



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

Vocational Review Unit

Review Report

Bahrain Music Institute
Mahooz
Kingdom of Bahrain

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Table of Contents

The Vocational Review Unit	1
Introduction	2
Description of the provision.....	2
Scope of the review.....	2
Overall judgement	3
Effectiveness of provision.....	3
Capacity to improve	4
Summary of grades awarded.....	6
Main judgements and recommendations	7
Strengths	7
Areas for improvement.....	8
Recommendation.....	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 judgments 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 Music Institute (BMI) was established in January 2000 and is licensed by the Ministry of Education. The Institute offers practical musical courses to children and adults in various instruments including Piano, Keyboard, Guitar, Saxophone, Drum, Violin, Flute and Oud. Vocal and theory classes are also offered. Courses offered are either non-accredited or externally accredited by the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music (ABRSM) of the United Kingdom.

The Institute has enrolled a total of 1302 students from 2009 to date and 4363 students since inception.

BMI has one centre located in Mahooz operated by a managing director and a deputy in addition to two administrative/clerical staff. The Institute utilises a pool of fourteen teachers most of which are full-time.

Scope of the review

This review was conducted over three days by a team of four reviewers. During the review, reviewers observed classes, analysed data about the qualifications students achieve and the courses they complete, and talked with the managing director, teachers, administration staff, students and parents.

This report summarises reviewers' findings and their recommendations about what Bahrain Music Institute should do to improve.

Overall judgement

Effectiveness of provision

Grade 1: Outstanding

Bahrain Music Institute is outstanding overall. All the aspects of the Institute including the capacity to improve are outstanding as well.

Students' achievement is well above average as they have very high success rates as well as retention rates. The Institute performs a useful check on students' abilities and skills at the beginning of the courses. Most students at BMI are extremely capable and develop extensive skills in their own field of music. Moreover, they make extremely good progress in their lessons and courses. Students' progress and achievement are monitored thoroughly through progress reports. Most students demonstrate strong communication skills, they are thoroughly enjoying their learning experience and are highly self-motivated. The Institute maintains good records of attendance; punctuality is not a major issue but it is not recorded.

BMI teachers demonstrate a high level of subject and vocational expertise. Lessons all start promptly and teaching is consistently challenging for all students across a range of ages and abilities. Lessons are well planned and have clear objectives that are explained progressively as the lesson develops. Most teachers are inspiring for their students and consistently motivate them. Rigorous assessment is continuous and on-going throughout teaching sessions and associated feedback is prompt and appropriate. Resources are of excellent quality and underpin a high standard of teaching and learning. Although schemes of work have been developed for the oud, piano and guitar, these have not yet been developed for other subjects.

A comprehensive and varied range of musical courses are on offer that covers all the specialties. Courses match the needs of students extremely well and both parents and students are highly satisfied. Course content and plans are clearly specified in writing in the books provided to support each course. All course materials are of excellent quality and are fit for purpose. Students are provided with an extensive range of effective enrichment activities. The Institute has established a good capacity for developing customized courses. The small management team are proactive in promoting the Institute through regular press releases, frequent advertisements, and excellent relationships with international embassies, but there is no formal or structured approach to their efforts.

Teachers and administration staff are extremely co-operative with students and parents. Students are extensively well prepared for external examinations and parents are very well informed with guidance documents. Moreover, the Institute provides innovative support

for talented students and those who are handicapped or orphaned. BMI has produced an updated, informative and colourful leaflet that illustrates the range of courses and opportunities available. Moreover, BMI has a well-presented website, however the data made available were not up to date and there are technical problems. The premises are very well equipped, safe and fit for purpose. The Institute has published a health and safety policy and an extensive range of health and safety measures are in place; however, these are not communicated formally to students.

BMI management has very detailed record keeping, monitoring and follow-up of students' results. Management and teachers have extremely close relationships with parents who are updated on the progress of their children. Moreover, the Institute has highly effective links with different sections of the community including ministries and international embassies. Although students and parents feedback is not obtained in a structured way, both staff and management are very proactive in response to verbal feedback and actions are taken where appropriate. Management of BMI has recruited and deployed very well qualified and experienced teachers. In the randomly conducted lesson observations by the managing director, noteworthy feedback and guidance are provided to teachers. Musical workshops are conducted for both teachers and students. The Institute's vision and mission statements appropriately focus on raising achievement; however, BMI requires a more structured approach to management strategies including capturing stakeholders' views more formally and developing teachers in a collaborative way.

Capacity to improve

Grade 1: Outstanding

BMI has an outstanding capacity to improve. The head of the Institute has a very clear vision for developing music in the Institute and beyond. The Institute has implemented highly successful plans in the last two years. These include the movement to the current new location, the opening of new classes in terms of number of classes and the addition of new instruments such as Trumpet and Violin, and the recruitment of four new teachers. BMI actively and continuously conducts concerts to enrich the students' learning experience. Moreover, the Institute has effective links with a centre for talented and gifted students for which students are selected to study music in BMI. The Institute has added a range of programmes such as the Orchestra and the Band Master courses which were also promoted in other Gulf countries. Management is now looking into the feasibility of introducing Music Technology.

The head of the Institute has also proactively approached the Ministry of Education with a plan to train school bands and has approached the Labour Fund (Tamkeen) seeking support

to develop their accounting and auditing, marketing and information technology functions. In September 2010, BMI opened another branch in Saar but it was closed recently due to unrest in that area.

BMI has a very clear staff handbook which includes internal rules and regulations, a code of conduct, details of working hours, penalties, leaves and holidays, wages and termination of contract. Moreover, a comprehensive database is in place for record keeping of students, teachers, schedules and invoices.

The success rate in the externally accredited courses was sustained at above 95 per cent in the last three years, the Institute has good repeat business and an enrolment of 1302 students in the last three years. The self-evaluation form (SEF) was moderate and fairly informative. BMI has stimulating and effective human and physical resources to carry out its improvement plans.

Summary of grades awarded

Overall Judgement	Grade
Effectiveness of provision	Grade 1: Outstanding
Capacity to Improve	Grade 1: Outstanding
Review Findings	
How well do students achieve?	Grade 1: Outstanding
How effective is teaching?	Grade 1: Outstanding
How well do courses meet the needs of students and stakeholders?	Grade 1: Outstanding
How well are students guided and supported?	Grade 1: Outstanding
How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all students?	Grade 1: Outstanding

Main judgements and recommendations

Strengths

- **Very high level of attainment and outstanding progress across all courses.** Students are achieving very well at BMI with Students' Performance Data (SPD) showing very high success rates of above 95 per cent for the last three years in the externally accredited courses. Retention rate is also very high reaching 94 per cent on the long courses.
- **As a consequence of attending BMI, students develop as highly motivated, self-confident and talented musicians.** In addition, students demonstrate strong communication skills with their teachers, helping them to achieve very well on their courses. Observations also show that students are highly engaged in their work and are able to work independently.
- **Highly effective and inspirational teaching which engages and motivates students.** Teachers at BMI consistently demonstrate a high level of subject and vocational expertise that is well matched and paced to the level of students' needs and understanding. Teaching is consistently challenging for all students across a range of ages and abilities; lessons are well planned and have clear objectives that are explained progressively as the lesson develops.
- **A comprehensive and varied range of musical courses that match the needs of students extremely well and satisfies stakeholders.** These cover the specialties of piano, strings, woodwind, brass, percussion, vocal and music theory. The Institute has also established a good capacity for developing customized courses including adapting the externally accredited courses on offer to meet the needs of those learners not wishing to enter for examinations.
- **Students are provided with an effective and enjoyable range of enrichment activities.** These include four conducted concerts per year, a Christmas concert, and participation in Bahrain music festivals and the young musician festival of the Gulf.
- **Highly effective support and guidance are provided to students to enable them to achieve very well on their courses.** Teachers and administration staff are extremely co-operative with students and parents. Students are well prepared for external examinations by providing them with plentiful support and guidance prior to the final examination. The Institute also provides innovative support for talented students and pupils from outside the Institute through the award of scholarships, including those for disadvantaged young people such as those who are handicapped or orphaned.

- **The head of the Institute has a very clear vision for developing music in the Institute and beyond.** This vision permeates throughout the Institute and inspires both teachers and students to achieve the outstanding outcomes observed across all the courses.
- **Effective management of the Institute that consistently aims at raising the quality of the provision.** It has very clear record-keeping, monitoring and follow-up of students' results in the external examinations as well as the non-examined courses. Agreements are made with parents and teachers for further improvement if a student needs that.

Areas for improvement

- **A more structured approach to management strategies including capturing stakeholders' views, developing teachers in a collaborative way and engaging in marketing activities.** Although staff and management are very proactive in dealing with issues that arise at the Institute, this is not done in a formal, structured way.

Recommendation

In order to improve provision, Bahrain Music Institute should:

- develop a more structured approach to management strategies including capturing stakeholders' views, developing teachers in a collaborative way and engaging in marketing activities.