بوليتكنك البحرين
**Bahrain Polytechnic**

# Flowering in the Desert, Growing Employability, Embedding Quality at Bahrain Polytechnic

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# Employment & Employability

Graduate unemployment has stimulated the world's concern and similarly this has been the case in Bahrain. However, internationally, the focus of higher education has gradually shifted from students' employment to employability (Johnston & Watson, 2006).

# Reforming education

- Bahrain Economic Vision 2030 & Government Program 2015-2018 considers education a cornerstone of knowledge based economy.

- The main goal of Vision & the program for Bahrain to develop "a productive, globally competitive economy, shaped by the government and driven by a pioneering private sector" diversifying economy away from oil.

- Beside providing a public commitment to narrow the gap and improve education  a number of mechanisms were thoroughly considered and implemented including the establishment of Bahrain Polytechnic

# Employability

Over the last 20 years the definitions of employability have progressed from demand-led skill sets towards a comprehensive perspective of 'graduate attributes' that include 'softer' transferable skills and person-centred qualities, developed in conjunction with discipline-specific knowledge, skills and competencies

Cole and Tibby (2013)

# Bahrain Polytechnic & Employability Background

- Bahrain Polytechnic primarily developed to meet the market gap of well-prepared graduates who are <u>work Ready</u>.

- Employability is clearly emphasized in since establishment and at it's <u>mission.</u>

- Employability was legitimately <u>instituted since 2010</u> in collaboration with Labour Market partners.

- The Employability  framework that developed back then mainly comprised of the <u>8 Employability Skills only.</u>

# Employability Background

| | |
|---|---|
| **Communication** | • Communicate effectively in ways that contribute to productive and harmonious relationships across stakeholders. |
| **Team work** | • Work effectively independently and in collaboration with others through a common approach towards a common goal. |
| **Problem solving** | • Analyse a problem critically and respond appropriately to organisational and societal needs. |
| **Initiative and enterprise** | • Apply resourcefulness, innovation and strategic thinking in an organisational context. |
| **Planning and organisation** | • Efficiently and effectively plan and manage work commitments |
| **Self management** | • Demonstrate self-discipline, resilience and adaptability, and be able to plan and achieve personal and professional goals |
| **Learning** | • Understand the need for and engage in life-long learning |
| **Technology** | • Utilize information technology effectively and ethically in their personal and professional lives |

21st Century (Employability) Skills Framework (2010)

# Bahrain Polytechnic & Employability Project

A way forward plan submitted to HEC, detailing the objectives and interventions to maximise employability agenda. *(Sep, 2015)*

- *Perception and understanding assessed*

- *Recommendations to revamp the model identified*

- *Definition adopted*

- *Services and practices scoped*

- *Framework developed*

- *Actions prioritized to attend the gap*

# HEA-UK Employability Framework

- Bahrain Polytechnic aligns with the HEA-UK Employability Framework

- This framework is based on the HEA publication, Defining and Developing the approach to Employability (2013). It has also been informed by feedback from representatives of the 37 higher education institutions who participated in the HEA's Employability Strategic Enhancement Programme (2014/15).

INCLUSIVITY

Stage 1
Defining
employability

Attributes and capabilities

Specialist, technical and transferable skills

Experience and networks

Knowledge and application

Stage 4
Measuring impact

Confidence, resilience and adaptability

Embedding employability

Behaviours, qualities and values

Stage 2
Auditing and mapping

Reflection and articulation

Enterprise and entrepeneurship

Self, social and cultural awareness

Career guidance and management

Stage 3
Prioritising actions

ENGAGEMENT

COLLABORATION

Definition adopted by Bahrain Polytechnic

Bahrain Polytechnic audited and mapped its practices and developed the Employability Framework based on this exercise

Prioritizing actions to embed Employability

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# Employability Project

Perceptions and understanding of Employability model assessed (Dec, 2015 – Mar, 2016)

- Employability Discussion Forums scheduled across to ensure as broad a sweep as possible.

- 116 (61%) academic and 72 (33%) allied staff attended total 188 (45%)

- The data generated from the EDF with staff was rich and varied. There were three key emerging themes:

  - The recognition of Employability as a working and applied concept at Bahrain Polytechnic

  - Mixed awareness of fundamentals  and application of Employability

  - The need to develop Employability at Bahrain Polytechnic

# Employability Project

Bahrain Polytechnic Employability Definition approved. (April, 2016)

After review of literature and short listing exercise, 2 definitions were proposed to the Academic Board

Lowden et al (2011) "the acquisition of skills and attributes that allow the individual to secure and maintain employments, to develop within a particular job and have the ability to move on to new sustainable employment if required. This involves possessing particular knowledge, skills and attitudes with an ability to deploy them and market them to employers"

Yorke and Knight (2003) "a set of achievements – skills, understandings and personal attributes – that make graduates more likely to gain employment and be successful in their chosen occupations, which benefits themselves, the workforce, the community and the economy". (Approved)

# **Employability Project**

- Bahrain Polytechnic Employability activities scoped, mapped and the framework developed and approved. (Jun – Sep, 2016)

**Activity**

Discuss with the person next to you the following questions

- What does a framework mean?

- Why is it important to have a framework?

- Are you aware of any Employability Frameworks?

# Framework

What dose a framework means?

- "…a broad overview, outline, or skeleton of interlinked items which supports a particular approach to a specific objective, and serves as a guide that can be modified as required by adding or deleting items."

- "A theoretical structure of assumptions, principles, and rules that holds together the ideas comprising a broad concept…"

# **Framework**

Why is it important to have a framework?

- Provides logical comprehension for related concepts.

- Provides a process for discussion, reflection, action and evaluation.

- Understand the exact requirements of the institution

- Develop you better towards expectations

- Institutional branding

# Developing Framework

# Developing Framework



Bahrain Polytechnic Learner Employability Outputs

Measuring Learner Employability

**Indirect**
- Employer survey
- Alumni survey
- Alumni Focus group
- Awards
- Reflection
- Recognition

**Learner**
- Employability
  Knowledge
  Attributes
  Skills

**Direct**
- Assessment component aligned to learning outcomes
- Evaluation of programme learning outcomes mapped to course learning outcomes
- Reflective log of capstone course

Q&A

Thank you