



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

Directorate of Vocational Reviews

Monitoring Visit Report

Al Noor Education Center
East Riffa
Kingdom of Bahrain

Date of last review: 29-31 October 2018

Date of the 1st monitoring visit: 30 December 2019

VO131-C4-Ma009

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Monitoring visit

The purpose of monitoring visits is to evaluate the progress made by an Institute in addressing the key issues for action identified in the review report.

Information about the provider

Al Noor Education Center (Al Noor) was established in April 2016. It is licensed by the Ministry of Education (MoE) to offer a range of non-accredited general English and Information Technology (IT) courses. The Center also offers tutorial courses covering the Ministry of Education (MoE)'s school curricula for main subjects (Arabic, English, Mathematics and Science) for all stages. Most learners come from government schools and are aged seven and eighteen.

The Center operates from one location in East Riffa. Most learners aged seven to eighteen years old. Since the last review visit, the Center has enrolled 621 learners in tutorial courses, and no general English or IT courses have been offered since the last review visit. Al Noor organisational structure consist of the Center Manager who is the owner, a secretary and an office boy. A pool of part-time teachers is used as and when needed.

Last review

The overall effectiveness of Al Noor Education Center was judged 'inadequate' in the last review and therefore the Center was subject to a monitoring visit to assess the progress it is making in addressing the recommendations detailed in the review report. The review report concluded that all aspects of provision are 'inadequate' as well as its capacity to improve. The Center's approach to quality assuring its offerings is insufficient. There are no clear development goals, and the Center failed to draw up basic improvement plans. It also lacks sufficient and experienced human resources.

Any significant changes to the provider since the last review:

- The Center starts to maintain records of learners' performance during the first semester of 2019-2020 academic year, and it maintains learners' work represented in the set for pre-course test, quizzes and post-course test in most subjects.
- Al Noor developed the Center's Policies and Procedures Handbook.

Criteria for judging progress on an issue / recommendation and the provider's overall progress:

Table 1: Judgement per recommendation

Judgement	Standard
Fully Addressed	The provider has demonstrated marked progress in addressing the recommendation. The actions taken by the provider have led to significant improvements in the identified aspect and, as a consequence, in the overall effectiveness of the provider, particularly in the outcomes for learners.
Partially Addressed	The provider has taken positive action to address the recommendation. There is evidence that these actions have produced improvements and that these improvements are sustainable. The actions taken are having a positive, but as yet incomplete, impact on the quality of provision and outcomes for learners.
Not Addressed	The provider has not taken appropriate actions to address the recommendation and/or what actions have been taken have had little or no impact on the quality of provision and outcomes for learners. Weaknesses still persist within this aspect of provision.

Table 2: Overall Grading

Grade	Grade Description	Standard
A	Sufficient progress	The provider has fully addressed the majority of the recommendations contained in the review report, and/or previous monitoring report, and includes those which have most impact on learners' achievement, and the rest have been partially addressed. No further monitoring is required.
B	In progress	The provider has at least partially addressed all of the recommendations contained in the review report and/or previous monitoring report.
C	Insufficient progress	The provider has made little or no progress in addressing the majority of the recommendations contained in the review report and/or previous monitoring report.

Progress on recommendations

Recommendation 1:

- ensure that learners develop suitable skills and knowledge and make sufficient progress compared to their prior attainment.

Judgment: partially addressed

Comment:

Al Noor Education Center 's management prepared 'BQA's recommendations follow-up report' including an action plan to address the previous review report recommendations. With regard to Recommendation 1, the plan covered a number of procedures taken by the management and most of them were addressed; for example, the development of a pool of sufficient policies and procedures such as monitoring learners' performance and achievement levels, academic progress measurement policy and added-value. The Center also applied pre-course test, quizzes and post-course test for admitted learners and prepared a form to capture marks for such examinations and tests to monitor the learners' attainment and academic progress. Furthermore, the Center keeps electronic record related to such data.

From sessions observed by the monitoring visit team and analysis of learners' results, it is evident that learners are gaining sufficient knowledge, skills and competencies related to tutorial courses; however, they were less gained by few learners. Furthermore, learners enrolled in the English courses are not developing writing skills sufficiently. Approximately half of learners are progressing adequately, whereas their level of progress varies from one course to another; learners make minimal progress in few courses, particularly in Chemistry 102, English 101 and Arabic for the intermediate stage.

Recommendation 2:

- ensure that learners are rigorously assessed with a clear rubric, and the outcomes of the assessments are utilised in lesson planning to address learners' varying needs.

Judgement: partially addressed

Comment:

Al Noor Education Center developed a number of assessment-related policies including placement test/pre-course tests, as well as moderation and verification policy; however, such policies were not implemented consistently in all courses nor effectively in a number of courses. Currently, teachers assess learners' prior attainment level, or assess their levels when they joined courses adequately through diagnostic tests or pre-course tests; however, the test questions do not always measure learners' prior attainment rigorously in terms of basic skills of subjects. Despite learners' attainment and progress levels are adequately measured in courses through quizzes and post-course tests, the monitoring team noticed that assessments mechanisms in Arabic do not cover all basic skills of the subject. Teachers also use model answers for marking most offered subjects; however, no clear rubrics are applied to assess writing skill in English. Also, it was noticed that written feedback about learners' classroom activities or various tests is not provided.

From the observed sessions, teachers measure learners' understanding and achievement of lesson objectives through suitable assessment methods which include oral questions and a set of individual and group activities; nevertheless, there are a few cases where such activities are not implemented effectively. Moreover, learners' prior or continuous assessment results are not utilized in lesson planning to meet learners' varying learning needs.

Recommendation 3:

- ensure that the courses are well planned and structured to meet learners and stakeholders' different needs

Judgement: partially addressed

Comment:

Al Noor has taken some measures to address this recommendation. It developed some relevant policies such as 'Formation and Functions of the Academic Advisory Committee Policy'. According to this policy, the advisory committee prepares and approves the core competencies /sub competencies and skills lists for each academic level, reviews, moderates and approves examination papers and assessments, and proposes additional curriculum to be used in course planning. Additional policies include curriculum and course planning policy, and moderation and verification policy. However, these policies are recently developed in May 2019, and their impact is not clearly seen by the monitoring visit team. Furthermore, Al Noor prepared appropriate course handouts for the majority of tutorial courses and developed examination questions verification and course planning forms which are not implemented consistently in all courses.

Recommendation 4:

- devise and implement a formal and effective mechanism to support and guide learners to achieve better outcomes, including learners with special needs

Judgement: partially addressed

Comment:

Al Noor develops a suitable policy related to support and guidance of learners including those with special needs; however, procedures related to this category of learners are not implemented formally and adequately. For instance, the registration form contains no section to identify and accommodate learners with special needs, and the Center's premises is not prepared to receive learners with physical disability. Al Noor starts to use a suitable form to identify support and guidance provided for learners in a number of offered courses such as provision of additional time for learners to focus on areas for improvement or awarding extra time during the examination setting according to the teacher's evaluation of the learners' abilities. Al Noor provides verbal induction for learners when they register in courses; nevertheless, there are no clear guidelines for learners covering the basic information on offered courses.

Recommendation 5:

- strengthen the leadership and management by:
 - ensuring that learners' achievement data and records for all courses are accurately maintained throughout the course, closely monitored and analysed to inform improvement decisions
 - improving internal quality assurance systems, including policies and procedures to monitor the overall performance of learners and teachers effectively
 - ensuring that strategic planning is informed with a clear self-evaluation process and has measurable goals and performance indicators.

Judgement: partially addressed

Comment:

From scrutiny of course files, it is evident that Al Noor started to keep learners' achievement data including attendance and participation rates, pre-course tests, quizzes and post-course tests marks, as well as the progress level they made measured by the difference between the pre-course tests and post-course tests marks. Overall, the Center collects and analyses all data to reflect the number of learners in one academic year, their average marks and progress level. However, this analysis is not implemented at the educational stage or subject levels, and learners' achievement trends are not monitored over years to utilize this data in identifying areas for improvement and taking the necessary decisions.

In 2019, the Center developed a handbook covering a set of policies and procedures relating to learners' achievement measurement, follow-up their progress and the quality of provision including the curriculum policy, learners' support and guidance, monitoring staff performance and session management; however, course file scrutiny for the conducted course during 2019 shows that these policies and procedures are not fully nor consistently implemented, particularly, the moderation and verification of assessments policy. This handbook also includes the 'Formation and Functions of the Academic Advisory Committee Policy', where this committee identifies competencies, select extracurricular curriculum for each education stage, moderates and verifies all pre-course and post course tests and assessments. It also evaluates teachers' performance through class observations. Despite the above, and except for the examinations

verification forms for some of the conducted courses, the monitoring visit team has not observed the implementation of this policy. Moreover, a limited number of critical class observation visits were conducted and identified areas for improvement, however, these areas were not followed up to ensure continuous quality improvement. In September 2019, the Center organised a workshop for teachers on effective lesson planning; which was one of the areas for improvement identified by the class observation visits.

The Center's strategic plan 2018-2020 was devised based on SWOT analysis that was implemented adequately. This plan includes clear objectives relevant to the quality of provision and key performance indicators (KPIs); however, the implementation of this plan is still in early stages and there were a number of procedures that had not been implemented to the date of this monitoring visit.

Overall Judgement and Further Recommendations

Overall Judgement: In Progress

Comment:

Al Noor Education Center has partially addressed the previous review report recommendations. Currently, learners' achievement is assessed, and their progress level is monitored adequately. From the analysis of learners' achievement records and the observed sessions, learners are gaining sufficient skills and knowledge and are achieving sufficient progress compared to their prior attainment; however, few learners do not develop skills sufficiently and make minimal progress. English course learners do not acquire adequate writing skills. From the observed sessions, the quality of teaching is improved adequately, where teachers assess the learners' understanding level, achieve the lesson objectives through oral questions, individual and group class activities, and provide useful verbal feedback. Though teachers use model answers in marking examinations, the Center still lacks clear rubrics to assess writing skills in English courses. Teachers do not utilise the outcomes of the assessments in lesson planning to address learners' varying needs. In addition, the Centre does not monitor the implementation of the strategic plan and KPIs regularly.

The Center developed a pool of policies and procedures related to the learners' achievement and the quality of provision, as well as the quality assurance arrangements; however, these procedures are insufficiently and inconsistently implemented, especially the moderation and verification of assessments. Limited class observation visits were conducted but identified areas

for improvement are not followed-up to ensure continuous quality improvement. Still, more efforts need to be made to address the review report recommendations more effectively focusing on the effective and comprehensive implementation of policies and procedures that have been recently developed, and especially in relation to the assessments moderation and ensuring that they are appropriate to measure the required competencies, and monitoring of teachers' performance. The role of the Academic Advisory Committee, especially in relation to the development of extracurricular provision, needs to be enhanced.

Summary of progress grades

Overall progress grade	Grade: B	Description: In progress
Recommendations		Description
Recommendation 1		Partially addressed
Recommendation 2		Partially addressed
Recommendation 3		Partially addressed
Recommendation 4		Partially addressed
Recommendation 5		Partially addressed

The Center took some sufficient steps to address the previous review report recommendations and improve its provision. 'In progress' is given to the Center. As per the BQA regulations, the Center will be subject to a second monitoring visit.