after this step, whereas a general physician would be recognized as a *General Practitioner*.

3. Saudi Licensing Exam (Prometric) and Final Registration

Most professional categories will need to pass a Saudi licensing exam as part of the process. For physicians, this is the **Saudi Medical Licensing Examination (SMLE)**, commonly referred to as the Prometric exam (since it's administered via Prometric). There are equivalent exams for other professions (e.g. SCFHS has tests for nurses, pharmacists, dentists, etc.). Once your classification application is approved/eligible, you can schedule the exam using your **Eligibility ID** on the exam provider's website.

- The **SMLE for doctors** is a computer-based test of 300 multiple-choice questions, taken in 3 sections (6 hours total). It assesses medical knowledge across various domains (medicine, pediatrics, surgery, etc.) and clinical decision-making skills. Passing score is standardized (around 536/800 for SMLE) Other professions have similarly structured exams with appropriate content for their field.
- **Exam Cost:** The Prometric exam fee for Saudi licensure is around **\$200–\$300** (for example, **\$289 USD** for nursing, and roughly in that range for physicians as well). This is paid to the exam administration (Prometric/Pearson) at booking.

No English Test Required: Unlike many Western countries, Saudi Arabia **does not require an English language exam** (IELTS/OET) as part of licensing. As long as you have the professional knowledge and can function in English on the job, you don't need to pass a separate English test for SCFHS. This is a significant advantage for many international

candidates – you can focus on your medical exam without worrying about an English certification

After passing the exam, you return to Mumaris Plus to **apply for Professional Registration** (the final licensing step). You'll pay the registration fee (about **200 SAR** for the license issuance) and SCFHS will grant your license. At this point, you are fully licensed in Saudi Arabia. Your license will be activated once you have an employer in Saudi who sponsors you – essentially, when you land a job offer, the employer will help link your license to their facility and provide you with the work visa/permit. (If you're going through BookaHospi, we facilitate this connection with the hospital).

Timeline: In total, the Saudi licensing process can take about **3 to 6 months** for most applicants from start to finish. This can vary: DataFlow might take 1-3 months, the exam scheduling and result a few weeks, etc. Planning ahead is key – start early, ensure your documents are ready, and respond quickly to any requirements to avoid delays

Licensing Process in the United Arab Emirates (Dubai & Abu Dhabi)

The United Arab Emirates has a **federal structure** for healthcare licensing – each emirate has its own health authority for licensing professionals:

- **Dubai:** Licensing is managed by the **Dubai Health Authority (DHA)**.
- **Abu Dhabi:** Managed by the **Department of Health – Abu Dhabi (DOH)**, formerly known as HAAD.
- (Other emirates use the Ministry of Health and Prevention (MOHAP), but here we focus on Dubai and Abu Dhabi as requested.)

If you wish to work in **Dubai or Abu Dhabi**, you will need to go through a similar credential verification and examination process under the respective authority. The overall steps are analogous to Saudi's process, with some differences in portals and exams:

1. Credential Verification via DataFlow (UAE)

Just like Saudi, the UAE requires **Primary Source Verification** of your degrees, licenses, and experience. The **DataFlow Group** is also the approved provider for both DHA and DOH verifications. When you start a licensing application in Dubai or Abu Dhabi, you will be prompted to submit your documents for DataFlow PSV.

- **Dubai (DHA):** You will create an account on the DHA licensing portal (often referred to as the **Sheryan** system). The first step is usually a self-assessment and application where you provide your qualifications. DHA will then issue you a **PSV case** to be done via DataFlow. You submit your documents (passport, education,

experience, etc. similar to the list for Saudi) and pay the DataFlow fee.

- **Abu Dhabi (DOH/HAAD):** Abu Dhabi's process is done through their online portal (the TAMM platform or DOH e-services). You apply for credentialing, then complete DataFlow as instructed, uploading your documents for verification.

Costs: The DataFlow fees in the UAE are a bit higher than in Saudi due to different currency and package structure. For **Dubai**, the DataFlow (PSV) fee typically ranges from **AED 1,100 to AED 1,500** (Emirati Dirhams), depending on the number of credentials to verify. Similarly, for **Abu Dhabi**, expect roughly in the same range (about AED 1,200 as a base package). These amounts equate to roughly \$300–\$400 USD. The fee covers verification of your primary degree, license, and a couple of work experiences; if you have more items, there might be additional charges.

Tip: If you have already done DataFlow for one Gulf country, you might be able to transfer the report instead of paying again. For example, a recent DataFlow report from DHA can sometimes be transferred to DOH or vice versa for a smaller fee (often around 200 SAR/AED) though criteria apply.

2. Exam and Licensing Application in Dubai (DHA)

After your credentials are verified (or concurrently, as some start studying earlier), DHA will require you to pass a **licensing exam** for your profession. This is commonly called the **DHA exam**, and for physicians it is a Prometric-based test similar to the SMLE (though tailored to international standards and the needs of Dubai). There are DHA exams for various specialties and professions (e.g., DHA GP exam, DHA Specialist Pediatrics exam, DHA Nursing exam, etc.).

Application & Fees: You will need to submit an application for **DHA license evaluation** through the Sheryan portal. There is a one-time application processing fee of about **AED 200** for the DHA system. Once your DataFlow is complete and your application is accepted, DHA will issue you an **Eligibility Letter** which allows you to schedule the exam.

The **Prometric exam fee** for DHA typically ranges between **AED 1,000–1,200** for most physician specialties (approximately \$270–\$330). Nurses and other allied health exams might be slightly lower but generally a few hundred dollars as well. If a candidate fails and needs to re-take, they would pay the exam fee again; rescheduling may also incur a small fee.

After passing the exam, the final step is to **activate your DHA license**. Unlike Saudi where the license is issued only when you have an employer, DHA can issue an eligibility certificate or license that you hold while seeking jobs. However, to get the **“Active” license, you will need to have a job offer** and be sponsored by an employer in Dubai, who will then convert your license to an active status and help with visa formalities. The **license issuance/activation fee** can range widely depending on the profession and duration – for example, a consultant doctor might pay around AED 3,000 for the license, whereas a nurse might pay AED 1,000. (Often these fees are handled by the employer as part of onboarding; many hospitals in the UAE will cover or reimburse your licensing costs.)

Timeline: The UAE licensing can also take a few months. DataFlow might be done in a few weeks if all responses are quick (sometimes they advertise 10–15 working days for DHA DataFlow in ideal cases, but it can be longer if verification is slow). The exam scheduling depends on seat availability but usually you can get a test date within a month or so. Overall, expect roughly **3–5 months** from start to finish for DHA/DOH licensing, similar to Saudi's timeframe.

3. Exam and Licensing Application in Abu Dhabi (DOH/HAAD)

For Abu Dhabi, the process is comparable to Dubai's with some differences in naming and fees:

- You will submit your **qualifications through the DOH portal**, and after DataFlow verification, you'll receive an **exam authorization**. Abu Dhabi's exam for doctors used to be called the HAAD exam; now it's often just referred to as the **DOH exam**. It is also administered via Prometric/Pearson and covers the relevant professional knowledge.
- **Exam fees** for DOH are similar, around **AED 1,000–1,300** for most categories.
- Abu Dhabi, like Dubai, will grant you a license upon passing exam and verification, but you need to have an employer to fully activate it. Abu Dhabi often issues an **Eligibility Letter** first, and once you secure a job, the **facility will sponsor your license activation** and your work visa.

Both Dubai and Abu Dhabi do **not require a separate English test** for licensing either. They assume proficiency in English (since that's the working language in hospitals), but you won't be asked for IELTS/TOEFL for the license itself – another advantage for international (including Latin American) candidates.

Differences for General vs Specialist: In UAE, as in Saudi, your exact **title and scope** on the license will depend on your training and experience. The regulators use a Professional Qualifications Requirement (PQR) manual that outlines what is needed for each title. For instance, a general practitioner (with just an MBBS or MD) can get licensed as a **General Physician**, whereas having a specialty board (e.g. in Anesthesiology or Pediatrics) and a certain number of years of experience will allow licensure as a **Specialist** or **Consultant** in that field. The demand is high for specialists, and our focus fields – **Anesthesiology, Pediatrics, Radiology, Orthopedic/Trauma Surgery, Neurology, Cardiology**, etc. – are all in shortage, so both Saudi and UAE are eager to recruit doctors in these specialties. General physicians and nurses are also needed, but meeting the additional requirements (like experience years) can be necessary to qualify in the UAE. BookaHospi can provide guidance on a case-by-case basis to ensure you meet the criteria for your target position.

Benefits of Working in Saudi Arabia & UAE (Professional and Personal)

One of the main reasons healthcare professionals from around the world, including Latin America, seek opportunities in Saudi Arabia and the UAE is the **excellent remuneration and benefits packages**. Through BookaHosp, you can access positions at prestigious hospitals like the Saudi **Ministry of National Guard Health Affairs** hospitals and the **Dr. Sulaiman Al Habib Medical Group** – both known for world-class facilities and very attractive employment terms. Below we outline the key benefits you can expect when working with these employers (and generally across major Gulf healthcare institutions):

- **Tax-Free High Income:** Both Saudi Arabia and the UAE levy **no personal income tax** on your salary. This means your earnings (which can range roughly from **€5,000 up to €20,000 per month** for physicians, depending on specialty and experience) are entirely tax-free. You take home 100% of what you earn, allowing you to save a substantial portion of your income.
- **Free Accommodation:** Hospitals typically provide **free housing accommodation** for international staff, or a generous housing allowance if housing isn't directly provided. For example, the National Guard hospitals in Saudi offer spacious furnished villas or apartments on secure compounds **within or near the hospital campus**, at no cost to the employee. These compounds often include amenities like pools, gyms, parks, and 24/7 security, creating a comfortable community for expatriates. Utilities such as electricity, water, and gas are usually **covered by the employer** as well so you have little to no out-of-pocket housing expenses. Dr. Sulaiman Al Habib Group likewise includes **housing benefits** – in their case it may be provided housing or a **housing allowance** added to your salary package. Either way, you can expect your living arrangements to be taken care of or funded by the hospital.
- **Transportation:** Commuting is facilitated by the employer. If you live in hospital housing, typically **shuttle buses or private transport** are provided from the compound to the hospital for work. National Guard facilities, for example, provide transportation for staff living on-site or an equivalent transport allowance if you live off-site. In the UAE, private hospital groups like Al Habib might include a **transportation allowance** as part of the benefits. Essentially, you won't need to worry about the daily commute costs.
- **Annual Flight Tickets:** Employers fund your travel to and from your home country. Standard contracts include **round-trip flight tickets**: one for when you start/finish the contract and typically **one paid round-trip ticket per year** of service for your annual vacation. For instance, with National Guard hospitals, you (and your family, if on a family-status contract) get economy airfare provided for initial mobilization, annual leave, and at contract end. This means you can visit home each year without financial burden. Dr. Sulaiman Al Habib Group and other major UAE hospitals also customarily provide an annual vacation ticket for you (and family, if applicable) as part of the package.
- **Generous Paid Leave:** Expect **at least 30 days of paid annual leave**, and often more. In Saudi government sectors (like National Guard or Ministry of Health), expatriate physicians are typically granted **45 days of vacation per year**. Many

hospitals give around **40-45 days** annual leave for physicians and about 30 days for other staff, which is significantly higher than what most Western systems offer. This allows ample time to travel or visit family. In addition, there are usually local public holidays off, and provisions for sick leave and maternity/paternity leave as per labor laws. The extended vacation (six to eight weeks) is a major perk, giving you a good work-life balance.

- **Family Benefits – Visas, Education, Healthcare:** If you are hired at a senior level (e.g. specialist doctor), you can often get a **family status contract**. This means the hospital will sponsor visas for your spouse and children to join you. They also may provide **family medical insurance** (for example, National Guard covers health insurance for you and your family) A particularly valuable benefit is **education allowance for children**: Saudi National Guard hospitals provide a set allowance for up to 3 children's school tuition (ages 5–18) to attend international schools. This helps ensure your kids can get a quality education (often in accredited international schools) at little or no cost to you. In the UAE, while not all private hospitals automatically include school fees, the overall environment has **excellent international schools** for expat children, and high-level recruits might negotiate an education allowance as well. With BookaHospi's partner institutions, we highlight comprehensive family support – so you can relocate with family smoothly, knowing their needs are covered.
- **Professional Development and Work Environment:** Both National Guard and Dr. Sulaiman Al Habib hospitals are known for their *state-of-the-art facilities* and high clinical standards. The National Guard Health Affairs hospitals are JCIA-accredited and even involved in research and academic training, offering opportunities for further learning and career growth (they often allow time for attending conferences, with days off for Continuing Medical Education each year) Dr. Sulaiman Al Habib Medical Group is a leading private provider with cutting-edge technology and a culture of innovation. You will be working alongside a **multicultural team** of experts from around the world, enriching your professional experience. English is the primary working language in these hospitals, and you'll interact with colleagues from many countries, which creates a vibrant, collaborative environment. There are also chances for **career advancement** – you could move into senior consultant roles or administrative positions over time, given the emphasis on professional development and training.
- **Personal Life and Perks:** Life in Saudi Arabia and the UAE for expats can be very comfortable. The compounds and communities for expatriates offer a wide range of leisure facilities – swimming pools, gyms, sports courts, restaurants, shopping centers, etc., often either on-site or nearby. Saudi Arabia has been rapidly modernizing, and cities like Riyadh and Jeddah have a growing range of entertainment options. The UAE (especially Dubai and Abu Dhabi) is famous for its high-quality lifestyle: beaches, cultural events, restaurants, and recreation are all world-class. Both countries being **family-friendly** is an important aspect – there are good parks, family events, and a generally safe environment for raising children. Moreover, these locations are **strategic travel hubs**; you'll be a short flight from many destinations in Europe, Asia, and Africa which is great if you love traveling.

during your time off.

In summary, working in the Middle East not only provides a **significant financial boost** (thanks to high, tax-free salaries and covered living expenses) but also an opportunity to enjoy a high standard of living. You can save money, advance your career, and experience a new culture, all while your family's needs are looked after. These benefits apply across many roles – whether you are an anesthesiologist, pediatrician, radiologist, trauma surgeon, neurologist, cardiologist, general practitioner, or nurse, you will find the incentives very compelling.

Why Choose BookaHospi for Your Licensing & Job Placement

Embarking on the journey to get licensed and hired in Saudi Arabia or the UAE can be complex – but **BookaHospi is here to make it seamless and efficient for you**. We are a specialized healthcare recruitment and consulting platform with a strong track record of helping professionals from around the world (particularly Latin America and Europe) secure top jobs in Saudi and the UAE. Here's why doing the process with us gives you an edge:

- **Expert Guidance at Every Step:** Our team guides you through **each stage of the homologation procedure** – from preparing your documents, submitting the DataFlow verification, to registering on Mumaris Plus or the DHA/DOH portals. We ensure that your paperwork is error-free and complete, reducing the chance of delays or rejections. By having experts who have handled hundreds of cases, we anticipate the common pitfalls (for example, we help you avoid mistakes in your DataFlow application that could cause delays). We also advise on exam registration and provide resources for exam preparation if needed. In short, we hold your hand through the entire licensing journey until you have your license in hand
- **Fast-Track and Convenience:** BookaHospi's process is designed to be **100% online** and convenient for you. You do not need to travel abroad at any point during the licensing – everything from verification to exams can be done from your home country until you actually move for the job. We even assist with things like obtaining certified translations of your documents if required, saving you the hassle of figuring that out. Our experience means we can fast-track certain steps by making sure they're done right the first time, potentially getting you ready for interviews in as little as 3-4 months for general practitioners and about 3-6 months for specialists.
- **DataFlow and Mumaris Handling:** We include the preparation and **submission of your DataFlow application** as part of our service. This means you have support collecting the needed documents and filling out the forms correctly. We also handle your **Mumaris Plus presentation** – essentially managing your SCFHS profile and ensuring your credentials are presented in the best way. Our packages cover these critical steps, so you don't have to navigate foreign websites and forms alone. Moreover, we stay updated on any changes in **SCFHS or DHA/DOH regulations** so

we can promptly adapt your application to meet current requirements.

- **Direct Hospital Connections:** BookaHospi works **in partnership with top healthcare employers** in Saudi Arabia and the UAE. In particular, we have collaboration with the **Saudi National Guard Health Affairs** network and **Dr. Sulaiman Al Habib Medical Group** (among others). This means once your license process is underway (or completed), we can directly connect you to job openings in these institutions. You won't be dropping CVs into a void; instead, you'll have a foot in the door through our referrals. Our platform lets you browse exclusive job offers in public and private hospitals that hire through BookaHospi. We have successfully placed over 200 healthcare professionals in Saudi hospitals with our support many of whom came from Latin American countries – demonstrating our capability to bridge that gap effectively.
- **Personalized Job Matching:** We take into account your specialty, experience, and preferences to find you the **ideal position**. Whether your expertise is in **Anesthesiology, Pediatrics, Radiology, Orthopedics, Neurology, Cardiology** or any other field, we seek out hospitals that need your skills. There is a high demand for these specialties, and BookaHospi will ensure your profile reaches the right department chiefs and HR personnel. We arrange interviews with hospitals for you and guide you on what to expect. Our team can also advise on contract terms so you understand the offer package in detail.
- **No Need for English Tests:** Since **no IELTS/OET exam is required to work in Saudi or UAE**, as mentioned earlier, BookaHospi focuses on your professional credentials and not on language scores. We know that as a Latin American or international candidate, you might be concerned about language – rest assured, if you can communicate in English professionally, that is sufficient. We even provide an orientation on adapting to the new healthcare system and language nuances as part of our service (for example, tips on medical terminology differences, cultural communication, etc.).
- **Visa and Relocation Support:** Once you secure a job offer, our work isn't done. We assist you with the **work visa process and family visa (if applicable)**, working closely with the hospital's HR and government relations departments to ensure your paperwork is processed smoothly. We help you understand the documents needed for the visa (police clearance, medical tests, etc.) and timeline. Moreover, we brief you on what to pack, travel arrangements, and what to expect on arrival. Moving to a new country is a big step – with BookaHospi, you won't feel alone in that process. We aim to make your transition as comfortable as possible, including advice on the culture, laws, and day-to-day living in your new city.
- **Exclusive Benefits and Cost Savings:** By going through BookaHospi, you may also **save on certain costs**. Some of our partner hospitals **cover the licensing expenses** (DataFlow, exam fees, etc.) for candidates we refer, as part of the employment offer – this can save you hundreds of dollars. We also only charge a modest fee for our comprehensive service (which you often only pay in full once you get the job). For instance, you can reserve a package with a small deposit (e.g. €50)

and pay the rest once you have results, as per our pricing options. Our goal is to make the process accessible and risk-free: *if you don't land a job, you won't be out a fortune*. And considering the significant salary you'll be earning, the investment in our service is very small by comparison.

- **Proven Success and Satisfaction:** Our growing community of successful candidates can attest to how BookaHospi changed their lives. We pride ourselves on professionalism, transparency, and dedication. Choosing us means you have a **partner** in your journey – your success is our success. We are continually improving our services (for example, adding training modules about working in Saudi's system, or expanding our network of hospital partners) to serve you better. At the end of the process, not only will you have your license and a great job, but you'll also have gained valuable guidance that will help you thrive in your new role abroad.

Below is a detailed comparison of licensing and exam requirements for various **general** and **specialist** healthcare professions in **Saudi Arabia** and the **UAE** (with specifics for **Dubai (DHA)** and **Abu Dhabi (DOH)**). Each profession's requirements are outlined, including education, experience (for General/Specialist/Consultant levels), exam needs, English proficiency, application platform, and key differences between Saudi and UAE:

General Careers

1. General Practitioner (GP) – (*MBBS/MD degree holders providing primary care*)

- **Saudi Arabia (SCFHS):** Must hold an MBBS/MD degree from a recognized institution and have completed a 1-year internship. Foreign-trained GPs are generally required to have at least **1–2 years** of clinical experience post-internship (Saudis are exempt from the experience requirement). All physicians must pass the **Saudi Medical Licensing Exam (SMLE)** administered by SCFHS(exemptions are rare and usually only for those with certain in-country training). No specific English test is mandated by SCFHS, but proficiency in English is expected in practice (medical education and hospital work in KSA are largely in English) License applications are submitted via the **Mumaris Plus** e-portal. Classification: without specialty training, doctors practice as **General Practitioners**; those with recognized postgraduate specialty can be classified as specialists or consultants (with additional experience – see below).
- **UAE – Dubai (DHA):** Must have an **MBBS or equivalent** plus completion of internship. **Minimum 2 years** of clinical experience *after* internship is required to be licensed as a GP in Dubai Candidates must pass the **DHA licensing exam** (a Prometric CBT) specific to general practice; however, passing certain international exams (e.g. USMLE Steps, PLAB) can **waive the DHA exam** requirement English proficiency proof is required for foreign applicants – typically **IELTS ≥6.5** (or equivalent TOEFL/OET) unless their medical education was in English applications are done through the **DHA Sheryan** online portal. after a self-assessment and DataFlow verification. Classification: GP is the entry-level license for doctors without specialization; those with specialist qualifications are licensed as “Specialist” or

“Consultant” (see specialist section for details).

- **UAE – Abu Dhabi (DOH):** Requires an **MBBS/MD and internship** as well. Generally **2 years** post-internship experience is expected for licensing as a General Practitioner. Must pass the **DOH licensing exam** (formerly HAAD exam) via Pearson VUE. Similar to DHA, recognized credentials (e.g. USMLE, etc.) may grant exam exemption. **English proficiency** (IELTS ~6.5 or TOEFL 79) is typically required for licensure unless the applicant graduated from an English-speaking program. Applications are processed through the DOH e-licensing system on the **TAMM portal** with DataFlow verification. *Classification:* Doctors without specialized training are licensed as General Practitioners; with further qualifications they move to specialist/consultant roles (see below).

2. Nursing (Registered Nurse) – (*Professional nurses providing patient care*)

- **Saudi Arabia (SCFHS):** Required to have a recognized **nursing degree** (at minimum a **Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN)** or equivalent). Diploma-holders may be licensed in lower categories (e.g. “nurse technician”), but a BSN is the standard for Registered Nurse. Foreign nurses are expected to have at least **one year of clinical experience** (Saudi nursing graduates are often exempt from the experience requirement for initial licensure). All nurses (local or international) must pass the **Saudi Nursing Licensing Exam (SNLE)** to obtain licensure. There is no separate English exam requirement by SCFHS, though nurses must be able to practice in English (the primary working language in KSA hospitals). Licensing is done via **Mumaris Plus**. *Classification:* Saudi licensing for nurses does not use “specialist/consultant” titles as in medicine; a BSN nurse is a **Registered Nurse**, while those with higher degrees (MSc/PhD) or advanced practice training may take titles like “Nurse Specialist” or “Nurse Practitioner” under specific programs.
- **UAE – Dubai (DHA):** A **Bachelor’s degree in Nursing (BSN)** is required for Registered Nurse licensure (the UAE largely phased out diploma nursing licenses). Typically **2 years** of clinical nursing experience post-graduation is required (in some cases 1 year may suffice for certain categories or local graduates, but foreign RNs usually need 2 years). Nurses must pass the **DHA RN licensing exam** (Prometric CBT). The UAE may exempt the exam for nurses who are licensed and in good standing in certain countries (e.g. USA, UK, Canada, etc.), as per the unified PQR guidelines. **English language proficiency** is a firm requirement: non-native English speaking nurses must provide IELTS or equivalent (often **IELTS Academic ≥6.5** overall). The application is via **Sheryan** (DHA’s online system) after completing DataFlow verification. *Classification:* Registered Nurses generally practice under that title; **Nurse Practitioners** or specialized nursing roles require additional qualifications (e.g. advanced degree plus certification) and are separately licensed. There is no “consultant” level in nursing; higher expertise is reflected by titles such as Senior Nurse, Nurse Specialist, etc., based on credentials and experience.

- **UAE – Abu Dhabi (DOH):** Requires a **BSN degree** as well for Registered Nurse. **1–2 years** of nursing experience post-graduation is generally expected (the unified PQR notes that some applicants from certain countries may be exempt from the experience requirement) Nurses must pass the **DOH (HAAD) nursing exam** for licensure (computer-based test). DOH similarly mandates **English proficiency**: an IELTS or equivalent (often **IELTS ≥6.0–6.5** range) is needed unless the nurse's education was in English Application is through the **TAMM portal** with all documents verified via DataFlow. *Classification:* Follows the UAE unified model – licensure as Registered Nurse is the standard. Those with advanced training (e.g. nurse anesthetist, nurse midwife, etc.) may obtain additional privilege or licensure in that specialty, but the baseline license is RN No separate consultant tier; progression is based on education and experience (e.g. eligibility for **Chief Nurse** or similar roles comes via experience rather than a distinct license class).

3. Physiotherapist – (Allied health professionals in physical therapy)

- **Saudi Arabia (SCFHS):** Must have at least a **Bachelor's degree in Physiotherapy** (from an accredited institution). A one-year clinical internship (or supervised training year) is typically part of the degree program. Foreign physiotherapists should have a minimum of **one year experience** post-qualification (as a general SCFHS rule for non-Saudis). Licensure requires passing the **Saudi Prometric Licensing Exam for Physiotherapists**, which ensures the candidate's knowledge meets Saudi standards Eligibility for the exam includes holding the physio degree and a current license in the home country No separate English exam is required by SCFHS for physiotherapists, though working knowledge of English is necessary for practice. Applications go through **Mumaris Plus**, with primary source verification of credentials. *Classification:* A physiotherapist with a bachelor's is typically licensed as a **Physiotherapy Specialist** in Saudi's categorization. Those with postgraduate degrees (Master's/PhD) and extensive experience might be classified at a higher grade (e.g. "Senior Specialist"), but the primary licensure category is as a physiotherapist (there isn't a "consultant physiotherapist" track in SCFHS; higher expertise is usually reflected in job title rather than a separate license grade).
- **UAE – Dubai (DHA):** Requires a **Bachelor's in Physiotherapy** (or Doctor of Physical Therapy, where applicable). **Two years** of professional experience as a physiotherapist are generally required for foreign applicants; UAE nationals or those trained in the UAE might be exempt from part of this experience. Applicants must pass the **DHA licensing exam for Physiotherapists** (Prometric CBT). Certain internationally certified physios may have exam waiver if covered under PQR reciprocity, but in most cases the exam is necessary. **English proficiency** is required (usually IELTS or equivalent) similar to other healthcare roles, ensuring the physiotherapist can communicate effectively in an English-language clinical environment Applications are via **Sheryan**, with DataFlow verification. *Classification:* Licensed simply as **Physiotherapist** (there are no tiered titles like specialist/consultant for this role in UAE licensing). With higher qualifications (e.g. a master's in a physio subspecialty), one may be recognized in that specialty area, but

licensure remains under the general physiotherapist category.

- **UAE – Abu Dhabi (DOH):** Also requires a **physiotherapy degree** (min. bachelor's). Around **2 years** of work experience is expected for overseas-trained physiotherapists (the unified PQR allows some flexibility for high-caliber credentials). Must pass the **DOH physiotherapist exam** (administered via Pearson VUE). English fluency proven by an IELTS/TOEFL score is needed for non-native speakers. The licensing application is done through **TAMM** with all credentials verified. *Classification:* Licensed as **Physiotherapist** (same as Dubai). Advanced clinical experience or specialization (e.g. in orthopedic physiotherapy, neurorehabilitation, etc.) does not alter the license title but can be noted in privileges; there is no separate consultant-level license for allied health in the UAE.

4. Pharmacist – (*Community or hospital pharmacists dispensing medications*)

- **Saudi Arabia (SCFHS):** The standard qualification is now a **Doctor of Pharmacy (PharmD)** degree (or at minimum a Bachelor of Pharmacy, though new graduates in KSA are PharmD). Graduates must complete any required internship (often one year). At least **1 year of work experience** is expected for foreign-trained pharmacists before licensing. Licensure involves passing the **Saudi Pharmacist Licensure Examination (SPLE)**, a Prometric exam covering all aspects of pharmacy practice. A passing score on the SPLE is mandatory to practice pharmacy in KSA. English proficiency is not separately tested by SCFHS; however, pharmacy practice is conducted in English (drug information, prescriptions, etc.), so proficiency is assumed. Applications are via **Mumaris Plus**, with DataFlow verification of degrees, registration, and good standing. *Classification:* A licensed pharmacist with a bachelor's or PharmD is typically titled **Pharmacist**. With additional credentials (e.g. clinical pharmacy residency or a PhD), one might work as a **Clinical Pharmacist** or in specialized roles, but the licensing category remains that of a pharmacist. Saudi does not have distinct “consultant pharmacist” licensing; roles like **Pharmacy Consultant** in hospital settings are usually job titles granted to very experienced pharmacists rather than separate SCFHS classifications.
- **UAE – Dubai (DHA):** Requires a **B.Pharm or PharmD** from an accredited institution. **Two years** of post-qualification experience is generally required to be eligible for licensure as a pharmacist in Dubai. Applicants must pass the **DHA Pharmacy exam** (Prometric). In some cases, holders of certain international qualifications (e.g. US Board of Pharmacy licensure) may get an exam exemption, but typically the exam is required. **English language proficiency** (such as IELTS) is necessary unless the pharmacist's education was in English, as communication and documentation are in English. Application is through the **Sheryan** system with standard PSV checks. *Classification:* Licensed as **Pharmacist**. (The UAE does not differentiate general vs. consultant pharmacists in licensure; all are simply licensed pharmacists. There is a separate category for **Pharmacy Technician** for those with diplomas, but a degree-holder will be a pharmacist. Advanced roles like clinical pharmacists are based on credentials and employment, not a different license type under DHA).

- **UAE – Abu Dhabi (DOH):** Also mandates a **Pharmacy degree (BPharm or PharmD)**. ~2 years experience in practice is expected for foreign pharmacists (the updated PQR in UAE reduced required experience for first-tier qualifications to 2 years) Must pass the **DOH (HAAD) Pharmacy exam** (via Pearson VUE) to obtain the license. Exam may be waived if the candidate has a recognized license from certain countries in good standing, but such cases are limited. **English proficiency** at a professional level is required (usually proven with IELTS/TOEFL unless exempt). Licensing is done through **TAMM**, with DataFlow verification of education, license, and experience. **Classification:** **Pharmacist**. (There is no multiple-tier system for pharmacists in the UAE; all licensed pharmacists meet the requirements above. Senior or specialist pharmacist positions are an employer distinction, not a separate DOH license category.)

Specialist Careers (Physicians)

*For the following specialist physician roles, **baseline requirements** in both Saudi Arabia and the UAE include: an undergraduate medical degree (MBBS/MD) + completed residency training in the specialty (with a recognized specialty certification or board qualification), a set number of years of experience depending on the level (specialist vs consultant), passing the relevant licensing exam (with possible exemptions for certain international board holders), and meeting English proficiency and licensing platform requirements as noted above. Differences mainly lie in experience needed for consultant status and exam reciprocity.*

1. Anesthesiology (Specialist Anesthesiologist) –

- **Saudi Arabia:** Must have completed specialized training in Anesthesiology (e.g. **Saudi Board or Arab Board in Anesthesia**, or an equivalent MD/DM or fellowship in anesthesiology). Eligibility as a **Specialist** requires a recognized specialty certificate; foreign specialists should have at least **2 years of practice in the specialty** post-qualification Licensure process includes passing an SCFHS **classification examination** (which may be an oral or written exam in the specialty) unless the physician's credentials are from a program recognized by SCFHS (e.g. American Board, FRCA, etc., which can exempt them from exam) All doctors (GPs or specialists) are required to pass a licensing exam; for anesthesiologists this is usually the Saudi Medical Licensing Exam or a specialized test if determined by SCFHS To attain **Consultant Anesthesiologist** status (the highest tier), the physician typically needs **5+ years** of experience as a licensed specialist after the anesthesia board, except in cases of certain high qualifications where **3 years** may suffice English proficiency is not formally tested, but practice is in English. Platform: **Mumaris+** (SCFHS) for application and credentialing.
- **UAE – Dubai:** Must hold a recognized **specialty degree in Anesthesiology** (e.g. a residency and board certification such as **FRCA, American Board of Anesthesiology, Arab Board**, or equivalent). To be licensed as a **Specialist Anesthesiologist**, the doctor should meet the DHA's Professional Qualification Requirements: completion of the specialty training and, if the qualification is from a high-tier accreditation (Tier 1 or 2), **no additional experience** may be required if

recently obtained If the qualification is from a lower-tier (Tier 3) program, at least **1 year of practice** post-specialization is required All anesthesiologists must pass the **DHA specialty exam** for anesthesiology (Prometric CBT), unless they hold an acceptable international qualification that **exempts** them from the exam (DHA recognizes certain international board exams as equivalent .For promotion to **Consultant Anesthesiologist** in Dubai, the physician generally needs additional experience: typically **2 years** as a specialist if holding a Tier 1 credential (or completion of a Western fellowship like CCT which in some cases waives extra years or about **5 years** if holding a Tier 2 qualification . (Tier 3 holders are usually not eligible for consultant title in UAE.) English proficiency (IELTS etc.) is required for licensing as per DHA police Applications via **Sheryan**, with DataFlow verification.

- **UAE – Abu Dhabi:** Requires a completed residency and **specialist qualification in Anesthesiology** (e.g. Arab Board, FRCA, American Board, etc.). Licensing as a **Specialist** doctor in anesthesiology demands meeting the DOH criteria which mirror the unified PQR – high-tier qualifications allow immediate specialist registration, whereas others require a couple of years of experience as a specialist. A **DOH exam in Anesthesiology** (computer-based via Pearson VUE) must be passed unless the physician has a DOH-recognized board certification (Abu Dhabi, like Dubai, exempts those with certain Western/equivalent board credentials from taking the local exam) . To be licensed at **Consultant** level in anesthesiology, typically **5+ years** of post-board experience is needed (often at least 5 years, though holders of top boards like a UK CCT or US Board with prior consultant experience may qualify with fewer years – e.g. ~2–3 years) English language proof is required similarly (IELTS/TOEFL). Application is through **TAMM** with full PSV.

2. Pediatrics (Specialist Pediatrician) –

- **Saudi Arabia:** Must have a **specialty qualification in Pediatrics** (such as the **Saudi Board or Arab Board in Pediatrics, MRCPCH, American Board of Pediatrics**, etc.). Requires completion of pediatric residency. **Specialist Pediatrician** licensing by SCFHS requires the recognized qualification and usually at least a couple of years of experience in pediatrics (foreign-trained doctors are often expected to have ≥ 2 years practice in the specialty)he physician must pass the SCFHS **Saudi Licensing Exam** (with a pediatric focus if applicable) or an oral exam for pediatrics, unless they are exempt by virtue of holding a highly recognized credential English fluency is expected (no separate test). To achieve **Consultant Pediatrician** status, the doctor needs around **5 years post-specialty experience** (or 3 years for those with certain fellowships) along with possibly an interview/exam by SCFHS. Licensing via **Mumaris+**.
- **UAE – Dubai:** Must have completed a **pediatric residency and obtained a pediatric board certification** (e.g. Arab Board, MRCPCH, American Board, or similar). **Specialist Pediatrician** licensure in Dubai follows the unified PQR: no additional post-qualification experience required if the pediatric board is Tier 1/2 and recent,if the qualification is lower-tier, **1–2 years** pediatric practice post-certification is required. The doctor must pass the **DHA Pediatrics exam** (Prometric) unless holding

an approved equivalent (certain international pediatric board exams can serve as a substitute and grant exam exemption). To be licensed as a **Consultant Pediatrician**, the physician generally needs **2–5 years** of experience as a specialist pediatrician (2 years if holding e.g. a UK CCT or similar Tier 1, or ~5 years for other qualifications). English proficiency is required (many pediatricians will already have it via their training). Application via **Sheryan** after DataFlow verification.

- **UAE – Abu Dhabi:** Requires a **specialty diploma in Pediatrics** (residency and board certification). For **Specialist Pediatrician** licensure, DOH criteria are similar: a well-recognized board (Tier 1) with recent completion may not require extra experience, whereas others might require at least **one year or more** practice in pediatrics post-qualification. The physician must pass the **DOH pediatric exam** (unless exempt by holding a recognized international qualification). Advancement to **Consultant Pediatrician** demands substantial experience (around **5 years** or more as a pediatric specialist, subject to reduction for top-tier credentials) in addition to the board certification English language requirements and the application process (TAMM + DataFlow) are the same as for other specialists.

3. Radiology (Specialist Radiologist) –

- **Saudi Arabia:** Must have a postgraduate **qualification in Radiology** (e.g. the **Saudi Board in Diagnostic Radiology, Arab Board, FRCR, American Board of Radiology**, etc.). SCFHS will classify a doctor as a **Specialist Radiologist** upon verification of the radiology fellowship/board and typically **2+ years** of specialty experience (foreign radiologists are often expected to have a couple of years of independent work post-training). The **Saudi Licensing Exam** (or a specialty exam in radiology, if required by SCFHS) must be passed unless waived due to recognized credentials. No separate English exam, though radiologists must be proficient in English for reporting and communication. **Consultant Radiologist** status requires about **5 years** of post-board experience (3 years if possessing certain high-tier fellowships). Process via **Mumaris+** with DataFlow.
- **UAE – Dubai:** Must have completed **radiology residency and obtained board certification** (e.g. FRCR, Arab Board Radiology, American Board, etc.). To license as a **Specialist Radiologist**, DHA expects the requisite radiology qualification; if it's from a Tier 1/2 source and recent, **no additional experience** is needed, whereas a Tier 3 qualification would need at least **one year** of experience post-certification. The **DHA Radiology exam** (Prometric) is required for those without an accepted international board; many Western board-certified radiologists will be **exempt from the exam**. For **Consultant Radiologist** licensure, generally **2 years** experience as a specialist (with top qualifications) or **5+ years** (with other qualifications) is required. English proficiency (IELTS/OET) is needed if not already proven. Application via **Sheryan**.
- **UAE – Abu Dhabi:** Requires a **specialty qualification in Radiology**. **Specialist Radiologist** licensing follows DOH's PQR rules: a strong credential (e.g. FRCR) allows direct licensing as specialist with no extra years, while others may require **1–2**

years experience post-qualification Must pass the **DOH radiology exam** unless the radiologist holds an equivalent credential that DOH recognizes (e.g. fellowship of Royal College, etc., often grants exam exemption). For **Consultant Radiologist**, around **5 years** of post-board experience is standard (with flexibility down to ~2 years for certain Tier 1 credentials). English and application process same as above (TAMM portal + PSV).

4. Orthopedics / Trauma (Specialist Orthopedic Surgeon) –

- **Saudi Arabia:** Must have a **specialization in Orthopedic Surgery** (e.g. **Saudi Board or Arab Board in Orthopedics, FRCS (Trauma & Ortho), American Board of Orthopedic Surgery**, etc.). SCFHS will license as **Specialist Orthopedic Surgeon** those with the requisite qualification and usually a couple of years of orthopedic surgical experience post-certification. Passing the **Saudi Licensing Exam** (which covers general medicine and clinical knowledge) is required ; SCFHS may also conduct oral evaluations especially for surgical specialties. No English test required, but English is used professionally. To attain **Consultant Orthopedic Surgeon** status, a surgeon needs roughly **5 years** of experience as a specialist (3 years for certain advanced qualifications) in addition to board certification Licensing via **Mumaris+**. (*Note: “Trauma” is typically part of orthopedics; in Saudi, a trauma specialist would be an orthopedic surgeon with sub-specialty or experience in trauma.*)
- **UAE – Dubai:** Must have completed **orthopedic surgery residency and board certification** (e.g. FRCS (Orth), Arab Board, etc.). For **Specialist Orthopedic** licensure, if the surgeon's qualification is top-tier and recent, **no additional experience** is required beyond residency. Tier 3 credentials require ≥ 1 year practice post-qualification. The surgeon must pass the **DHA Orthopedics exam** (unless exempted by holding a recognized international board). **Consultant Orthopedic Surgeon** licensing requires significant experience: generally **2 years** as specialist for Tier 1 credentials, or **5 years** for others Major surgical specialties often require proof of surgical logbook and an oral assessment for consultant upgrade in UAE.) English proficiency and application via **Sheryan** are as per standard.
- **UAE – Abu Dhabi:** Requires a **specialty qualification in Orthopedic Surgery**. **Specialist Orthopedic Surgeon** criteria: appropriate board certification; no extra experience if credential is highly recognized, otherwise a minimum of **1–2 years** of independent practice post-board^t. The **DOH exam in Orthopedics** (Prometric/Pearson) must be cleared unless waived by virtue of an accepted board certification. For **Consultant** level, about **5 years** of specialist experience is typically expected (with some allowances for those with esteemed qualifications to reduce this requirement). Process through **TAMM**; English proficiency needed as with other roles.

5. Neurology (Specialist Neurologist) –

- **Saudi Arabia:** Must have specialized in **Neurology** (e.g. **Saudi or Arab Board in Neurology, American Board of Neurology, MRCP(UK) with neurology specialization**, etc.). Licensed as **Specialist Neurologist** after completing training and usually with **≥2 years** of neurology practice for foreign doctors. The **SMLE** or a neurology-focused exam must be passed (SCFHS may conduct an oral exam in neurology if deemed necessary for evaluation). No English exam required (English proficiency is expected in clinical work). **Consultant Neurologist** requires **~5 years** post-specialty experience (or 3 years if holding exceptional credentials), aligned with SCFHS consultant criteria. Apply via **Mumaris+**.
- **UAE – Dubai:** Must have a **Neurology residency and board certification** (e.g. Arab Board Neurology, American Board (ABPN), UK CCT in Neurology, etc.). For **Specialist Neurologist** licensure, high-tier recent qualifications don't need additional experience, whereas others need **≥1 year** post-qualification practice. The **DHA Neurology exam** must be passed unless the neurologist holds a recognized exam/certification that DHA accepts for exemption. To be a **Consultant Neurologist**, typically **2–5 years** of experience as a specialist are required depending on the qualification tier. English proficiency (IELTS/OET) is required for licensing. Process through **Sheryan** with verification.
- **UAE – Abu Dhabi:** Requires a **Neurology specialty degree** (board certification). **Specialist Neurologist** licensing: follow PQR guidelines (Tier 1/2: no extra experience needed if recent; Tier 3: **~1 year** required). Must pass the **DOH Neurology exam** unless exempt by recognized credentials. **Consultant Neurologist** status demands extensive experience (**~5 years** as specialist, subject to adjustment for top boards). English and application on **TAMM** as standard.

6. Cardiology (Specialist Cardiologist) –

- **Saudi Arabia:** Must have specialized in **Cardiology** (often after completing Internal Medicine residency + Cardiology fellowship, e.g. **Saudi/Arab Board in Cardiology, American Board in Cardiology, MRCP with Cardiology specialization**, etc.). To be licensed as a **Specialist Cardiologist**, an appropriate fellowship and board certification in cardiology are required, along with a couple of years of cardiology practice (for non-Saudi specialists). SCFHS typically requires passing the **Saudi Licensing Exam**; cardiologists may also undergo an oral assessment, especially for invasive cardiology roles. No separate English test (English is widely used in practice). **Consultant Cardiologist** classification requires about **5 years** of experience post-fellowship (3 years if holding distinguished fellowships) as per SCFHS rules. Licensing is via **Mumaris+** with verification of all credentials and subspecialty training.
- **UAE – Dubai:** Must have completed an **Internal Medicine residency and Cardiology fellowship/board** (e.g. Arab Board Cardiology, American Board of Cardiology, Fellowship of the European Society of Cardiology, etc.). **Specialist Cardiologist** licensure requires the cardiology qualification; if it's a top-tier board and obtained recently, **no additional experience** is needed. If from a lower tier, at least

1–2 years of experience post-board is required. The physician must pass the **DHA Cardiology exam** unless holding an internationally recognized certification that grants exemption. For **Consultant Cardiologist**, generally **2 years** as a specialist (with a Tier 1 credential) or **5+ years** (with other credentials) of cardiology practice is required, in addition to demonstrating procedural experience for interventional cardiologists. English proficiency is a must. Application via **Sheryan**.

- **UAE – Abu Dhabi:** Requires a **Cardiology subspecialty qualification** (after internal medicine). **Specialist Cardiologist** licensing follows the same pattern: strong credentials allow direct specialist status, others need some **experience (≈ 1 year+)** in cardiology post-qualification. The **DOH Cardiology exam** (Pearson VUE) must be cleared unless the cardiologist has a DOH-approved equivalent. To be licensed as a **Consultant Cardiologist**, about **5 years** of specialized experience is typical (with potential reduction for those with eminent international certifications and extensive training). The usual English requirement and **TAMM** application process apply here as well.

Key Differences and Summary

- **Educational Qualifications:** The baseline degrees are similar across KSA and UAE. Saudi Arabia and UAE both require the relevant primary degree (MBBS for doctors, BSN for nurses, etc.) and completion of internships/training. For specialist physicians, a formal residency and specialty board certification are needed in both countries. UAE licensing often categorizes qualifications into tiers, where Tier 1 (e.g. US, UK, Canadian boards) are highly recognized. Saudi SCFHS also has a list of recognized programs but generally requires all to pass its exams unless trained in specific countries. Notably, **Saudi pharmacy now expects a PharmD** whereas UAE accepts BPharm or PharmD.
- **Experience Requirements:** Saudi Arabia typically mandates at least **one year of experience for foreign healthcare professionals** across the board and more for higher positions (e.g. 5 years post-specialty for consultants). In practice, the Saudi Ministry of Health often requires 2 years experience for foreign hires in roles like GP and RN (even if SCFHS allows 1 year). The UAE's updated guidelines generally require **two years of experience** for most categories (GPs, specialists, nurses, etc.), though this has been reduced from older 3-year rules. UAE also allows **newly qualified specialists** from top programs to skip additional experience for licensing. For consultant-level physicians, Saudi's requirement (~5 years) is a bit higher than Dubai's if one has top credentials (Dubai/Abu Dhabi may grant consultant after ~2 years for Tier 1 certified doctors), though in other cases UAE also needs ~5 years. In summary, **Saudi Arabia tends to require a standard 5 years for consultant**, while **UAE can be more flexible** depending on the qualification tier.
- **Licensing Examinations:** Both countries require professional licensing exams. **Saudi Arabia** uses SCFHS exams (e.g. SMLE for doctors, SNLE for nurses, SPLE for pharmacists, etc.). **UAE** requires **Prometric/Pearson VUE exams** for DHA and DOH respectively (often referred to as DHA exam or HAAD/DOH exam) for each

profession. However, **exam exemptions** are more commonly formalized in the UAE: for example, passing USMLE, PLAB, Canadian licensing exams, etc., can exempt doctors from DHA/DOH exams and nurses or allied health licensed in certain Western countries with good standing may bypass the exam. Saudi Arabia's SCFHS also may waive the exam for some internationally board-certified doctors (and Saudi-trained graduates) but in practice, most foreign healthcare workers do end up taking the Saudi licensing exams. Both countries require **Primary Source Verification (DataFlow)** before exam eligibility.

- **English Proficiency:** This is a major point of divergence. **UAE absolutely requires evidence of English proficiency** (usually IELTS or equivalent) for licensing of nurses, allied health, and often doctor. Commonly, an IELTS Academic score of **6.5** (with no band lower than 6.0) or an OET grade of B is expected for nurses and allied professionals. Physicians are also expected to demonstrate English fluency; an English test may be waived if their medical education was in English or if they're from an English-native country, but many applicants provide IELTS/TOEFL as part of credentials. **Saudi Arabia**, on the other hand, does **not require an IELTS/TOEFL score** for licensure – English is the medium of professional communication (especially in tertiary centers) but there is no formal language test in SCFHS criteria. Employers in KSA might assess language skills during hiring, but it's not an upfront licensing requirement.
- **Application Platforms:** The process is digitally managed in both countries but on different systems. Saudi Arabia uses the **Mumaris Plus** platform for all healthcare licensing applications. In the UAE, each emirate's authority has its own portal: **Dubai's DHA Sheryan** system is used for registration, exam scheduling, and licensing services, while **Abu Dhabi's DOH** licensing is handled through the **TAMM portal** (the unified Abu Dhabi government services platform). These portals are where professionals create profiles, upload required documents, apply for exams, and ultimately receive their eligibility letters and licenses.

Overall, while **the core requirements are similar** (appropriate degree, some experience, pass licensing exam, PSV of documents), **nuances differ**: Saudi Arabia has a **slightly more centralized and standardized approach (via SCFHS)** with an emphasis on its own exams for all, whereas the UAE has **multiple regulators (DHA, DOH)** with a unified framework that offers more **flexibility in recognizing international qualifications** and enforces language proficiency. Professionals aiming to work in either country must carefully follow the specific guidelines of the relevant authority (SCFHS for KSA; DHA for Dubai or DOH for Abu Dhabi) to ensure they meet all criteria for their profession.