



هيئة جودة التعليم والتدريب
Education & Training Quality Authority
Kingdom of Bahrain - مملكة البحرين

Directorate of Vocational Reviews

**Handbook for Evaluating the Quality of Teaching
and Training Practices of Vocational Education and
Training Providers during Exceptional
Circumstances in the Kingdom of Bahrain
(Second Edition)**

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ABBREVIATIONS

BQA	Education & Training Quality Authority
DVR	Directorate of Vocational Reviews
EF	Evidence Form
GDQ	General Directorate of National Qualifications Framework
GDR	General Directorate of Education & Vocational Institutions Reviews
ILOs	Intended Learning Outcomes
LMS	Learning Management System
LR	Lead Reviewer
RE	Record of Evaluation
SEF	Self-Evaluation Form

INTRODUCTION

I. Background to the Education & Training Quality Authority

The Authority was established under the name the 'Quality Assurance Authority for Education & Training' pursuant to the Royal Decree Royal Decree No. (32) of (2008) as an independent national authority governed and supervised by the Cabinet of Ministers of the Kingdom of Bahrain. With the promulgation of the Royal Decrees Nos. (83) of (2012) and (74) of (2016), the Authority was reorganised and renamed as the 'Education and Training Quality Authority (BQA)'. Pursuant to the Royal Decree duly promulgated in (2012) and subject to Article 4 thereof, one of the BQA mandates is to ensure that the quality of education and training in the Kingdom of Bahrain meets international standards and best practice, being mandated to 'review the quality of the performance of education and training institutions in light of the guiding indicators developed by the Authority' in accordance with Kingdom of Bahrain Economic Vision 2030 and directions of the Government Action Plan.

BQA has three main core functions: performance reviews of education and training institutions, through the General Directorate of Education and Training Institutes Reviews (GDR), managing the National Qualifications Framework (NQF), and conducting the National Examinations by the General Directorate of National Qualifications Framework and National Examinations (GDQ). The GDR consists of four directorates: the Directorate of Government School Reviews (DGS), the Directorate of Private Schools and Kindergartens Reviews (DPS), the Directorate of Vocational Reviews (DVR), and the Directorate of Higher Education Reviews (DHR). The GDQ is comprised of the Directorate of National Qualifications Framework Operations and the Directorate of National Examinations (DNE).

II. The Directorate of Vocational Reviews

The Directorate of Vocational Reviews (DVR) is mandated to review and report on the quality of vocational education and training across the Kingdom of Bahrain. Reviews conducted by the DVR involve evaluating vocational education and training providers against a set of quality assurance criteria.

The Directorate is responsible for:

- providing decision makers and stakeholders with evidence-based judgments on the quality of the performance of education and training providers;
- identifying strengths and areas for improvement in vocational education and training providers, focusing on the achievement and experience of learners;

- promoting improvement and a culture of self-evaluation and accountability among providers;
- identifying and spreading good practice.

The evaluation process includes evaluating the providers' performance during exceptional circumstances against a set of clear indicators. The evaluation is independent, objective and transparent. The evaluation process highlights important information about a provider's strengths and areas for improvement, to assist individual providers to focus its efforts and resources toward raising their overall performance.

III. About the Evaluation Handbook

This second edition of the Handbook is for the use of evaluation teams and providers of vocational education and training. Part one of the Handbook sets out the evaluation framework and the rubric used to evaluate each indicator, Section and overall provider performance. Part two indicates the source of evidence used to evaluate each Section and provides interpretation of what is expected from the providers against each of the 14 indicators and Part three of this Handbook clarifies the review process and its activities.

PART 1: Framework for evaluating the quality of teaching and training practices of vocational education and training providers during exceptional circumstances

This second edition of the Framework for evaluating the quality of teaching and training practices of vocational education and training providers during exceptional circumstances in the Kingdom of Bahrain is an annex to the Review Framework used in the review of vocational education and training providers, issued in accordance with Resolution No. (38) of 2018. This framework defines the evaluation requirements that are used in evaluating the practices of vocational education and training providers during any exceptional circumstances in the Kingdom and is activated based on an assessment of the situation by competent national authorities and, if deemed appropriate, by the BQA. The Handbook addresses the Sections to be evaluated, and the associated indicators and their interpretations. The evaluation team will implement this framework to conclude their evaluations in order to rate the provider's overall performance during exceptional circumstances. This framework is activated only during exceptional circumstances that may prevail in the Kingdom.

The Framework for evaluating the quality of teaching and training practices of vocational education and training providers during exceptional circumstances addresses three Sections: Teaching/Training and Learning, Courses/Programmes and Resources, Leadership and Change Management. The framework includes the evaluations' rubrics to be applied during the process of evaluating practices of a provider, based on approved indicators and according to the BQA's policies and procedures. The vocational education and training providers are required to implement this framework and its evaluation rubrics in their self-evaluation.

The framework consists of 14 indicators, abbreviated as 'I' – and distributed over three Sections.

Sections and Indicators

Section (1): Teaching/Training and Learning

- I1.1 Teachers/trainers employ effective teaching/training strategies when delivering a lesson/training session
- I1.2 Teachers/trainers utilise the available learning resources to enable effective learning
- I1.3 Rigorous assessment methods are used and learners are provided with constructive feedback
- I1.4 Learners are engaged, motivated and show commitment towards their learning experience

- I1.5 Learners progress towards achieving the course/programme Intended Learning Outcomes and the qualifications they aim for.

Section (2): Courses/Programmes and Resources

- I2.1 Courses/programmes are well planned and structured
- I2.2 The provider is suitably resourced for the needs of the courses/programmes and the mode of delivery
- I2.3 Enrolled learners are suitable for the requirements of the course/programme and mode of delivery
- I2.4 Learners are suitably inducted, supported and informed of any changes to the courses/programmes and mode of delivery.

Section (3): Leadership & Change Management

- I3.1 The Management team implements appropriate plans that respond to the needs of emerging exceptional circumstances
- I3.2 Learners' performance is monitored and analysed to inform decision-making
- I3.3 Staff performance is monitored and analysed to inform decision making
- I3.4 Procedures and practices in place are effective in ensuring the health & safety and well-being of staff and learners
- I3.5 Policies and procedures are in place to ensure the security of staff and learners' records and, where applicable, the security of the online systems and platforms used.

Evaluation Rubric

Evaluation per Indicator

The evaluation of Indicators under each section is based on a rubric of three evaluations as follows:

Evaluation	Description
Sufficient Response	This evaluation is awarded if the provider's response related to the Indicator is productive in addressing the Indicator requirements, and initiatives are responsive to exceptional circumstances and reflect a clear improvement and development.
Partially Sufficient Response	This evaluation is awarded if the provider's response related to the Indicator is inconsistent in addressing the Indicator requirements, while the initiatives are partially responsive to exceptional circumstances and reflect some improvement and development.
Insufficient Response	This evaluation is awarded if the provider's response related to the Indicator does not address the requirements of the Indicator sufficiently, and the initiatives are not suitable to address the needs of the exceptional circumstances.

Evaluation per Section

The evaluation of this Section is based on a rubric of three evaluations as follows:

Evaluation	Description
Sufficient Response	If at least three Indicators are evaluated 'Sufficient Response' and none of the Indicators is evaluated 'Insufficient Response'.
Partially Sufficient Response	If at least two Indicators are evaluated 'Partially Sufficient Response', or even one Indicator is evaluated 'Insufficient Response' in all conditions.
Insufficient Response	If two or more Indicators are evaluated 'Insufficient Response'.

Overall Provider Performance Category

The overall performance of the provider during exceptional circumstances will be categorised into three performance evaluations as follows:

Category	Description
Sufficient Response	The performance of the provider in the three Sections are evaluated 'Sufficient Response'.
Partially Sufficient Response	The performance of the provider in any of the three Sections are evaluated 'Partially Sufficient Response', while the performance of the provider in none of the Sections is evaluated 'Insufficient Response'.
Insufficient Response	The performance of the provider in any of the three Sections is evaluated 'Insufficient Response'.

The providers in category 'Sufficient Response' are the ones that met the evaluation process's expectations; while the providers in categories 'Partially Sufficient Response' and 'Insufficient Response'; need to make more effort to improve their performance.

PART 2: SECTIONS AND INDICATORS

This part describes the set of Indicators under each Section, provides guidance on how to interpret these indicators and the source of evidence required for the evaluation. The list of evidence provided for each Indicator is not limited to the executive list; the provider may choose to include other/more evidence.

Section (1): Teaching/Training and Learning

Interpreting the Indicator of the Section

I1.1 Teachers/trainers employ effective teaching/training strategies when delivering a lesson/ training session.

This indicator is inferred through the following:

- teachers/trainers will adapt the teaching/training strategies used to ensure that the lesson/training session is delivered in a manner that is appropriate for the stated ILOs and mode of delivery agreed on to suit the current circumstances
- there is evidence that lessons/training sessions are appropriately managed and in a manner that is suitable for the platforms used and mode of delivery
- teachers/trainers display knowledge and understanding of their vocational or subject area, and have adapted/developed their knowledge and skill sets to suit the exceptional circumstances and current training environment
- where applicable there is evidence of advanced use of on-line simulation tools, particularly for the delivery of practical materials
- teachers/trainers tailor their teaching/training and assessments methods to suit the different levels and type of learners in line with the ILOs.

Essential sources of evidence include, but are not limited to, the following:

- relevant policies and procedures, and relevant changes introduced to suit the current circumstances
- observation of online and traditional lessons/training sessions by a BQA evaluation team
- samples of recorded lessons/training sessions for different teachers/trainers and courses
- the internal records of monitoring teacher's/trainer's individual performance
- teachers/trainers' Curriculum Vita (CVs)

- access to learning management system (LMS)/online platforms where applicable
- evidence of teachers/trainers' adaptation to the needs of different learners, based on current circumstances and learners' type and level and how available information is utilised
- evaluation team meetings with learners, teachers/trainers, relevant staff, moderators and stakeholders
- outcomes of learners and stakeholders' feedback collected by the BQA
- outcomes of learners and stakeholders' feedback collected by the provider
- other documents mentioned in the provider's SEF.

I1.2 Teachers/trainers utilise the available learning resources to enable effective learning.

This indicator is inferred through the following:

- teachers/trainers demonstrate a suitable knowledge of the available learning resources, including the online systems and platforms available, and they are confident that these meet the needs of the current circumstances
- teachers/trainers utilise the different learning resources and teaching venues to extend learners' interest and motivation and ensure their engagement throughout the learning process
- teachers/trainers utilise the available learning resources and materials sufficiently to further learners' understanding, and accelerate their performance and support their needs
- teachers/trainers gauge learners' ability to utilise the available resources, support learners where needed, and encourage them to produce digital content and develop their technological skills where applicable.

Essential sources of evidence include, but are not limited to, the following:

- relevant policies and procedures, and relevant changes introduced to suit the current circumstances
- observation of online and traditional lessons/training sessions by a BQA evaluation team
- samples of recorded lessons/training sessions for different courses and teachers/trainers
- the internal records of monitoring teacher's/trainer's individual performance

- access to LMS/online platforms where applicable
- list of teaching/training resources available, including online resources
- evidence of the differentiated efforts that teachers/trainers have made in the special circumstances as compared to normal times
- evidence of teachers/trainers' adaptation to the needs of different learners, based on current circumstances and learners' type and level, and how available information is utilised
- access to communication channels available to learners and teachers/trainers and evidence of their use during their learning journey
- evaluation team meetings with learners, teachers/trainers, relevant staff, moderators and stakeholders
- outcomes of learners and stakeholders' feedback collected by the BQA
- outcomes of learners and stakeholders' feedback collected by the provider
- other documents mentioned in the provider's SEF.

I1.3 Rigorous assessment methods are used, and learners are provided with constructive feedback.

This indicator is inferred through the following:

- teachers/trainers use a range of summative and formative assessment methods that are appropriate for the mode of delivery and have adapted these to suit the requirements of the current circumstances
- assessment methods used are timely, frequent and clearly linked to the stated ILOs
- teachers/trainers use clear, pre-defined rubric and grading criteria to ensure that learners' work is marked in a fair and transparent manner
- measures (including assessment moderation and verification) are in place to ensure the accuracy of the assessment and its outcomes, and that these are suitable for the way assessments are conducted
- learners are provided with timely and constructive verbal and/or written feedback on how they are doing, and that there are appropriate opportunities to discuss their progress and whether they are on track to achieve the ILOs and what they need to do to improve further.

Essential sources of evidence include, but are not limited to, the following:

- relevant policies and procedures, and relevant changes introduced to suit the current circumstances
- observation of online and traditional lessons/training sessions by a BQA evaluation team
- fully authorised access to the provider' LMS to review samples of learners' assessed work for different courses, levels and teachers/trainers (summative and formative)
- samples of learners' assessed work where LMS is not available
- course specifications detailing assessment type, schedule and marking scheme
- rubrics used to assess learners' work and performance (passing criteria and grading system)
- evidence of changes in the assessment methods to suit the current circumstances
- evidence of feedback provided to learners on their work, and access to the available channels for providing feedback to learners including any reports shared with them
- external awarding body's rules and regulations, where applicable
- verification and moderation reports
- evaluation team meetings with learners, teachers/trainers, relevant staff, moderators and stakeholders
- outcomes of learners and stakeholders' feedback collected by the BQA
- outcomes of learners and stakeholders' feedback collected by the provider
- other documents mentioned in the provider's SEF.

I1.4 Learners are engaged, motivated and show commitment towards their learning experience.

This indicator is inferred through the following:

- learners attend regularly and punctually
- learners execute the work assigned to them within due date
- learners consolidate and extend what they have been taught by participating in discussions and group work conducted through the different platforms available.

Essential sources of evidence include, but are not limited to, the following:

- relevant policies and procedures, and relevant changes introduced to suit the current circumstances
- observation of online and traditional lessons/training sessions by a BQA evaluation team
- fully authorised access to the provider' LMS to review samples of learners' assessed work for different courses, levels and teachers/trainers (summative and formative)
- samples of learners' assessed work where LMS is not available
- evidence of learners' submission dates of their work and follow-up mechanisms
- records of learners' attendance and punctuality throughout the courses and the aggregated rates
- access to communication channels between learners and teachers/trainers during their learning journey
- evaluation team meetings with learners, teachers/trainers, relevant staff, moderators and stakeholders
- outcomes of learners and stakeholders' feedback collected by the BQA
- outcomes of learners and stakeholders' feedback collected by the provider
- other documents mentioned in the provider's SEF.

I1.5 Learners progress towards achieving the course/programme Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs) and the qualifications they aim for.

This indicator is inferred through the following:

- learners develop the expected knowledge, skills and competences throughout the course's/programme's duration
- learners' work produced indicates sufficient progress relevant to the duration and level of the courses/programmes
- learners and stakeholders are satisfied with the acquired skills and competences
- learners' achievement rates reflect standards of knowledge and understanding as seen through learners' participation and engagement and the level of their work produced
- where applicable, learners achieve the qualifications they aim for in a timely manner, considering the awarding body's regulations and the achievement rate is comparable with the published data

- for those providing tutorial services, learners' needs related to achievement at their school/university, study skills and/or specific area for improvement are addressed.

Essential sources of evidence include, but are not limited to, the following:

- relevant policies and procedures, and relevant changes introduced to suit the current circumstances
- observation of online and traditional lessons/training sessions by a BQA evaluation team
- data on learners' performance, including (success rates, retention, etc.)
- fully authorised access to the provider' LMS to review samples of learners' assessed work for different courses, levels and teachers/trainers (summative and formative)
- samples of learners' assessed work where LMS is not available
- marking distributions and minimum pass requirements
- the results of internal assessments of learners' performance
- the results of external examinations, where applicable
- learners' progress and achievement reports, where available
- benchmarks with local, regional and international/global pass rates, where available
- awarding body's rules and regulations, where applicable
- employers/workplace feedback, where available
- evaluation team meetings with learners, teachers/trainers, relevant staff members and stakeholders
- outcomes of learners and stakeholders' feedback collected by the BQA
- outcomes of learners and stakeholders' feedback collected by the provider
- other documents mentioned in the provider's SEF.

Section (2): Courses/Programmes and Resources

Interpreting the Indicator of the Section

I2.1 Courses/programmes are well planned and structured

This indicator is inferred through the following:

- course/programme components are adjusted to suit changes needed due to exceptional circumstances. These are subjected to an appropriate internal quality assurance mechanism and are approved in line with the provider's internal procedures, and any external requirements of the licensing body where applicable
- courses/programmes have detailed course outlines that indicate the ILOs and the corresponding teaching/training and assessment methods; these are subject to the provider's courses/programmes design, development and approval mechanisms
- course outlines/specifications are up-to-date and are suitable for the mode of teaching/training and learning and the platforms used
- courses/programmes are designed to enhance and support practical and theoretical learning, course components being planned in a sequence that facilitates a progressive acquisition of knowledge, skills and competences and the achievement of the ILOs
- the study/training hours allocated for the course are sufficient to attain the relevant course ILOs and suit the mode of delivery
- assessments are scheduled in a reasonable and balanced manner, ensuring that they are manageable and the assessment tools used (formative/summative) are fit-for-purpose and appropriately mapped to the ILOs.

Essential sources of evidence include, but are not limited to, the following:

- licensing body approvals for courses/programmes offered during the current circumstances
- relevant policies and procedures, and relevant changes introduced to suit the current circumstances
- courses/programmes plans and schedules and schemes of work, including course outlines/specifications and assessment plans highlighting all changes introduced due to the current circumstances
- course materials and assigned learning resources, and where applicable access to online course materials
- course specifications detailing assessment type, schedules and marking schemes

- internal quality assurance reports relating to course design, development, revision, and approval, especially those due to the current circumstances
- evaluation team meetings with learners, teachers/trainers, relevant staff, moderators and stakeholders
- outcomes of learners' and stakeholders' feedback collected by the BQA
- outcomes of learners' and stakeholders' feedback collected by the provider
- the provider's website
- correspondence with external vendors/awarding bodies according to the circumstances where applicable
- other documents mentioned in the provider's SEF.

12.2 The provider is suitably resourced for the needs of the courses/programmes and the mode of delivery.

This indicator is inferred through the following:

- the provider has assessed its learning resources and facilities, and has invested in additional learning resources where needed to provide necessary capacity for the new circumstances
- learning resources and facilities available are adequate and appropriate considering the mode of delivery, number and type of learners, and the courses/programmes on offer
- courses/programmes are reinforced with an appropriate range and quality of learning resources reflecting current industrial and commercial standards
- the provider ensures the quality of the learning materials provided to learners; these need to be up-to-date, authentic, relevant, comprehensive and suitable for the mode of delivery and platforms used
- learners and teachers/trainers have access to learning resources and facilities, and where needed Information Communication Technology (ICT) and online resources.

Essential sources of evidence include, but are not limited to, the following:

- evidence of assessment of learning resources and facilities available, and addressing the gaps identified in line with the current circumstances
- list of any new learning resources obtained to provide necessary capacity for the exceptional circumstances

- course materials, learning resources and relevant manuals, highlighting changes introduced to suit the current circumstances
- list of online resources used for the delivery and support of learning during the current circumstances
- actual/virtual premises tour
- evaluation team meetings with learners, stakeholders, teachers/trainers and relevant staff
- outcomes of learners' and stakeholders' feedback collected by the BQA
- outcomes of learners' and stakeholders' feedback collected by the provider
- observations of traditional and/or online and lessons/training sessions by a BQA evaluation team
- arrangements to support learners with special educational needs and/or disabilities, where applicable and especially in relation to current circumstances
- other documents mentioned in the provider's SEF.

I2.3 Enrolled learners are suitable for the requirements of the course/programme and mode of delivery.

This indicator is inferred through the following:

- there is a clear and transparent access and entry level policy for each course/programme on offer that adheres to regulatory body requirements, where applicable, which is implemented consistently and fairly
- there are mechanisms in place to ensure that the entry requirements are effective in admitting learners, suitable for the course/programme needs and mode of delivery, and that these requirements are reviewed and adjusted as needed especially to meet the current circumstances
- initial guidance is provided to learners on course selection and what is expected from them to complete the course/programme they choose.

Essential sources of evidence include, but are not limited to, the following:

- access and entry level policies and evidence of their implementation and changes introduced, if any, to meet the needs of the current circumstances
- admission and placement policies and procedures and evidence of their implementation and changes introduced, if any, to meet the needs of current circumstances

- relevant policies and procedures, and relevant changes introduced to suit the current circumstances
- evidence on mechanisms implemented to manage any changes introduced in the mode of delivery
- learners' performance records, and placement tests where applicable
- evaluation team meetings with learners, teachers/trainers, relevant staff, moderators and stakeholders
- outcomes of learners and stakeholders' feedback collected by the BQA
- outcomes of learners and stakeholders' feedback collected by the provider
- the provider's website
- other documents mentioned in the provider's SEF.

I2.4 Learners are suitably inducted, supported and informed of any changes to the course/programme and mode of delivery.

This indicator is inferred through the following:

- there is some form of induction programme that enables learners to settle in quickly and confidently
- learners are advised on any changes made during the period of the course delivery due to exceptional circumstances, and are informed of all the different options they have and supported to choose the best scenario for themselves
- the provider has flexible arrangements for the mode of delivery of courses/programmes to suit learners' needs during exceptional circumstances, while maintaining learning standards
- if there is a change in the mode of the delivery the provider has a mechanism in place to gauge learners' ability to undertake this change, and they are provided with the technical support needed for the new mode of delivery and the platforms used
- there is a formal and explicit mechanism in place through which learners' concerns/complaints are addressed in a fair and transparent manner.

Essential sources of evidence include, but are not limited to, the following:

- manuals and guidance provided to learners on the use of LMS
- complaints and appeals procedures in place; if any, and samples of complaints where available and the actions taken to resolve them

- relevant policies and procedures and changes introduced, where applicable
- evidence of support provided to learners to reach an informed decision that suits their different types and needs and the current circumstances
- evidence of changes in delivery arrangements due to learners' needs during the current circumstances
- evaluation team meetings with learners, teachers/trainers, relevant staff, moderators and stakeholders
- outcomes of learners and stakeholders' feedback collected by the BQA
- outcomes of learners and stakeholders' feedback collected by the provider
- evidence of an induction programme provided to learners (including introduction to resources to be used) due to the change in resources and mode of delivery during current exceptional circumstances
- evidence of any flexible arrangements and their impact
- mechanisms used to assess learners' ability to use the LMS and evidence of technical support provided to them
- mechanisms available for learners to communicate with the technical support team
- provider's communication with learners through social media and website
- other documents mentioned in the provider's SEF.

Section (3): Leadership and Change Management

Interpreting the Indicator of the Section

I3.1 The Management team implements appropriate plans that respond to the needs of emerging exceptional circumstances.

This indicator is inferred through the following:

- the management team conducts periodic risk management assessments and mitigation plans
- in case of exceptional circumstances, the management team develops and implements a specific and rapid plan in response to the emerging circumstances and identifies the human, physical and financial resources needed

- roles and responsibilities of staff, particularly the senior management team, are clearly defined and adjusted to meet the needs of the exceptional circumstances
- changes in the way the provider operates due to exceptional circumstances are discussed with staff members, and their opinion is considered when decisions are made
- the provider has the necessary range of human resources for the design and delivery of courses/programmes in a manner suitable for the mode of delivery and platforms used
- where appropriate, the provider's governing body is involved in developing plan, strategies and policies and executes its role effectively.

Essential sources of evidence include, but are not limited to, the following:

- risk management policy and changes introduced to the policy as a result of the current circumstances
- current action plan and reports on implementation
- change management prompt response to the needs of emerging exceptional circumstance
- availability of mechanisms and inputs utilised to develop the contingency plan
- the organisational structure and details of staff roles and responsibilities
- evaluation team meeting with the management, including governing body where applicable
- minutes of management, staff and other relevant meetings
- where applicable, governing body roles, responsibilities and accountabilities/ contributions
- relevant committees' roles and responsibilities
- evaluation team meetings with learners, stakeholders, teachers/trainers and relevant staff
- outcomes of learners and stakeholders' feedback collected by the BQA
- outcomes of learners and stakeholders' feedback collected by the provider
- other documents mentioned in the provider's SEF.

I3.2 Learners' performance is monitored and analysed to inform decision-making.

This indicator is inferred through the following:

- there is a mechanism to monitor learners' attendance, analyse this and use the outcomes to inform decision-making
- the provider maintains accurate and reliable data on learners' performance for all courses conducted; this includes learners' retention, success and/or pass rates, and attainment levels on course, programme and institutional levels
- learner's performance data is analysed, and outcomes are discussed at relevant management and staff meetings to inform strategic direction and the action planning process.

Essential sources of evidence include, but are not limited to, the following:

- all relevant policies and procedures, including the quality assurance procedures and documentation and relevant changes introduced to suit the current circumstance
- analysis of learners' attendance and performance data and utilisation of the outcomes
- access to provider's LMS, and reports produced where applicable
- learners' achievement reports
- minutes of management, staff and other relevant meetings
- evaluation team meetings with management, teachers/trainers and relevant staff
- external verifiers and moderators' reports, where applicable
- internal verification and moderation reports.
- other documents mentioned in the provider's SEF.

I3.3 Staff performance is monitored and analysed to inform decision making.

This indicator is inferred through the following:

- staff are inducted properly, when they are appointed and in case of the emergence of new circumstances that effect their work
- the provider monitors the performance of staff regularly to ensure the quality of its provision, including during exceptional circumstances

- the mechanisms utilised to ensure the quality of teaching/training are effective and suitable for the provider's circumstances and chosen mode of delivery, and teachers/trainers' ability to utilise the available resources is evaluated
- the outcomes of monitoring the performance are used to identify strengths and areas for improvement and develop an action plan to improve the provision in all times
- if there is a change in the mode of the delivery the provider has a mechanism in place to determine teachers/trainers' ability to undertake relevant changes and they are provided with the technical support needed for the mode of delivery and the platforms used.

Essential sources of evidence include, but are not limited to, the following:

- all relevant policies and procedures, including the quality assurance procedures and documentation and relevant changes introduced because of the current circumstances
- records of staff qualifications, including teachers/trainers' Curriculum Vitae (CVs) and profiles
- the internal records of monitoring teachers/trainer's individual performance
- evaluation team meetings with learners, stakeholders, teachers/trainers and relevant staff
- evidence on staff induction and awareness of the current circumstance's needs
- mechanisms used to assess teachers/trainers' ability to use the LMS, and evidence of technical support provided to them
- manuals and guidance provided to staff, including teachers/trainers on the utilisation of LMS
- evidence on tracking teachers/trainers' use of the available resources (including LMS tools) and using the outcomes to improve teachers/trainers' performance
- evidence of evaluating staff performance against the current circumstance's needs and use of the outcomes to improve their performance
- outcomes of learners and stakeholders' feedback collected by the BQA
- outcomes of learners and stakeholders' feedback collected by the provider
- other documents mentioned in the provider's SEF.

I3.4 Procedures and practices in place are effective in ensuring the health & safety and well-being of staff and learners.

This indicator is inferred through the following:

- appropriate and comprehensive health & safety policies, procedures and equipment are in place, and that this is evident in the day-to-day provider's operations, the commitment of the management, and the staff involvement to foster a health and safety culture
- the provider adopts a monitoring mechanism to ensure the continuous implementation of these policies and procedures, and where needed to revise them
- regular health & safety risk assessment is undertaken, and formal records of evacuation drills are maintained
- the provider has certified first aiders and staff are trained on handling emergency cases
- there are formal policies and procedures in place for dealing with incidents of racism, bullying, harassment (including cyber), and other inappropriate behaviour such as the misuse of social media
- where relevant there are procedures in place for the supervision and care of young learners, particularly while using online platforms, during break periods while being on the provider's premises, and while using the provider's transportation
- the learning premises are hygienic and conducive to needs, with sufficient and appropriate classrooms and workshops that adhere to all health and safety regulations required by the official bodies, including measures called for during exceptional circumstances.

Essential sources of evidence include, but are not limited to, the following:

- relevant policies and procedures, and relevant changes introduced to suit the current circumstances
- procedures/guidelines introduced/revised to deal with the staff and learners' well-being during exceptional circumstances
- documentations and arrangements for health and safety and evidence of implementation
- actual/virtual premises tour
- evaluation team meetings with learners, stakeholders, teachers/trainers and relevant staff
- outcomes of learners and stakeholders' feedback collected by the BQA
- outcomes of learners and stakeholders' feedback collected by the provider
- log of health and safety incidents and their actions to address them
- log of racism, bullying, and harassment incidents (including cyber) and the actions taken

- minutes of management, staff and other relevant meetings
- evidence of certified first aiders and staff who are trained on handling emergency cases
- other documents mentioned in the provider's SEF.

I3.5 Policies and procedures are in place to ensure the security of staff and learners' records and, where applicable, the security of the online systems and platforms used.

This indicator is inferred through the following:

- there is an overarching ICT manual that include: data protection and security of records procedure, back up plans, disaster data recovery plans, maintenance, and that it is systematically implemented, followed up and revised
- roles and responsibilities for ICT and LMS management within the provider are clearly stated and communicated across the provider
- there is an effective system to maintain learners' records, which include processes for accurately entering (and verifying) data on enrolments and grades, backup of records, and processes to preserve the integrity and confidentiality of records and protect against unauthorised or improper use
- staff records are maintained and protected
- online platforms used are secured and protected from hackers, and that there is a register to log any incident and the steps taken to mitigate the risk of the incident recurring in the future.

Essential sources of evidence include, but are not limited to, the following:

- relevant policies and procedures including data protection and disaster recovery policies and relevant changes introduced to suit the current circumstances
- job descriptions of relevant staff
- ICT manual/handbook
- virtual tour of the LMS and data management system
- minutes of the management team, ICT team and other relevant meetings
- register of security breach incidents of the system and mitigation actions, if any
- evaluation team meetings with learners, stakeholders, teachers/trainers and relevant staff
- other documents mentioned in the provider's SEF.

PART 3: EVALUATION PROCESS

The evaluation process takes place to assess providers against the three Sections detailed in Part 2 of this Handbook. Using the Indicators under each Section, reviewers make professional and evidence-based evaluations. The evaluation process includes a number of activities over a predefined timeline. The main steps are stipulated in the table below.

Evaluation Timeline Guide

Activity	Undertaken By	Timeline
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review Coordinator (RC) sends notification to provider, along with the SEF and learners performance data/records templates to be completed. 	RC	At least four weeks before the evaluation date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Lead Reviewer (LR) conducts a planning meeting with the nominee. 	LR	within two days of the notification date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provider submits completed up-to-date SEF, learners performance data/records and supporting evidence to the DVR. 	Provider	Within two weeks from notification date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The LR arranges a meeting with the nominee to discuss the evaluation assumptions based on the information provided in the SEF, issues to focus on during the evaluation and shares the evaluation plan. 	Evaluation team	At least one week before evaluation date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluation team conducts lesson/session observations. 	Evaluation team	From the initial communication with the provider - which may occur prior to the notification date - until the end of evaluation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Duration of the evaluation visit. 	Evaluation team	Usually five days

Evaluation Activities and Tools

Provider's Notification

All educational and training providers' practices during the exceptional circumstances will be evaluated as per BQA policies and procedures. At least four weeks before the evaluation, providers will receive a notification by e-mail to inform them that they have been scheduled for an evaluation. The e-mail includes SEF and learners' performance data/records templates to be completed by the provider and submitted to DVR within two weeks from the notification date. To complete this process, the provider should:

- familiarise themselves with this Handbook
- discuss the requirements of the evaluation with their staff, so that everyone knows what to expect
- select a nominee to be the focal point of communication with the BQA
- ensure that the submitted SEF, learners' performance data/records and supporting evidence are up-to-date and reflect the provider's current status for the exceptional circumstances period.

Planning Meeting

Once a provider is notified, the LR assigned to the evaluation will communicate with the provider to arrange for a pre-evaluation planning meeting. This will take place within two days of the notification date at a time convenient to the provider's representatives and the LR. This is the provider's representative's chance to:

- make sure the LR understands the key characteristics of the provision and the status of the provider during the current exceptional circumstances
- clarify any queries or concerns
- identify the nominee
- plan with the LR the upcoming activities.

Self-evaluation

Self-evaluation by the provider plays a central part in the evaluation process. Providers should evaluate their performance with regard to the three Sections and 14 Indicators stated in the Evaluation Framework (refer to Part 1 & Part 2), and record their findings in the SEF provided by the BQA. The evaluation team use the SEF, learners' performance data/records and submitted evidence to frame preliminary assumptions about the provider's performance in relation to the Sections in advance of the evaluation date. These assumptions are shared with the provider at least one week prior to the evaluation date, along with the evaluation

plan. The evaluation team will verify the SEF claims by directly observing lessons/training sessions, scrutinising learners' work, analysing data, reviewing documentation and meeting (on-site or virtually) with learners, key staff and other stakeholders such as employers and, where relevant, parents.

Evaluation Visit

The evaluation visit is usually last for 5 days, the evaluation team will meet (on-site or virtually) with the nominee and senior members of staff at the beginning of the first day of the evaluation. This meeting gives an opportunity for the team to introduce themselves to the provider's staff and to deal with any raised questions or concerns.

The evaluation team will undertake a range of evidence-gathering activities including:

- observing on-site or distance learning lessons/training sessions and other related activities
- examining and evaluating learners' written and practical work
- analysing data about learners' retention and achievements
- evaluating evidence documents, especially those relating to the provider's strategy responding to exceptional circumstances and relevant plans for improvement
- conducting questionnaires/meetings (on-site or virtually) with staff, learners and other stakeholders
- touring the premises to assess whether relevant health and safety requirements are being met and that the provider has an appropriate learning environment and facilities with sufficient resources.

Some of the above activities may also take place prior to the evaluation date.

Data/Records of Learners' Performance

Providers are expected to collect data on learners' performance and regularly maintain it, as collection and analysis of data are key to arrive at an evaluation on the progress learners make towards achieving course/ programme ILOs, their levels of attainment and the overall performance of the provider. A Learners Performance Record (LPR) template is provided by the DVR to document all relevant data; however, the provider may develop a database that contains all the necessary information.

Observation of Lessons/ Training Sessions

Evaluation team will spend a proportion of the time observing teaching/training sessions during the week of the evaluation or in the weeks leading up to it. The LR will decide on the sessions to be observed; this process is usually guided by the analysis of learners' performance

data/records. Not all teachers/trainers will necessarily be observed, and reviewers will not always observe a session for the full duration, although they will normally observe the session for about 45 minutes. An evaluation will be awarded for the session.

Scrutiny of Learners' Work

Evaluation team may evaluate learners' written and practical work as they carry out observations, but the provider will also be asked to gather the written work of a representative sample of learners for the evaluation team to look at. Analysis of work samples enables evaluation team to evaluate the standards being achieved, the progress learners have made towards achieving the course/programme ILOs, the quality of assessment, in particular marking, and the quality and effectiveness of the feedback given. Examples of learners assessed work and a range of assessment material should be made available to evaluation team in order to demonstrate how assessment supports learning.

Meetings and Questionnaires

Meetings with staff, learners and stakeholders are key sources of evidence in making evaluations about a provider's performance. The nominee will be asked to schedule meetings with staff and with a representative sample of learners and stakeholders; if required. Meetings will not, except by prior arrangement, exceed 60 minutes. Meetings may also be held virtually or by telephone. Questionnaires will be sent to learners and trainers and where required to employers, parents and other stakeholders to seek their views and suggestions about the performance of the provider, which may also be obtained by telephone, email and/or online surveys.

Feedback

Throughout the evaluation reviewers will share their observations and findings with the nominee in a way that allows the nominee to respond. They are also open to receiving additional evidence should the nominee wish to offer this in response to issues raised. Feedback will occur in the following formats; the LR will discuss the progress of the evaluation and the emerging findings and issues with the nominee. On the last day; the LR will provide feedback on the main findings to the nominee.

The verbal feedback provides an opportunity for the evaluation team to share their observations and findings with the nominee and other members of the provider's staff in a formal way. The nominee or a representative of the provider is encouraged to take relevant notes of the feedback, particularly the team's recommendations. Some of the findings may subsequently change as a result of the BQA's internal quality assurance processes, and the phrasing of the verbal feedback will not necessarily be the same as the phrases of the report. However, the main evaluations offered at the end of this process are unlikely to change. If for any reason they do, the provider will be informed of such changes in due course.

Evaluation Report

The evaluation report presents the provider's performance in each of the three Sections and the overall provider's performance category, including the provider's strength and recommendations on what the provider should do to improve. The report will go through a number of internal quality assurance activities and will be sent to the provider to check for factual accuracy before it is submitted to the BQA's Board for approval and the Cabinet for endorsement.

Mechanisms for Issuing Evaluations

Evaluations are reached collectively by the evaluation team during the daily team meetings. These evaluation team meetings are essential to complete the evaluation requirements and agree on issues arising during the evaluation process. Discussions in these meetings are vital to reach collective evaluations when considering the evaluation of indicators in the framework and the overall provider performance category.

The final evaluations on the indicators of the framework are reached professionally. This is particularly so when evaluating the lessons/training sessions observation as well as the provider's documents, evidence and supporting information in the Self-Evaluation Form (SEF) and during the evaluation process. In the absence of relevant data, information, records and/or the related learning systems, the evaluation of the relevant indicators of each section will be affected, which in turn will be reflected on the provider's overall performance category.

It should be noted that the evaluation process in exceptional circumstances does not include issuing judgements, but rather focuses on giving a professional reflection of the provider's fulfilment of the basic requirements to perform its tasks in line with expectations. The categorisations of the overall performance of the provider aims mainly to direct the provider effort and take appropriate procedures to ensure the best possible performance. The overall provider performance classified under category (Sufficient Response) are considered meeting the expectations to handle appropriately the teaching/training process during exceptional circumstances.

Code of Conduct

Reviewers have a code of conduct which reflects the BQA's values and will always be observed. Reviewers will uphold the highest professional standards in their work, and ensure that staff of the provider are treated fairly and benefit from their evaluation. These standards are ensured through the following code:

- evaluate objectively and impartially
- report honestly, ensuring that evaluations are fair and reliable

- carry out their work with integrity, treating all those they meet with courtesy and sensitivity
- do all they can to minimise the stress on those involved in the evaluation, and act with their best interests and well-being as priorities
- maintain purposeful and productive dialogue with those whose work is evaluated, and communicate evaluations clearly and frankly
- respect the confidentiality of information, particularly about the provider and individuals.

Issues that Affect the Evaluation Process

Health and Safety Issues

In case the provider fails to comply with the health and safety requirements and procedures related to the exceptional circumstances, as approved by the official bodies of the Kingdom, which may cause a critical health and safety hazardous situation, the BQA will inform the licensing bodies regarding this matter. This failure will directly impact the categorisation of the provider's overall performance.

Non-compliance with the Evaluation Process and Requirements

Providers may be deemed as in the lowest category if they fail to comply with the evaluation requirements such as providing data or records, access to platforms and different learning management systems, access to regular/virtual lesson/training session and/or other requirements. This process will be in accordance with BQA's policies and procedures.

Complaints

The DVR expects that the evaluations to be completed smoothly and efficiently, but in some exceptional cases, the provider may not be satisfied with an aspect of the evaluation process and procedures. In this case, the nominee should discuss this with the LR immediately. If the matter is not resolved during the evaluation process, the provider can express its dissatisfaction to the concerned directorate at BQA through following the approved procedure for formal complaints within three working days as per the BQA policies, procedures and timeframes.

Complaints can only relate to reviewers' behaviour, their compliance with the professional code of conduct, and the quality of communication and interaction during the evaluation. Complaints cannot be filed about provider evaluations and categorisation. In turn, according to BQA's policies and procedures, the evaluation team is entitled to file a complaint in the event of any violation by the provider to any of the Team members.