



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

Directorate of Vocational Reviews

Review Report

New Generation Network (NGN) Training Center
Manama
Kingdom of Bahrain

Date Reviewed: 17-19 February 2020

VO136-C4-R023

Introduction

The Directorate of Vocational Reviews (DVR) of the Education & Training Quality Authority (BQA), conducted this review over three days by a team of four 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 New Generation Network (NGN) Training Center and collected feedback from learners, employers, trainers, management and support staff.

It is worth mentioning that this is the first review for this Centre. 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	3
	Quality of courses/programmes	1
	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

- The quality of the programmes offered at NGN Training Center (NGN) is judged ‘Outstanding’ while the effectiveness of training and assessment is judged ‘Satisfactory’. All other aspects of the review are judged ‘Good’.
- NGN has a 3 years Strategic Plan (SP) that is well aligned to the Center’s vision and mission statements. The SP is based on regular SWOT analyses and rigorous self-evaluation practices and has benefited from feedback sought from an external reviewer. The management has a suitable arrangement for monitoring the progress of the SP.
- The Center offers externally accredited and local achievement courses; mainly high-end courses in the field of Information and Communication Technology (ICT). These courses are developed and offered based on a clear understanding of the needs of the local, regional and international market.
- Most of the learners enrolled in the ICT externally accredited courses sit the online examinations and competently achieve the qualification they aim for. However, a few of the learners enrolled in the International Computer Driving License (ICDL) courses, which represent six percent of the total enrolment, achieve the external qualification they aim for after several attempts.
- In the local achievement Virtual Realization (VR) course, learners develop highly effective skills and knowledge that are relevant to the market needs and enhance their ability to secure employment. However, while the analysis of the Learners Performance Data (LPD) submitted for this review indicates that learners enrolled in the English language courses score high success rates, the standards of learners’ produced work – specifically in relation to writing skills - do not reflect these high success rates.
- NGN has a clear support mechanism that is shared with learners during the induction session, which is conducted at the start of each course. Learners receive highly beneficial support and guidance, enabling them to achieve better outcomes.
- Trainers use effective training methodologies, supported by up-to-date learning resources, to engage learners productively throughout the session. However, in a few of the observed sessions, trainers neither engaged nor motivated passive learners during the in-class activities.
- Suitable formative and summative assessment tools are used in all courses to evaluate learners’ understanding and the achievement of the course Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs). However, assessment moderation is implemented inconsistently across all courses. Moreover, there were cases of inaccurate corrections and wrong marking that the moderation was not able to detect.
- The Center maintains appropriate quality assurance arrangements that

include detailed policies and procedures to ensure consistency and maintain standards of the provision. Nevertheless, the implementation of

these policies various in consistency and rigor.

Capacity to improve 'Good'

Judgement justifications

- Since the inception in 2017, the Centers' strategic direction is fully driven towards providing training programmes that meet labour market and learners' needs with a focus on the ICT field. The management has successfully completed the implementation of most of its key strategic objectives for the period under review, including improving the learning environment by moving to larger well-equipped premises.
- NGN depends on its highly productive links with well reputed international awarding bodies in the field of ICT to expand its range of courses it offers. Towards the end of 2018, NGN added a new learning area to the Center's activities by including the Gatehouse English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) courses. Enrolment in the Center has been steady over the last three years, over 700 learners were enrolled to the date of this visit in different courses.
- The management employs a structured approach towards maintaining learners' achievement rates. This is evident from the detailed records of learners' achievement kept since 2017. Recently, an Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system was implemented to better monitor the quality of the provision.
- NGN organisation structure is effectively supported with sufficient number of qualified staff and full-time trainers. A systematic and critical self-evaluation process is implemented periodically to ensure continuous improvement.

The provider's key strengths

- Most learners enrolled in the externally accredited courses sit the international awarding body's online examinations and achieve the external qualifications competently.
- The Center was established based on a well-developed feasibility study that encompassed an in-depth analysis of Bahrain's training needs.
- The on-going updating of the courses on offer based on the highly productive links the Center has with relevant local, regional and international stakeholders.
- The state-of-the-art laboratories and classrooms available on the Center's premises and the effective support and guidance provided to learners that enable them to achieve better outcomes.
- The strategic plan that is well aligned to the Center's vision and mission statements and is developed based on a thorough understanding of the market needs and the outcomes of a systematic self-evaluation process.

Recommendations

In order to improve, New Generation Network Training Center should:

- further enhance skills and knowledge of learners enrolled in the English language and International Computer Driving License (ICDL) courses.
- improve training methodology to better engage and motivate learners productively throughout the session.
- enhance the effectiveness of the implemented quality assurance management system, particularly the moderation process.

Learners' achievement 'Good'

Judgement justifications

- The vast majority of learners enrolled in ICT courses acquire and develop effective skills, knowledge and competencies. In addition, learners enrolled in the VR course develop positive vocational skills that support them to gain employment in their chosen profession. Nevertheless, in the ESOL courses, which constitute 12 percent of the total enrolment, though learners develop pertinent reading, speaking and listening skills upon course completion, they show less development in their writing skills.
 - Most learners achieve the external qualifications they aim for successfully. Yet, in the ICDL courses, which represent six percent from the total enrolment, a few learners achieve the external qualification they aim for after several attempts. Most interviewed learners expressed their satisfaction with the learning experience at the Center, which has had a positive impact on their professional carrier.
 - The learners' performance records provided by the Center for the purpose of this review reveals that most of the learners enrolled in the Information Technology Infrastructure Library (ITIL), EXIN, Huawei Certified ICT Associate (HCIA), VMWare and Blockchain Training Alliance courses sit the international awarding body's online examinations and achieve the external qualifications competently.
- Though the Center has discontinued offering the Association of Accounting Technicians (AAT) courses, for the conducted courses a minority of the learners achieved their qualification from the second attempt, with the rest successfully passing the examination from the first time.
 - For all offered courses, learners' performance and skills development are measured throughout the course using different assessment tools that include quizzes, practical laboratory exercises and final projects. In addition, relevant pre- and post-course assessments are conducted to evaluate learners' prior attainment at entry level, and the progress they make towards the end of a course. Nonetheless, the practices used for moderation of internal assessment tools are implemented inconsistently and do not ensure the rigor of the assessment tools used.
 - Analysis of pre- and post-course assessments shows that a significant number of learners make good progress taking into consideration the level of learners at course entry and assessment methods used.
 - Learners are attentive and have positive attitude towards their learning, especially during class practical activities. Moreover, a few learners reflect critically on their learning, which was evident during the observed sessions.

- Attendance and punctuality are always recorded. From learners' attendance records and the observed sessions, it is evident that most learners attend on a regular basis. Nonetheless, punctuality was an issue in a few cases.
- The majority of learners show confidence and are highly able when working independently during the

in-class activities and collaboratively during the group work. However, in a number of the sessions observed, a few learners could not complete the assigned task independently and required further support from the trainer.

Areas for improvement

- Learners' produced work, specifically the work exhibiting their writing skills in the ESOL courses.
- Learners' achievement of the ICDL qualifications.
- Learners punctuality.

Effectiveness of teaching/training and assessment 'Satisfactory'

Judgement justifications

- Trainers in the good or better training sessions (which represent 70% of the observed sessions) utilise effective training methodologies that suit the course nature. These include lecturing, project based, and hands-on practical activities in addition to detailed explanations that are enriched with real life and workplace examples.
- Training methodologies are supported with the available learning resources such as state-of-the-art laboratories which includes up-to-date tools, specialized hardware and software, educational games, data show, videos, smart screen, white board and flipchart to engage learners productively throughout the session. However, in a few of the observed sessions, trainers

- neither engaged nor motivated passive learners during in-class activities.
- The vast majority of learners are highly satisfied with the trainer's delivery which was evident from learners and employers' feedback; however, in a few cases learners raised their dissatisfaction with the training methodologies used.
- Useful assessment policies are owned by the Center such as 'Teaching and Learning Policy' and 'Examination Policy'. NGN trainers use suitable formative and summative assessment methods to check learners understanding and the level of course ILOs' attainment for all the conducted courses.
- Scrutiny of evidence provided during the review visit revealed inconsistency

in the implementation of moderation of assessment tools used. For instance, in a few cases inaccurate corrections and wrong marking found by the review team were not detected during the moderation process as the submitted moderation sheets did not record these incidents. In addition, learners' assessed work does not always match the answer key documents provided. This also was not detected by the implemented moderation process.

- A fit for purpose rubric is used for the ESOL courses to ensure that learners' speaking, reading, writing and presentation skills are assessed in a fair and transparent manner. Moreover, rubrics for assessing participation and laboratory practical activities are in place for all the conducted courses. However, the utilisation of these rubrics varies among trainers.
- Generally, sessions are delivered in a smooth and progressive way, allowing learners to achieve the specific session ILOs. Also, sessions are sufficiently planned and suitably managed; however, in a few occasions class activities are insufficiently managed. Trainers usually starts their session with a recapitulation of the previous session as an introductory to new topics, in addition to sharing session objectives and ILOs.
- For the ICT courses, trainers follow a general agenda that mainly identifies the topics to be covered per session and time allocation. On the other hand, in the English language courses, lesson plans are suitable, sufficiently detailed

and supported with activities and resources. However, trainers do not use a daily session plan that is informed by the learners' prior attainment and outcomes of the continuous assessment.

- From meetings with learners and the findings of the observed sessions, learners' different needs are properly addressed. Trainers respond to their enquiries and provide further clarifications on the questions raised during the session. In addition, extra explanations are provided through enriching the answers given with practical examples from the workplace.
- Trainers appropriately stimulate self-learning, higher order and critical thinking amongst learners, and promote life-long learning by asking challenging questions, providing learners with relevant links to extra learning materials and conducting in class activities that focus on problem solving, particularly in the high-end courses.
- Trainers provide learners with useful verbal feedback during the delivery of the sessions. However, the given written feedback provided for the English language courses is not constructive.
- Suitable performance and attendance records are kept for all courses. However, records are not always accurate and there is evidence that in a few cases there are errors in the overall attendance rate that are generated from the automated formula used.

Areas for improvement

- The training methodologies used.
- The consistency in the implementation of the assessment moderation
- The quality of the lesson plans.

Quality of course/programmes 'Outstanding'

Judgement justifications

- NGN Center was established in Bahrain based on a highly effective feasibility study conducted by NGN International – Mena Region and encompassed an in-depth study of Bahrain's local market needs. NGN continues to update its understanding of the market and its needs, utilising various studies conducted by both national and international bodies, in addition to relying on the professional experience of the management team.
- The courses on offer are revised periodically and the 2019 training calendar of the Centre demonstrates a high awareness of the local ICT sector needs and requirements in the amongst the management team of the ICT.
- NGN has partnered with a number of international training providers to offer a range of externally accredited qualifications in the field of ICT. These include Information Technology Infrastructure Library (ITIL), EXIN, Huawei Certified ICT Associate (HCIA), VMWare, Blockchain Training Alliance and International Computer Driving License (ICDL). Moreover, the Center offers Association of Accounting Technicians (AAT) and Gatehouse English for Speakers of Other Languages.
- Recently, NGN has formed a standing 'Focus Group' selected from its major clients to regularly seek their opinion about the provision and utilise these to inform improvement actions. These views have contributed to the contextualisation of the local achievement Virtual Realization (VR) course.
- Course outlines are well detailed in line with the requirement of the awarding bodies. In addition, the course specifications stipulate the rational of the course and its objectives, course ILOs, delivery and assessment methodologies and the duration of the course.
- There is a formal policy for course design and approval which the Center adheres to. Moreover, although the update process is not clearly stated in the policy, evidence provided indicates that the Center ensures that courses on offer are current and that learners are provided with the latest versions of the offered courses.
- Courses are effectively resourced with up-to-date original material of the awarding bodies, in addition to the

software and necessary online resources needed to meet the requirements of the offered courses.

- The training premises are well-equipped with high-end technologies that are utilised for the local achievement VR course and the externally accredited Cyber Security and VMware courses. Learners and stakeholders were highly satisfied with these resources.
- There is a formal 'Admission Policy' that adheres to the requirements of the awarding bodies, which the Center

implements consistently. The requirements to enrol in the local achievement VR course are implemented consistently, as evident in the rejection of a few cases. However, it is also evident that the current requirements are limited and lead to the enrolment of a wide range of learners with varying background. This has presented some challenges in assuring that learners receive the ultimate benefit in some of the course modules.

Areas for improvement

- The admission criteria of the VR course.

Learners' support and guidance 'Good'

Judgement justifications

- Proper mechanism is deployed to ensure that learners receive effective support and guidance at NGN. Direct support from trainers and administration staff is provided to learners via the effective implementation of the 'Learners Support Policy' which has been developed and implanted since April 2018. In addition, the 'Academic Appeals Policy' and 'Complaints Policy' are implanted to ensure that learners' grievances are treated fairly and in a transparent manner.
- Learners are formally inducted at the start of their learning journey at NGN during which the support mechanism available at NGN is explained to them. They are also provided with the

'Trainee Handbook' document, which contains detailed information on the Center's rules and regulations, assessment policies and procedures, training methodologies and qualifications requirements.

- Flexible arrangements for the delivery of courses are in place. The timing of training is arranged to suit learners and employers working hours and needs.
- Trainers and responsible staff utilise the 'Individual Support Form' to discuss with learners matters related to late arriving and missing sessions. The Center provides learners with extra sessions and supports learners *via* arranging transportation for those who missed their session due to transportation difficulties.

- The Center has adopted ‘Trainees Reflection Form’ and ‘Trainers Reflection Form’, which are utilised to assure that learners are provided with informative feedback on their progress and the areas for improvements they should focus on. Upon request, employers are provided with reports on their employees’ performance.
- Learners enrolled in the externally accredited courses are provided with mock examinations to better prepare them and enhance their achievement when they sit the awarding bodies’ online examination.
- Learners enrolled in the English language courses are provided with a wide range of well-structured extracurricular activities. These are linked to the course ILOs and are effective in enhancing learners learning experiences. Learners are invited to attend talks conducted by invited guest speakers, write reports about movies

they watched and work on identifying skills needed to secure job opportunities that match the gained knowledge and developed skills.

- Learners enrolled in the VR course are provided with employment opportunities upon course completion.
- The ‘Learners’ Support Policy’ stipulates the formal mechanism used by the Center to identify and support learners with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND). It is worth mentioning; however, that NGN did not have any registered cases of special needs learner until the time of this review visit. NGN collects information about the existence of special needs/chronic diseases among learners at the time of registration; however, the Center does not have a formal mechanism to collect information about learners further needs throughout the course

Areas for improvement

- Updating learners needs throughout the course duration.

Effectiveness of leadership, management and governance 'Good'

Judgement justifications

- NGN's current Strategic Plan (2018-2020 SP) is well aligned to the Center's vision and mission statements. It is based on regular SWOT analyses and a rigorous self-evaluation process that is conducted periodically. In addition, the strategy has benefited from the input of an external reviewer. The strategic plan has five major focus areas and each area has a set of sufficiently challenging goals focusing on raising learners' performance and the quality of the provision.
 - The SP is translated to a detailed comprehensive action plan that stipulates actions to be taken, timeframe, responsible person and relevant performance indicators. The management has suitable arrangements for monitoring the progress of these plans through useful periodic analytics reports.
 - The Center maintains reliable learners' performance records. These are analysed and the outcomes are used by the management to closely monitor learners' performance and the quality of the provision. Purposeful trend analyses are carried out and analytical reports on achievements performance are produced. These are discussed during management meetings, and actions are agreed on based on these outcomes.
 - Knowledgeable, qualified, practitioners are employed to deliver the courses and programmes on offer.
- Trainers deliver externally accredited courses are licensed by the relevant awarding bodies to deliver their courses.
- An effective system to monitor staff performance is in place. The performance of full-time staff is assessed annually and strengths and areas for further development are clearly identified. The outcomes of the staff appraisal are used to develop an annual professional development plan that ensures staff are provided with suitable development opportunities in their areas of specialisation.
 - The quality of trainers' performance is evaluated through effective lesson observation visits which are carried out by the management team. The Form used is comprehensive and inclusive of main aspects expected in a lesson observation activity. Improvement actions are driven by the outcomes of these visits.
 - Considering the total number of enrolled learners and the nature of the Center's operations, the organisation structure is suitable and is populated with sufficient number of qualified administrative staff and full-time trainers. Staff are guided by detailed job descriptions that are included in the Center's Manual and formal induction procedures are in place to ensure that staff are well-informed about NGN's offerings and their role and

responsibilities of every function within NGN.

- The Center maintains appropriate quality assurance arrangements that include detailed policies and procedures to maintain the performance standard of the provision and ensure consistency. Nonetheless, the implementation of these policies varies amongst different courses and staff members.
- While the Center has a clear mechanism to quality assure teaching and learning through an effective lesson observation visits, the outcomes of these visit are not used to their ultimate to shape future improvement plans. Moreover, the moderation process is not implemented effectively across all courses.
- The Center's learning environment and training venues are conducive. The Center is safe, secure and free from hazards. The premises are well equipped with a number of learning facilities, including state-of-the-art laboratories and classrooms.
- Comprehensive health and safety policies and procedures are in place to

safeguard the health, safety and wellbeing of learners and staff. Regular fire drills are carried out and risk is assessed frequently, and outcomes are used to proactively avoid any hazardous situation. Additionally, the Center employs certified first aiders and staff are trained on handling emergency cases.

- NGN maintains highly productive links with relevant local, regional and international stakeholders. The views of learners and employers are systematically gathered, aggregated and analysed. Trends are clearly identified, and improvement actions are driven based on these outcomes.
- The Self-Evaluation Form (SEF) submitted for this review is detailed and informative with relevant supporting evidence and the grades allocated to the review aspects match the judgments reached by the review team except for the effectiveness of teaching/training and assessment, where the grade allocated by the Center overestimates its performance in this aspect by one point.

Areas for improvement

- The effectiveness of the implementation of the internal quality assurance system.

Appendix (1): Provider information

Name of the provider (English)	New Generation Network (NGN) Training Center					
Name of the provider (Arabic)	مركز ان جي ان للتدريب					
Licensing body	Ministry of Labour and Social Development					
Year of establishment	2017					
Age range of learners	+18					
Number of learners	Male	317	Female	383	Total	700
Learning areas	Externally accredited		Information and Communication Technology (ICT) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Information Technology Infrastructure Library (ITIL) - EXIN - Huawei Certified ICT Associate (HCIA) - VMWare - Blockchain Training Alliance - International Computer Driving License (ICDL) Finance and Accounting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Association of Accounting Technicians (AAT) – UK English Language <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gatehouse English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL). 			
	Local achievement		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Virtual Realization (VR) course 			
	Local attendance		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None 			
Institution's listing status	Not yet listed on the National Qualification Framework (NQF)					