



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

Directorate of Vocational Reviews

Review Report

ILC Training
Zing
Kingdom of Bahrain

Date Reviewed: 10 – 13 February 2020

VO097-C4-R022

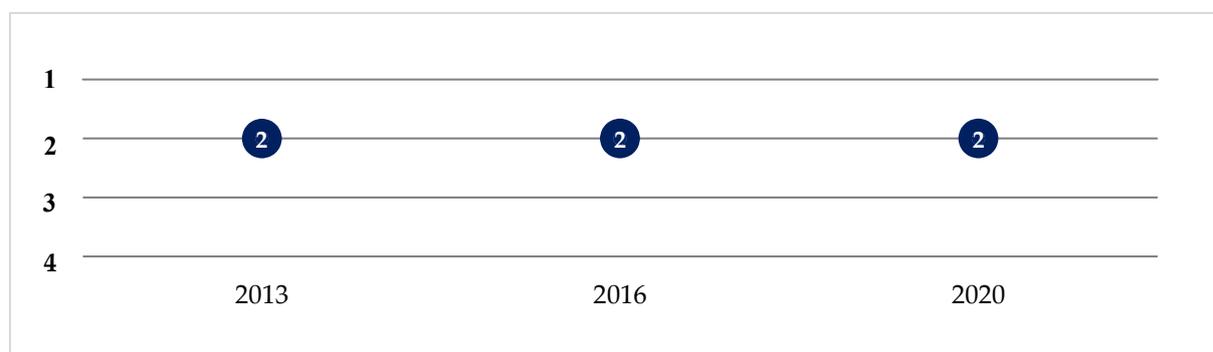
Introduction

The Directorate of Vocational Reviews (DVR) of the Education & Training Quality Authority (BQA), conducted this review over four days by a team of five reviewers. For this review, reviewers observed training sessions and other related activities, analysed data about the courses and qualifications learners achieve, examined learners' written and other work, examined documents and materials provided by ILC Training and collected feedback from learners, employers, trainers, management and support staff.

This Report summarises the review team's findings and their recommendations about what the provider should do to improve.

Summary of review judgements		
	Aspect	Judgement
Outcomes	Learners' achievement	2
Programmes and processes	Effectiveness of teaching/training and assessment	2
	Quality of courses/programmes	2
	Learners' support and guidance	2
Management and governance	Effectiveness of leadership, management and governance	2
Capacity to improve		2
Overall effectiveness		2

Provider's overall effectiveness throughout the last three reviews



Outstanding	1	Good	2	Satisfactory	3	Inadequate	4
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Overall effectiveness 'Good'

Judgement justifications

- Learners' achievement as well as all other review aspects are judged 'Good' at ILC Training (ILC).
 - The management maintains effective relationship with major stakeholders and international bodies and utilises their feedback to inform its improvement directions and decisions. This is well reflected in the Institute's strategic and operational plans that are geared towards meeting learners' evolving needs.
 - Based on a clear understanding of the local market needs and trends, ILC offers a range of local attendance, local achievement and externally accredited courses in the fields of English language, communication & soft skills and business & commerce.
 - Learners acquire knowledge and develop vocational skills that are relevant to their needs and most learners achieve the course Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs). The Institute aggregates and maintains detailed learners' achievement records for most of the executed courses and further trend-analysis is carried out to inform improvement plans.
 - Trainers use a range of training methods to engage and challenge learners and promote learning through sharing their relevant vocational experiences. Most sessions are well planned and delivered.
- Most of the trainers utilise detailed and well-structured lesson plans. The outcomes of learners' profiles, the pre-course assessment results and the continuous formative assessments are utilised in informing lesson plans, specifically in the Northern Council for Further Education (NCFE) programmes. In contrast, the session plans of the Effective Communication Skills (ECS) courses are not suitably linked to the course ILOs.
 - Considering the type and duration of the offered courses, ILC provides comprehensive support and guidance to help learners reach their full potential. Formal, inclusive and clear support policy and procedure are effectively implemented during the learning journey. Additionally, trainers provide guidance to learners to enrich their knowledge in related matters.
 - ILC implements an effective quality assurance arrangement, which includes policies and procedures utilised to ensure that the quality of learning and training is consistent in all courses. Nonetheless, the moderation and verification process are not implemented consistently across all courses and the process does not cover all learning aspects.

Capacity to improve 'Good'

Judgement justifications

- Since the last review conducted in 2016, ILC's overall effectiveness has remained at a good level.
- The leadership and management have undertaken useful improvement initiatives to address the previous review's recommendations. These include further developing the quality assurance arrangement and introducing mechanisms to ensure developing learners' skills and knowledge relevant to their learning and course level.
- To ensure sustainable growth and quality improvement, the Institute has implemented effective strategic and operational plans with challenging targets that are monitored closely by the management. These plans are further tuned based on feedback sought from stakeholders and international awarding bodies and the outcomes of the on-going self-assessments carried out by the management team.
- ILC has a fit-for-purpose organizational structure to run its operations and staff members, in general, have experience in relevant fields of vocational training. In order to meet its future expansion plans and react to stakeholders' feedback, the Institute has moved to bigger premises with up-to-date training hardware and software. Furthermore, the Institute has strengthened its current human resources by recruiting an IT trainer to expand its offerings to include IT programmes. Also, ILC is working on placing all its local qualifications on the National Qualification Framework (NQF).
- Through its highly effective links and affiliations with local, regional and international bodies, the Institute has introduced NCFE, Institute of Supply and Materials Management (ISMM) and ECS courses targeting job seekers, employees and foreigners who are interested in learning Bahraini dialect and culture.
- ILC has finalized a plan to implement a new intranet (Tadween), that maintains learners' records, achievement, attendance and feedbacks, in addition to its communication with stakeholders. Also, a new website is being developed to better serve the stakeholders.

The provider's key strengths

- The effective strategic and operational plans that are well aligned to the Institute's vision, mission and value statements and are based on thorough and periodic self-evaluation process that benefits from stakeholders' feedback.
- The congenial and welcoming learning environment that is enhanced with a diverse range of learning resources and facilities.
- The effective and strong links with stakeholders, which provides opportunities for expanding the Institute's offerings and changing its approaches to better meet the needs of its stakeholders
- The comprehensive and systematic support and guidance provided to learners throughout their learning journey.

Recommendations

In order to improve, ILC Training should:

- improve the structure of ECS courses by identifying measurable intended learning outcomes, mapping assessment tools to the stated outcomes, constantly implementing the verification and moderation processes and clearly identifying the access and entry requirements
- further improve the teaching and training methods to better engage learners and promote learning throughout the lessons
- ensure that the policies governing the provision are all stipulated in a comprehensive manual that is shared by all the relevant stakeholders to maintain consistent implementation and learners' achievement level and standard.

Learners' achievement 'Good'

Judgement justifications

- Learners acquire and develop effective knowledge and vocational skills relevant to their courses. Learners' level of attainment in most of the enrolled courses reflects the standard of knowledge and understanding as seen in the good and better sessions, which represents the majority of the observed training sessions. This is evidenced in learners' participation during the in-class activities and the level of their interaction with the trainer. Upon course completion, learners are able to complete the assigned tasks in accordance with the course level, particularly in the NCFE and general English courses. However, a few learners do not master all skills towards the end of the training course.
- Learners and stakeholders are satisfied with the learning experience at ILC. Learners affirm that the developed skills are beneficial to their life, utilised in their workplace and have had a positive impact on their employability.
- The outcome of the placement test for the general English and NCFE courses is used as an indicator to evaluate learners' starting point. In addition, an informal interview format is used for the ECS courses to gauge learners' level and needs prior to the start of the course.
- From the provided records and samples of learners' work, most of the learners progress productively through the course activities and proceed successfully toward achieving their certificates, particularly in the externally accredited courses.
- The Learners Performance Data (LPD) submitted for this review, indicates that the success rates are high for all the conducted courses, and the overall retention rate is almost 90%, as expected in short courses.
- The majority of learners are enrolled in the externally accredited courses, which represent 60% of the total enrolment. Most of the learners achieve the qualifications they aim for in a timely manner according to the awarding body's regulations, particularly in the NCFE Level Certificate in English courses. Learners can respond to the variety of relevant formative and summative assessments used, with good level of attainment as evidenced by the standards of the learners' produced work and level of achievement; however, a few of them achieve the course outcomes after several attempts.
- In the local achievement and local attendance courses, most of the learners achieve the stated course outcomes and complete the course requirements successfully. However, a few learners are not able to meet these requirements toward the end of the course, particularly in the general English courses. Moreover, the produced work in the ECS courses is barely at an acceptable level, due to the courses' structure which adversely impacts the implementation of the course assessment toward achieving the approved course outcomes.
- Most of the learners show commitment and positive attitudes towards their learning as reflected from their regular attendance. The Institute has an attendance and punctuality policy in place. Records of attendance are regularly maintained, yet punctuality is not recorded consistently. From the observed sessions and the records

maintained, most learners attend regularly and on time; however, punctuality is an issue in a few cases. During the observed sessions, several learners arrived more than 30 minutes after the start of the session.

- Learners extend what they have been taught by participating in purposeful discussions and by questioning their trainers. They also reflect on their learning

through a number of proper reflection forms which have been introduced recently.

- Most of the learners are able to work well independently and collaboratively through in-class and language conversation group activities. However, during the observed sessions, several learners depended more on their colleague's answers to accomplish the given tasks.

Areas for improvement

- Mastering the skills and knowledge relevant to the course learning outcomes, particularly in the ECS courses.
- Learners punctuality.

Effectiveness of teaching/training and assessment 'Good'

Judgement justifications

- Trainers have relevant subject knowledge and experience in their field where the English language trainers are certified with Certificate in English Language Teaching to Adults (CELTA). Most of them are capable of providing learners with sound explanation and practical experiences.
 - Trainers use a variety of training methods and activities that effectively attract and engage learners. They also provide useful real-life examples, hands-on practical activities, and respond well to learners' questions. However, in a few of the observed sessions, learners were insufficiently engaged and motivated throughout the training session.
 - Available resources and learning aids, such as power point presentation, google classroom, word log and on-line based learning platform, are utilised well to enrich the learning experience.
 - Effective range of formative and summative assessments are used in the vast majority of the conducted courses to assess learners' understanding and attainment, including examinations, quizzes, in class activities and implementing Concept Checking Questions (CCQs) techniques in the NCFE classes. Although ILC has a clear rubric for different courses, marking is insufficiently rigorous in a few cases.
 - Verification and Moderation reports are regularly processed for different courses. However, the areas for improvement are not always critical, particularly in the ECS courses.
- Most of the sessions observed by the review team were timely managed and well planned. The flow of the sessions is delivered in a progressive and systematic way.
 - Trainers use detailed session plans to deliver the training, particularly in the NCFE programmes. Trainers usually adjust the session plan according to learners' attainment, start with ice breaker activities and share the session objectives. On the other hand, session plans of the ECS courses are mostly brief, no clear linkage of the lesson plan content to the course intended learning outcome is indicated, and time is not appropriately allocated for the provided activities.
 - Most trainers effectively adjust the training methods to address individual learners' needs through further explanation and providing more work to practice and improve their skills. However, in a minority of the observed sessions, low ability learners were not given enough support to help them achieve better.
 - The majority of the trainers develop learners' higher order thinking and encourage self- and life-long learning through the use of advance examples, activities and encourage learners to self-practice.
 - From the observed sessions, trainers develop learners' confidence to communicate in the Bahraini dialect in the ECS courses and through providing challenging tasks in the English language classes.

- Records of learners' performance are kept, and trainers provide useful verbal feedback during the sessions. Furthermore, individual progress reports are provided to learners with useful written feedback. However, the written feedback provided in

the ECS courses is not always individualised and does not reflect the specific areas for improvement and strengths that learners can build on.

Areas for improvement

- Training methodologies to engage learners productively
- Rigorousness of the assessment used in the ECS courses.

Quality of course/programmes 'Good'

Judgement justifications

- ILC offers externally accredited courses that include NCFE Entry Levels 1 to 3 and Level 1 and 2 English language qualification, Cambridge Professional Academy Certified General English courses and ISMM Sales and Marketing Diploma. The Institute also provides locally developed courses, namely: General English, Communications & Soft Skills and Business & Commerce courses that are offered both as local achievement and local attendance courses.
- As evidenced in the 'Market Survey Data for Learner Achievement' document, ILC conducts periodical analysis to identify the training gaps in the local labour market and monitors the emerging trends in the training sector to inform its provision. In addition, effective communication is maintained through emails, calls and visits with stakeholders, and based on their specific needs, ILC designs and develops the courses on offer.
- NCFE and ISMM courses are very well-structured with clear course outlines that state the ILOs, teaching methods, assessment methods and rubrics. The Institute rigorously implements the awarding body's specifications.
- ILC has a fit for purpose formal mechanism for designing, reviewing and updating its locally developed courses. For newly offered local achievement and local attendance courses, the objectives, structure, curriculum, teaching methods and assessments are formulated according to the target audience profile by the trainer or subject matter expert. These courses are subject to the Ministry of Labour and Social Development's (MLSD) and concerned stakeholders' approval prior to implementation.
- The local soft skills courses are appropriately structured, and ILOs are modified as per stakeholders' needs. However, the ECS courses are not clearly designed. There are no measurable ILOs and the assessments are not clearly linked to the learning outcomes. Moreover, the implementation of these courses does not always conform to the course descriptors approved by MLSD.
- Based on the outcomes of the regular analysis of stakeholders' feedbacks the Institute introduces, reviews and updates or discontinues its offerings. Moreover, through periodic monitoring, different aspects of the courses are evaluated for their effectiveness and these are modified as required.
- ILC trainers and learners have access to a good range of authentic and up-to-date learning material, such as textbooks, on-line resources and technology aids, that enhance the training and learning experience.
- There is a formal entry and access mechanism for placing learners within the different levels of the NCFE and General English courses. A comprehensive placement test with detailed rubrics for placing learners is systematically implemented. As for soft skills courses, the target audience profile is stated in the MLSD approval document or it is as per the specification of the client/company. For the

ECS courses, although the Institute has an appropriate conversation placement test and rubrics for placing learners, the

implementation of this tool is not always consistent.

Areas for improvement

- The specifications of the ECS courses and the implementation of the conversation placement test.

Learners' support and guidance 'Good'

Judgement justifications

- A fit for purpose mechanism is in place to support learners, and trainers are approachable, before, during and after course completion. The support practices adopted by ILC are articulated in a number of effectively implemented policies, such as the 'Student code of conduct' document, 'Equal Opportunity Policy' and 'Safeguarding Learners Policy'. However, the level of details among these documents varies between well-articulated procedures to general policy-related information.
- ILC effectively implements a number of support practices that include: makeup classes, after class hours support and individual learning plans, which utilise a form dedicated to learners in need for extra assistance throughout the course. In addition, a broad range of flexible arrangements that contribute to enhancing learners' understanding and achievement are in place.
- There are various types of purposeful extracurricular activities conducted by ILC, to enhance the learning experience, including conducting relevant field trips, organizing 'market days' to enable learners to practice their marketing and sales skills, in addition to forming conversation groups after class hours to provide learners with an opportunity to consolidate their communication and language skills. Recently ILC has conducted a workshop on CV writing for their learners, particularly the unemployed, to improve their employability skills.
- ILC takes the initiative and approach stakeholders to inform them about the offered courses, such as describing the importance of the course and what skills learners are expected to gain upon course completion, utilising the Institute's social media accounts and addressing learners' inquiries about the Institute's courses and programmes, their availability and duration, in addition to assisting learners in the registration processes.
- ILC conducts 'Intro Day', prior to the course beginning, where learners are suitably introduced to the course syllabus and structure, code of conduct, health and safety instructions, and the availability of trainers to help and support them. Although ILC is developing a new website, the current version of the website is insufficiently detailed, and not updated with current conducted courses.
- Considering that the majority of the learners are walk-in applicants, learners are effectively made aware of their performance, through mid- and end of course reports, mid-course reports cover details about learners' grades, in addition to constructive advices on how to elevate their performance in the rest of the course. The end of course reports comprise the final grades and performance comments that are tailored to individual attainments. These reports are discussed and signed by the learner and shared through email or the Google Classroom dedicated to the course.
- Where applicable, ILC has a practice of developing weekly 'sent upon request' and end of course reports, provided to employers. These reports are detailed with learners' progress, attendance and punctuality, in addition to general

comments on the performance of the course intake.

- The arrangements in place for learners with Special Educational Needs and /or Disabilities (SEND) are suitable. Also, ILC employs a safeguarding policy, where learners with learning difficulties and/or physical disabilities are identified. The policy also captures how staff at ILC

should cater for these learners' needs and requirements throughout the course. Moreover, ILC keeps records of the most frequent learning challenges faced with learners and the proper actions taken to cater for these needs, as a reference for future potential cases.

Areas for improvement

- The level of details stipulated in the support policies.

Judgement justifications

- ILC has a clear strategic direction and core values that enable the Institute to raise learners' achievement and monitor the overall performance of the provision. There are clear vision and mission statements that focus on enabling learners to fulfil their goals, expanding the range of courses offered and improving ILC performance.
- ILC has a strategic plan that covers the period 2016 - 2020 and is based on the outcomes of SWOT analyses, regular self-evaluation and real understanding of the surrounding environment. The Institute's strategic plan focuses on training courses/programmes, employers and sustainability. The developed action plans are linked to the strategic objectives with clear information about accountability and implementation time scales. Progress is regularly monitored by the management team.
- ILC management closely monitors learner's achievement and maintains detailed records on learners' performance for most courses. Data are analysed and followed up on course level. Annual performance report is generated to include the overall achievement, completion, retention and attendance rates. These are compared over years and discussed during the management meetings. Minutes of meetings show that improvement actions are taken based on the outcomes of these reports. This is clearly evident in the NCFE courses. However, the achievement data of the local courses are not always aggregated nor analysed to inform decision-making.
- ILC has an effective quality assurance arrangement; a set of policies and procedures are in place and most of them are implemented to ensure the quality of the provision. However, the rigour of these practices varies amongst different courses. For example, the NCFE programmes are subject to systematic internal and external quality assurance, including verification and moderation processes. However, the moderation and verification of learners' work are not consistently implemented for the ECS courses. Furthermore, the issued policies are scattered and a few of them are insufficiently detailed
- The Institute's learning environment and training venues are fit for purpose, safe and free from hazards. Fire drill and risk assessment are carried out regularly and almost all ILC staff members are certified as first aiders.
- Considering the number of enrolment and the nature of the Institute's operations, the organizational structure is fit for purpose. Roles and responsibilities are shared with staff members prior to their starting with the ILC. The 'Employee Handbook' is shared with the staff during the induction day. Staff members are

selected, recruited, effectively inducted and provided with proper career development programmes. However, a few of the staff members involved in the design and delivery of courses are with limited training experience. Moreover, the Employee Handbook is not updated with all the current ILC work practices, rules and regulations.

- Staff performance is managed effectively; training needs are assessed through periodical appraisal system and regular internal session observation are carried out. The session observation's form focuses on the trainers' performance, learning atmosphere and learners' achievement. Training needs of ILC staff are

identified and staff members are guided on how to improve. However, the mechanism utilised to monitor the impact of these training on improving staff performance is insufficient.

- The Institute's links with stakeholders, local community and international awarding bodies are well established. Learners' feedback about the conducted courses are regularly gathered, aggregated and analysed and actions are taken based on the collected views of learners and employers. These actions are effective in improving the quality of the provision.

Areas for improvement

- The compilation of the Institute's policies and procedures.

Appendix (1): Provider information

Name of the provider (English)	ILC Training					
Name of the provider (Arabic)	أي إل سي للتدريب					
Licensing body	Ministry of Labour and Social Development					
Year of establishment	2011					
Age range of learners	18 and above					
Number of learners	Male	236	Female	510	Total	746
Learning areas	Externally accredited	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NCFE • ISMM • English Language 				
	Local achievement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General English • Communications & Soft Skills • Business & Commerce 				
	Local attendance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General English • Communications & Soft Skills • Business & Commerce 				
Institution's listing status	Not yet listed on the National Qualification Framework (NQF)					