



هيئة ضمان جودة التعليم و التدريب
Quality Assurance Authority for Education & Training

Vocational Review Unit

Repeat Review Report

**Bahrain Institute
East Riffa
Kingdom of Bahrain**

Date Reviewed: 13 – 15 June 2011

Table of Contents

The Vocational Review Unit	1
Introduction	2
Description of the provision.....	2
The repeat review	2
Overall judgement	3
Effectiveness of provision.....	3
Capacity to improve	5
Summary of grades awarded.....	6
Main judgements and recommendations	7
Strengths	7
Areas for improvement.....	7
Recommendations	8

The Vocational Review Unit

The Vocational Review Unit (VRU) is part of the Quality Assurance Authority for Education and Training (QAAET), an independent body set up under Royal Decree No.32 of 2008 amended by Royal Decree No. 6 of 2009. Established to raise standards in vocational education and training, the VRU is responsible for monitoring and reporting on the quality of vocational provision, identifying strengths and areas for improvement, establishing success measures, spreading best practice and offering policy advice to key stakeholders, including the Ministry of Labour and the Ministry of Education.

Reviews are based on the VRU's *Review Framework*, and carried out on providers' premises by teams of carefully selected and highly trained reviewers. All providers are invited to nominate a senior member of their staff to participate in the planning of the review, and to represent them during review team meetings. Reviewers examine a range of evidence before arriving at a series of judgements and awarding grades for the quality of the provision.

Review grades are awarded on a five-point scale:

Grade description	Interpretation
1: Outstanding	This describes provision or outcomes that is/are at least good in all or nearly all aspects and is/are exemplary or exceptional in many.
2: Good	This describes provision or outcomes that is/are better than the basic level. Practice will be at least sound and there may be some particularly successful approaches or outcomes.
3: Satisfactory	This describes a basic level of adequacy. No major areas of weakness substantially affect what learners, or significant groups of learners, achieve. Some features may be good.
4: Below satisfactory	This describes situations where major weaknesses in some areas affect the outcomes for learners and outweigh any strengths in the provision.
5: Very weak	This describes situations where there are major weaknesses in all, or almost all, areas and where, as a result, learners are very poorly served.

Introduction

Description of the provision

Bahrain Institute (BI) was established in 1970 and licensed by the Ministry of Education as one of the first private educational institutes in the Kingdom. The centre, based in Riffa, is managed by a chief executive officer and deputy chief. The staff team comprises a registration officer, secretarial support and two full-time teachers. Several other teachers work part-time at the institute.

The institute offers non-accredited courses in operating systems and software applications including Windows, Word, PowerPoint, Excel, Access, Outlook, FrontPage and Photoshop. The institute also offers English Language courses. Courses last 15 hours and take place over five weeks. During the first half of 2010, 316 students were enrolled, 60 per cent of them in IT courses. From June 2010 to date and after its first review, BI has enrolled a total of 1226 students, 57 per cent of them on IT courses. Students range in age from 14 years to 35 years. Most students are self-sponsored and come from Ministry of Education schools, the University of Bahrain and local businesses.

The repeat review

BI was first reviewed in June 2010. The provision was below satisfactory overall. Although the range of programmes offered and the level of support for learners were satisfactory, the quality of training and the leadership and management of the provision were below satisfactory. There was insufficient evidence to judge learners' achievement. BI was therefore subject to a repeat review to ensure that these areas improved to the required standard.

The repeat review comprised of two one-day monitoring visits and a final three-day visit by a team of three reviewers. During the repeat review, reviewers observed teaching sessions, analysed data about the qualifications students achieve and the courses they complete, and talked with the managing director, teachers, administration and support staff, students and other stakeholders.

This report summarises reviewers' findings and their recommendations about what BI should do to improve further.

Overall judgement

Effectiveness of provision

Grade 3: Satisfactory

The overall effectiveness of Bahrain Institute's provision is now satisfactory. BI provided sufficient evidence on this review to judge students' achievement which is now also satisfactory. The teaching, range of courses offered, support and guidance and the leadership and management are all satisfactory.

Most students have the required basic skills in Information Technology and English Language that help them to function well on their courses. The overall retention and success rate is high as expected for non-accredited courses. Students' achievement on Information Technology courses is accurately measured and recorded; however, it is not always consistently measured on the English courses. Most students acquired and met the objectives of the lessons observed helping them to progress well at their workplace or school. However, not all students on the IT courses are sufficiently self-motivated. This aspect is better on the English courses. In a few cases, students still come late by around 15 to 30 minutes. Students are encouraged to work collaboratively through final projects.

Most lessons observed were satisfactory or better. In the most effective lessons, students are motivated and engaged and as a consequence participate well in class activities. Generally, though, students are not sufficiently challenged, particularly on IT courses. Nonetheless, the teachers observed focused on the development of appropriate skills both in English language and on the IT courses. Most lessons are conducted orderly, although a few had a late start, and time was not always managed well. Worksheets and activities are frequently used to evaluate students' learning, however, in most cases, activities are at the same level and are not tailored to meet different abilities and needs. Teaching strategies have improved since the first review and provide better opportunities for students to participate in lessons. Students are presenting and explaining activities, and taking responsibility in leading part of the lesson, however there are still a few teacher-centered lessons. Students' classwork is checked through their portfolios and verbal feedback given to students, however, it is not implemented well across all courses and it lacks effective follow-up of students' progress. Resources are used appropriately to promote learning

BI offers an appropriate range of English and IT courses, specifically the Microsoft Approved Certificate in Computer Application (ACCA), and a suitable range of English language courses with progression levels starting from beginner level to upper intermediate. Most parents and students are satisfied with the provision but expressed that students could achieve better. Overall, all students have stated clearly that more variety of English language

courses and advanced IT courses are demanded to fulfill their needs. Enrichment activities are limited. The institute is gauging the local needs through logging students' and parents' calls. Course outlines are still not provided prior to registration.

Teachers are helpful and responsive to students' queries both inside and outside of class. The administrative staff are supportive and cooperative; they follow up the cases of students' absenteeism and keep a log of students' attendance. A flyer and brochure provide basic information about the courses offered, fees and health and safety instructions. The institute inducts the students verbally on the first day about health and safety aspects although this practice has only recently been introduced and the institute does not have a formal, written health and safety policy. A first aid kit and well-maintained fire extinguishers are appropriately located but there are no smoke detectors. The premises are clean overall and fit for purpose. However, the institute lacks a dedicated prayer room.

The management team has a clear vision and mission statement which focus on high quality services and improving students' achievement. A draft five year strategic plan has been drafted but this is not really based on critical self-assessment. Students' achievement is appropriately monitored and data kept but not aggregated to monitor trends over time. The provider recruits qualified teachers and their performance is appropriately monitored; however, the identified issues are not always followed up for future improvement. Staff appraisal is carried out bi-annually but few opportunities are provided for training and professional development. However, most parents praised the quality of teaching and teachers' supportive and prompt response to their queries. Parents' and students' feedback is analysed and appropriately used to improve the provision but parents complained that they are not always informed about the progress of their children. Appropriate links with the community are maintained. Self-evaluation is not rigorous enough; priorities are not well formulated and are not based on a critical analysis of the institute's situation.

Capacity to improve

Grade 3: Satisfactory

The capacity to improve the provision is now satisfactory. The management team has carried out appropriate actions to improve the provision since the last review, for example in increasing its human and physical resources. All the classrooms are now neat, clean and air-conditioned and computer laboratories are well maintained and suitable for the IT courses offered. The institute has started working on a new website. The overall success rate is 91 per cent and the retention rate is 94 per cent, the repeat business is reasonable, currently at 20 per cent. Total enrolment has increased to 1226 from 316.

Although the institute has not carried out any kind of formal self-evaluation, it has though drafted its five year strategic plan. However, this has not identified clearly enough the institute's strengths and areas for development and the institute's priorities. Nonetheless, the institute does assess local and market needs through the logging of calls from different clients and individuals as well as information from current students. For example, the institute has recently run a new course in IT maintenance based on identified local needs.

The institute has appropriate future plans. It has initiated a memorandum of understanding with the Australian Management and Education Services (AMES Educational) to introduce new courses that meet labour market needs. Further contacts have been made with the Ministry of Education to introduce new courses in management, secretarial skills and human resources (HR).

The institute's SEF is insufficiently informative, grades are inconsistent and priorities to improve are not well addressed and in some areas not linked to that aspect or the question.

Summary of grades awarded

Overall Judgement	Original Grade	Repeat Grade
Effectiveness of provision	Grade 4: Below satisfactory	Grade 3: Satisfactory
Capacity to Improve	Grade 4: Below Satisfactory	Grade 3: Satisfactory
Review Findings		
How well do students achieve?	Insufficient evidence to grade	Grade 3: Satisfactory
How effective is teaching?	Grade 4: Below satisfactory	Grade 3: Satisfactory
How well do courses meet the needs of students and stakeholders?	Grade 3: Satisfactory	Grade 3: Satisfactory
How well are students guided and supported?	Grade 3: Satisfactory	Grade 3: Satisfactory
How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all students?	Grade 4: Below satisfactory	Grade 3: Satisfactory

Main judgements and recommendations

Strengths

- **Clear criteria used for measuring students' achievement on Information Technology courses.** This is done during and at the end of the course through relevant assessment activities representing 30 and 50 per cent respectively of the final examination, the remaining 20 per cent being allocated to attendance, participation and behavior.
- **An appropriate range of English and IT courses offered which satisfy the needs of parents and students.** These include English language courses with progression levels starting from beginner level to upper intermediate, as well as conversation English and preparation for International English Language Testing System (IELTS) and Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL)
- **Supportive and helpful teachers and staff.** This includes the institute's administrative staff following up students' absenteeism with calls to parents and keeping a log of students' attendance.
- **Regular feedback sought from parents and students with outcomes used to improve provision.** End of course evaluation is undertaken using a useful and detailed form with the feedback analysed and used appropriately to improve the performance of the provision,

Areas for improvement

- **A minority of students in both English and IT are not improving their skills appropriately.** Although most students have the basic skills to perform appropriately on most courses, a minority do not make the progress expected of them.
- **Achievement data are not aggregated to monitor trends over time.** Although students' achievement is appropriately monitored at the course level, this is not aggregated to monitor trends over time to focus their plans for improvement more explicitly.
- **Parents are insufficiently updated on their children's progress.** Although most parents praised the quality of teachers and their supportive and prompt response to

their queries, some complained that they are not always informed about the progress of their children during courses.

- **The different learning needs of students are not always met, particularly challenge for the more able.** In most lessons, activities are at the same level which means that individual students do not always make the progress expected of them.
- **Lack of critical self-evaluation to identify strengths and areas for development.** Although the SEF identified some areas for improvement it lacked detailed evidence and was not based on an appropriately critical analysis of the institute's strengths and areas for development.
- **Photocopying and distributing material from books and other printed resources which is an infringement of copyright.** The institute currently distributes black and white copies of original books as course material.

Recommendations

In order to improve provision, Bahrain Institute should:

- ensure that all students on IT and English courses are gaining the required skills
- develop a rigorous system of recording performance data and ensure that this data is analysed and aggregated to monitor trends over time
- ensure the different needs and abilities of students are met, particularly providing more challenge for the more able
- ensure that parents are updated on their children's progress
- ensure that rigorous self-evaluation is done to identify strengths and key areas for improvement to inform strategic planning
- stop the practice of photocopying and distributing material from books and other printed resources.