



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

Directorate of Vocational Reviews

Review Report

ETS Excellence Training Solutions
Al Nasfa
Kingdom of Bahrain

Date Reviewed: 1 - 4 April 2019

VO031-C4-R005

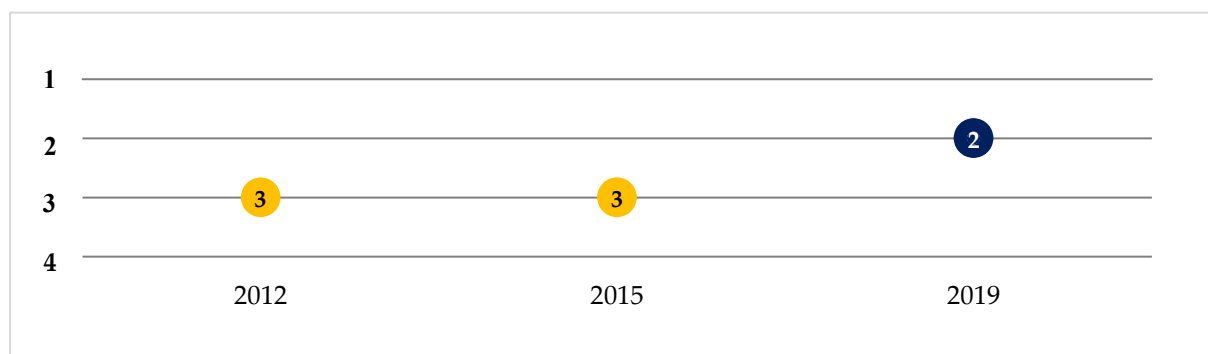
Introduction

The Directorate 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 lessons and other related activities, analysed data about the courses and qualifications learners achieve, examined learners' written and other work, examined documents and the materials provided by ETS Excellence Training Solutions (ETS) 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	3
	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

- The performance of ETS was graded 'Good' in all the review Aspects, except for 'Effectiveness of teaching/training and assessment' which was graded 'Satisfactory'.
- The Institute has a clear vision and mission statement that focus on expanding the range of courses offered and attention towards improving learners performance. With the support of an external consultant, the provider has developed in 2016 a fit for purpose Strategic Plan (SP) that enables the Institute to raise learners' achievement and enhance the overall performance of the provision. This is translated into an operational plan that sets five goals relevant to the effectiveness of teaching and learning, these goals have specific tasks, timescale and success measures.
- The Institute offers a suitable range of short local achievements courses in general English language, soft skills, and basic health and safety in addition to two externally accredited courses by Highfield Awarding Body for Compliance (HABC) in fire safety and risk assessment. However, almost all learners were enrolled in the local achieved courses for the period covered by this review.
- Learners in general English language course starters levels effectively develop the relevant grammar, vocabulary and reading skills. Yet, the achievement of learners in the advanced levels is at an adequate level. Most learners enrolled in the soft skills courses, successfully achieve their course objectives.
- Trainers assess learners' performance regularly through relevant formative and summative assessments to measure the achievement of course objectives. However, the assessment in the general English language advanced levels courses is not always rigorous to measure learners' language skills.
- ETS management has effective arrangements for monitoring trainers' performance and learners' achievement. Quarterly reports are generated and actions on the outcomes of these reports are taken.
- Detailed quality assurance manual has been developed in 2018 and shared with the staff; however, these practices are not effectively implemented across the provision. Moderation and verification of learners' work is not consistent and superficial.
- The provider has fit for purpose policies and procedures related to learners' support and guidance which are systematically implemented. Effective training and recruitment opportunities for a number of learners in the vocational field is provided. Learners are well inducted prior to the start of the courses. Learners' performance reports are provided upon course completion to inform stakeholders about learners' progress and their attendance. However, reports do not include any written feedback that details learners' performance during the course.

Capacity to improve 'Good'

Judgement justifications

- Since the last BQA review conducted in 2012, the performance of the provider has improved in four Aspects of the review and its overall effectiveness to 'Good' while the 'effectiveness of teaching/training and assessment' remained at 'Satisfactory'. The provider has effectively addressed most of the recommendations stated in the last BQA review report.
- The Institute's approach to gathering and analysing learners' achievement has improved and there are mechanisms to ensure that outcomes are used to trigger further improvement.
- The provider has fit for purpose organisational structure, equipped with sufficient number of full-time trainers and administrative staff. Staff are well inducted, regularly monitored, and appropriately trained.
- Management maintains effective links with the stakeholders and local community, and as a result, improvement plans, and successful recruitment programmes have been developed based on industry engagement.
- Since the last review, enrolment in general English language courses has increased and course duration has almost doubled to 60 hours, which enabled learners to attain the relevant course objectives.
- ETS has detailed quality assurance manual with only a number of its policies and procedures, such as course design, attendance and punctuality policies, being sufficiently implemented to date.
- At the end of 2018, ETS has conducted a self-evaluation for the period of January to December 2018. The self-evaluation outcomes identify good practices and areas of improvement mainly in the five Aspects of the BQA review framework. But no evidence was provided in utilising these outcomes to inform improvement plans. The Self-Evaluation Form (SEF) submitted for the purpose of this review is detailed and provides useful information. Grades stated matches most aspects of the review.
- The learning environment is fit for purpose with essential health and safety measures in place; however, the current size of the class rooms is small for the number of learners in each group. The provider has evidence on actions taken to change the Institute's premises.

The provider's key strengths

- Learners gain relevant employability skills that enable them to be recruited in the vocational field.
- Effective links are maintained with stakeholders and local community to sense the market needs and shape the provider's offering.
- Effective advice and guidance that enable learners to enhance their personal abilities, and seize career opportunities.
- Purposeful improvement actions that are based on monitoring and analysing learners' achievement.

Recommendations

In order to improve, ETS Excellence Training Solutions should:

- improve the general English language courses by ensuring that:
 - placement tests for the general English language courses are admitted effectively
 - learners are developing the expected skills and knowledge, particularly in the advanced levels of the general English language courses
 - assessment tools used are critical and rigorous to evaluate learners' achievement of course objectives
- ensure that the policies and procedures stated in the quality assurance manual are effectively implemented
- ensure that the verification and moderation processes are consistently implemented.

Learners' achievement 'Good'

Judgement justifications

- Learners enrolled in the soft skills courses, which constitute 37% of the total enrolment, acquire and develop effective knowledge, skills and competences relevant to their learning. In the general English language courses, which represent around 54% of the total enrolment - mainly concentrated in the 'Starters' levels - learners develop pertinent grammar, vocabulary and reading skills. However, upon course completion, a minority of learners are not able to competently complete the assigned tasks or master the required skills considering the course level.
 - Learners enrolled in the local achievement health and safety courses which represent 8% of total enrolment, gain relevant knowledge and develop effective vocational skills. In addition, learners enrolled in the externally accredited HABC courses, which represent 1% of the total enrolment, achieve the qualifications they aim for in a timely manner.
 - Learners' performance, acquisition of knowledge and development of skills against the pre-defined course objectives are measured using a range of formative and summative assessments through which accurate and reliable achievement data are maintained. Learners and stakeholders expressed their satisfaction with the acquired skills and competences and the extent to which those are utilised at the workplace and/or life.
- Most learners enrolled in the soft skills courses successfully achieve their course objectives. In the general English language courses, the vast majority of learners successfully achieve their course objectives - predominantly those enrolled in the 'Starters' levels, yet the achievement of learners in the advanced levels is at an adequate level.
 - Relevant pre-course assessments are conducted to evaluate learners' attainment at entry level to establish a starting point and enable the Institute to measure the impact of learning and the progress made by learners towards the end of the course.
 - From the observed sessions, scrutiny of learners' work and considering the starting points of learners on entry in the soft skills courses and the level of intake in the general English language courses, the vast majority of learners' progress well throughout the course and over levels.
 - During the sessions observed, learners adequately reflected on their understanding and extended what they have been taught by participating in discussions, sharing of work-related experience and questioning their trainers. Learners are attentive, committed and show positive attitude towards their learning experience. Most learners attend regularly; however, punctuality is an issue in a few cases.
 - From the observed sessions and scrutiny of learners' work, the majority

of learners' exhibit confidence and ability to work well both independently and collaboratively during the in-class activities. However, in a number of the sessions observed, few learners remained dependent on trainers' directions or required further support to complete the given tasks.

The 'Self-Appraisal and Action Plan' form provides learners with an opportunity to reflect on their learning after each session; however, this form is not critically filled by learners or followed up by trainers.

Areas for improvement

- learners' ability to master the required skills considering the course level
- learners' ability to work independently and competently complete the given tasks during the sessions.

Effectiveness of teaching/training and assessment 'Satisfactory'

Judgement justifications

- The majority of trainers have relevant qualifications and appropriate teaching experience which is evident from their explanations and responding to learners' questions. Most sessions are appropriately managed, with clear objectives that are shared with learners; they usually start with useful recapitulation of the previous session. Trainers use suitably structured and detailed lesson plans, though a few of them have not been used well in the delivery of the sessions where time is not accurately distributed.
- Different strategies are used adequately in the majority of sessions including team work, presentations, discussion, role plays and utilising of stars book to motivate learners. However, in number of the observed sessions, learners are not encouraged effectively to participate throughout the session. Moreover, the challenge provided to learners in sessions do not sufficiently stimulate self-learning or promote lifelong learning
- Learners' individual needs are suitably accommodated. Learners are provided with differentiated activities. However, in number of the observed sessions, lower ability learners are not sufficiently encouraged to participate in class activities.
- Trainers use the available learning resources appropriately including video clips, flash cards, 'Kahoot' mobile application and PowerPoint presentations. Records on learners' performance are kept and regularly updated.
- Trainers assess learners' performance regularly through relevant formative and summative assessments to measure the achievement of course objectives. However, the assessment in the general English language advanced levels courses is not always rigorous to measure learner language skills. Though marking of learners' work is generally accurate, the verification of marking is inconsistently implemented and does not highlight issues related to rigorousness of marking.
- Detailed rubric is available for different aspects. However, rubric of marking writing tasks is not available. Trainers regularly provide instant and useful verbal feedback to help learners improve. However, feedback on learners' written work is not sufficiently detailed on where and how they can improve further.

Areas for improvement

- the rigor of assessment tools used in the general English language advanced levels courses

- the consistency in implementing the verification of marking and its role in highlighting issues related to rigorousness of marking
- the details of the feedback on learners' written work
- the challenge provided to learners in sessions to stimulate self-learning and promote lifelong learning.

Quality of course/programmes 'Good'

Judgement justifications

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ETS offers a suitable range of local achievements, short courses in general English language, soft skills, and basic health and safety, in addition to two externally accredited courses; namely HABC Level 2 Award in Fire Safety and HABC Level 2 Award in Risk Assessment. The justification of needs of delivering the courses relies on the outcome of an effective market survey carried out yearly by the provider for the existing and new employers. • Course customisation is carried out based on employers' needs and requests that match learners' level and abilities, which are identified through a fit for purpose Training Needs Analysis (TNA). • Soft skills courses are well planned and structured, with specified content and the expected learning objectives. The general English language courses are suitably planned and structured. Course syllabus, learning objectives and the corresponding teaching and assessment methods stated are fit for purpose. However, the structure of assessments in the general English language advanced levels courses is inappropriately mapped to cover the stated course objectives. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The provider has an appropriate policy and procedure for designing and developing the courses. This clearly describes the process of course design and approval by stating the roles and responsibilities of those involved. Nonetheless, the update and review processes are insufficiently detailed and not systematically implemented. • Courses are well-resourced with relevant course materials and learning resources. Learning resources such as text books, handouts and access to online resources are provided to learners. In some sessions observed, copies of the textbooks are used for general English language courses. Health and safety courses are provided with a relevant learning resources, such as, safety gears and equipment's, first aid kits and dummies for practical exercise. • The target audience is clearly specified in the majority of the course outlines. Suitable placement tests are implemented in the general English language courses with clear rubric and guidelines to assess learners' abilities and place them at the right level. However, recently the provider |
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administration of placement tests has not been always effective.

Areas for improvement

- the details of the update and review process and their systematic implementation
- the authenticity of the textbooks used in some of the general English language courses
- the administration of placement tests for the general English language courses.

Learners' support and guidance 'Good'

Judgement justifications

- The provider has fit for purpose policies and procedures related to learners' support and guidance that are systemically implemented. Effective arrangements to support learners are in place, these are executed by approachable trainers and cooperative staff. Trainers are highly responsive and provide learners with the necessary assistance, such as extra support sessions and regularly follow-up on absenteeism.
- ETS is flexible and responsive to different learners' needs, such as responding to learners' requests in terms of scheduling and providing transportation. In addition, the provider offers training and recruitment opportunities for a number of learners in the vocational field.
- Extra readings, and useful links are provided to learners to enhance their abilities and learning experience. ETS helps learners to be prepared for their job application through a number of activities, such as helping learners to prepare their Curriculum Vitae.
- Learners are well inducted before the starting of the courses and have sufficient access to the available course materials and are provided guidance about programmes through course brochures and social media. However, at the time of the review visit, the provider website was under construction.
- Learners' performance reports are prepared upon course completion to inform stakeholders about learners' progress and attendance. However, these reports do not include any written feedback that details learners' performance during the course.
- Special need policy is in place and is fit for purpose. Suitable arrangements are provided for the currently existing few cases. However, the Institute's building is not provided with easy access for learners who use wheelchairs.

Areas for improvement

- end of course reports.

Effectiveness of leadership, management and governance 'Good'

Judgement justifications

- ETS has a clear strategic direction and core values that enable the Institute to raise learners' achievement and monitor the overall performance of the provision. The vision and mission statements focus on improving learners performance and expanding the range of courses offered. Based on a real understanding of the surrounding environment, the Institute - with the support of an external consultant - has developed in 2016 a fit for purpose Strategic Plan (SP).
- The SP has a set of five goals that are relevant to the teaching and learning, the SP is supported with detailed operational plan that specifies the tasks, timescale and success measures. Effective initiatives have been carried out towards achieving this strategy, a yearly basis market survey is carried out by the provider for the existing and new employers, goals that are relevant to the effectiveness of courses in meeting the requirement of the learners and stakeholders are successfully attained.
- ETS management has useful arrangements to monitor learners' achievement. Records of learners' performance data are accurate and reliable. Quarterly reports on learners' achievement are generated and discussed during the management meetings, improvement actions on the outcomes of these reports are taken. A formal attendance and punctuality policy is effectively implemented. Attendance rates are reviewed and analysed.
- Arrangements to quality assure the provision are appropriate. A detailed quality assurance manual was developed in 2018 and is shared with the staff. However, practices are not always implemented and moderation and verification of learners' work is superficial and is not consistently implemented. There is an appropriate health and safety policy in place and fire drills and risk assessment are carried out regularly. Almost all ETS staff are certified first aiders.
- Considering the number of enrolled learners and the nature of the provider operations, the organisational structure is fit for purpose. Staff are properly selected and recruited and new staff are inducted with their roles and responsibilities. There is a well-implemented Human Resource (HR) policy that is shared with the staff during the induction day.
- Staff performance managements are effective, training needs are assessed through the annual appraisal system and regular internal session observation are carried out. The form designed for the purpose of internal session observation is mainly focused on trainers' performance and methods used to engage learners, without evaluating the learners' performance. However, most of the forms

commented on and identified points related to learners' achievement. Training needs of ETS staff are identified and outcomes are used to guide performance improvement. However, mechanism to monitor the impact of these training is insufficient.

- The learning environment is suitable and hygienic, with essential health and safety measure being in place. Classrooms are properly ventilated, lightened and air conditioned; however, considering the number of

learners in each group, the size of the classrooms is small and the number of other facilities is not always sufficient.

- The provider maintains effective links with employers and relevant stakeholders which is utilised to provide learners with career development plan. Effective actions are taken based on the collected views of learners and employers'. Though analysis of learners' feedbacks is not carried out.

Areas for improvement

- the consistent implementation of moderation and verification process and their rigor
- the size of classrooms and number of other facilities.

Appendix (1): Provider information

Name of the provider (English)	ETS Excellence Training Solutions					
Name of the provider (Arabic)	إي تي إس اكسلنس لحلول التدريب					
Licensing body	MoLSD					
Year of establishment	2005					
Age range of learners	+18					
Number of learners (January 2016-March 2019)	Male	874	Female	732	Total	1,606
Learning areas	Externally accredited	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Highfield Awarding Body for Compliance (HABC) Level 2 Award in Fire Safety Highfield Awarding Body for Compliance (HABC) Level 2 Award in Risk Assessment 				
	Local achievement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> General English language courses Soft skills courses Basic Health and Safety courses 				
	Local attendance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not offered 				
Institution's listing status	Not yet listed on the National Qualification Framework (NQF)					