



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

Directorate of Vocational Reviews

Review Report

Edrak Training Center
Sanabis
Kingdom of Bahrain

Date Reviewed: 24-26 September 2019

VO133-C4-R011

Introduction

The Directorate 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 the materials provided by Edrak 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	3
Programmes and processes	Effectiveness of teaching/training and assessment	3
	Quality of courses/programmes	3
	Learners' support and guidance	3
Management and governance	Effectiveness of leadership, management and governance	3
Capacity to improve		3
Overall effectiveness		3

Provider's overall effectiveness throughout the last three reviews



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

Judgement justifications

- All aspects of Edrak Training Center (Edrak) provision and its capacity to improve are judged 'Satisfactory'.
- Edrak strategic planning is focused on generating business by expanding the range of the offered courses and providing training solutions for corporate clients. Operational plans were developed setting generic time scales and accountabilities; however, success measures are not always clearly stated to monitor the progress made and ensure timely achievement of the set objectives. Although generic SWOT analysis is developed annually, a thorough and regular self-evaluation process is not conducted to inform strategic and operational planning.
- Trainers' performance is sufficiently monitored; however, the identified areas for development are not always followed up.
- Learners' achievement is sufficiently monitored. Achievement data are kept for the majority of the conducted courses. In the Northern Council for Further Education (ncfe) externally accredited courses which represent around two third of the total enrolment, results of internal assessment are analysed and utilised to identify areas for improvement.
- Learners gain and develop appropriate knowledge and skills relevant to their courses. The vast majority of learners enrolled in the ncfе courses achieve the qualification they aim for in a timely manner. In addition, most of those enrolled in the local attendance courses complete their course requirements and are provided with certificate of attendance. However, a minority of learners do not master the required skills upon course completion and their added value is minimal.
- Edrak trainers use appropriate training strategies and learning resources that sufficiently engage learners; however, in a minority of the observed sessions, learners' involvement and participation are minimal.
- Suitable formative assessments were used to evaluate learners' understanding during the sessions observed. In the ncfе external courses, learners are assessed through the awarding body assessment which is properly mapped to the course skills standards and there are clear rubric and marking scheme. However, there are cases where the implementation of these is influenced by the trainer and as a result, grades particularly in the communication skills of the ncfе Functional Skills qualifications in English, do not always reflect learners' actual level. In the local achievement and local attendance courses, used summative assessments, though relevant, do not cover all the set course objectives.
- Edrak courses are offered based on a sufficient understanding of the market needs utilising local, regional and international relevant studies and published researches. In addition, the

management of the Center rely on their personal links with corporate clients to understand their training needs. However, the customization of courses is carried out on *ad-hoc* basis.

- The ncfе Functional Skills Qualifications in English are suitably structured and planned with course outlines that clearly state the skills standard coverage at each level. Nevertheless, in local courses, there is no clear statement of what is expected from the learners to achieve towards the end of a course to inform assessments.

- Considering the nature and the duration of the offered courses, learners at Edrak are provided with sufficient support and guidance to help them achieve better outcomes. However, the Center lacks comprehensive policies and procedures on learners' support and guidance including for those with special needs.

Capacity to improve 'Satisfactory'

Judgement justifications

- Edrak has sufficient and appropriate human and physical resources. Senior management staff are qualified and have relevant training experience.
- Although strategic planning is not based on a thorough and regular self-evaluation process, the Center's Strategic Plan is suitable to sustain business.
- The number of enrolments increased from 56 learners in 2017, to 513 learners in 2018. In 2019, Edrak enrolled 419 learners up to the date of this review.
- Links with corporate clients are well-maintained and repeat business is high representing 84% of the total enrolment in the local courses.
- Recent improvements carried out by the Center include introducing Islamic

Banking workshops, recruiting a third full-time English trainer, and a legal advisor, and introducing internship programme for the ncfе Functional Skills in English courses. Also, Edrak has a plan to expand their current premises.

- The current quality assurance arrangements are insufficient to secure continuous quality improvement. Some of the procedures included in the recently developed quality manual are insufficiently detailed to ensure standardisations and are inconsistently implemented.

The provider's key strengths

- The structure of the ncf Functional Skills Qualification in English courses.
- well-established links with corporate clients.

Recommendations

In order to improve, Edrak Training Center should:

- ensure learners develop skills relevant to their course level and progress well towards the achievement of the specified course standards/objectives
- improve training and teaching strategies to motivate and challenge learners productively throughout the session.
- ensure that course intended learning outcomes are clearly stated and utilised to inform the development of the assessment tools and marking of learners' work
- improve leadership and management by:
 - ensuring that strategic planning is developed based on a wholistic, and critical self-evaluation assessment of the provision
 - improving the quality assurance arrangements to ensure its comprehensiveness and monitoring its implementation to ensure consistency and effectiveness.

Learners' achievement 'Satisfactory'

Judgement justifications

- Learners acquire and develop appropriate knowledge and skills relevant to their courses. Upon course completion, they are able to complete the assigned tasks in an appropriate and timely manner considering the course level they are enrolled in. However, a minority of learners do not master the skills towards the end of the training course.
- Learners expressed their satisfaction with the learning experience at Edrak and confirmed that the developed skills are beneficial to their life and workplace. Feedback from employers reflect their satisfaction with the extent to which the provided training impact their staff performance at the workplace.
- Records of destination for learners enrolled in the Northern Council for Further Education (ncfe) Level 2 Diploma in Skills for Business programme -which represent around 3% of the total enrolment- show that the provided training had a positive impact on their employability.
- The Learners Performance Data (LPD) indicates that the success rates are high for both local (achievement and attendance) and externally-accredited courses, and the overall retention rate is almost 86%, as expected in such courses with short duration.
- The majority of learners are enrolled in the ncfe externally accredited courses; these represent around 69% of the total enrolment. The vast majority of learners in these courses achieve the qualifications they aim for in a timely manner according to the awarding body's regulations. They are able to respond to the variety of relevant formative and summative assessments with a reasonable level of attainment as was evidenced by the standards of learners' work.
- Most of the learners enrolled in the local attendance courses complete the course requirements and are provided with a certificate of attendance upon satisfying the minimum attendance rate (80%). These comprise around one third of the total enrolment.
- Edrak measures learners' prior attainments by different means such as diagnostic test and pre-courses assessment which is applied in the majority of the conducted courses. In addition, learners enrolled in the ncfe Functional Skills Qualification in English courses are interviewed and the outcomes are utilised to develop Individual Learning Plans, which enable the Center to measure the progress made by learners towards the end of the course.
- From the provided records and the samples of learners' work, the majority of learners make sufficient progress considering their prior attainment. However, the added value for a minority of learners is minimal.
- Learners show commitment and positive attitudes towards their learning. The Center has a written policy on attendance and punctuality. Records of attendance are regularly

registered, yet punctuality is inconsistently or inaccurately recorded. From the observed sessions and the attendance records, most learners attend regularly and punctually; however, a number of them arrived more than 20 minutes after the start of the lesson.

- A minority of learners are self-motivated. They were able to reflect suitably on their colleagues' responses and interact with their trainers during the observed sessions.
- The Center employs a form titled 'Reflective Review & Action Plan Sheet', where learners reflect on their own attainments and understanding;

however, some of the filled forms are insufficiently critical and some learners could not set realistic plans on where they can improve. Moreover, there is no sufficient evidence to show that the issues raised in these forms are systematically followed up by trainers.

- The majority of learners are able to work independently and collaboratively. However, a minority of them face difficulties to complete the given tasks as required and remain excessively dependant on their trainer's support to move forward.

Areas for improvement

- Learners' mastery of the intended skills and knowledge upon course completion.
- The progress made by learners towards the end of a course to achieve the courses' objectives.
- Learners' ability to work independently.

Effectiveness of teaching/training and assessment 'Satisfactory'

Judgement justifications

- Trainers employ appropriate training strategies that succeed in engaging the majority of learners throughout the training sessions. These include presentations, open discussions, role-play, individual and group activities. However, in a minority of the observed sessions, the training methods used did not engage learners productively throughout the sessions.
- The available learning resources and materials are used appropriately to deliver the courses and facilitate learning. These include digital data shows, PowerPoint presentations, whiteboards and flipcharts, in addition to relevant videos and course materials.
- Learners' understanding is assessed *via* suitable formative and summative assessment tools. Formative assessment methods used include open and targeted questioning techniques, quizzes, discussions and oral presentations.
- In the ncf externally accredited courses, which constitute two third of the total enrolment, learners are assessed through the controlled assessment which is clearly mapped to the skill standards stated in the course outlines and are graded using specific rubric and clear marking schemes. Nevertheless, there are a number of cases, particularly in Speaking, Listening and Communication (SLC), where the rubric is not followed suitably and grading is heavily influenced by the trainer. As a result, the given marks do not always reflect learners' actual level. This was also evident in a minority of the observed sessions.
- In the local attendance and achievement courses summative assessment is utilised to assess learners' attainment. Although the assessments used are relevant to the topics of the course, these do not cover all the stated course objectives.
- The majority of sessions observed were appropriately planned and structured. Schemes of work are utilised by trainers to plan the sessions indicating topics to be covered, overall time allocation and type of activities. Occasionally, trainers adapt their planning based on learners' prior attainment and their interaction with learners by expanding the time allocated to an activity or adding new activities when needed. However, class and time management were ineffective in a minority of the observed sessions. Recently, the Center has introduced a useful form called 'Incident Report for Class' which is used to update session plans based on learners' continuous assessment.
- Learners' individual needs are generally addressed through trainers' delivery approaches; guiding learners

and simplifying the language used. In a few cases, more able learners were provided with links to extra introductory reading material. On the other hand, less participating learners were not always supported during the observed session. Nonetheless, there were a few cases where trainers stimulated learners' higher-order skills through further questioning techniques.

- Records of learners' performance are kept in the majority of the conducted

courses. Though learners are provided with useful verbal feedback during the session, the written feedback on learners' assessed work is not constructive enough and does not clearly focus on where learners can improve further. General comments are provided in learners' end of course report.

Areas for improvement

- Effectiveness of the training strategies in motivating and challenging learners.
- Rigor of the summative and formative assessment tools.

Quality of course/programmes 'Satisfactory'

Judgement justifications

- Edrak offers a range of local courses in business, soft-skills, and communication, in addition to the externally accredited ncfе Functional Skills Qualification in English Entry Levels 1&2 courses and Level 2 Diploma in Skills for Business programme for a target market that comprises of job seekers registered with the Ministry of Labour and Social Development (MLSD) and corporate clients.
- The Center keeps abreast with the changing market needs and the latest trends in the training and vocational sector through analysing studies carried out by local, regional and international authorities. In addition,

Edrak management draws on their personal links with leading local businesses in different sectors to understand their training needs and utilise the outcomes to shape its offerings. Yet, the customization of these courses is *ad-hoc* and measures taken during this process are not formally documented.

- The ncfе Functional Skills Qualification in English courses were introduced based on an understanding of the gaps in English language skills needed by the labour market and impede job seekers' efforts to find suitable jobs. These courses are appropriately structured with recommended hours of study and course specifications that are

stipulated by the awarding body. These include the skills standard coverage at each level, and the tools used to assess the attainment of the specified standards.

- The local courses are suitably structured with adequate hours of instruction. However, there is no clear statement of what is expected from the learners to achieve towards the end of the course.
- The ncfе Functional Skills Qualification in English courses are designed, reviewed and updated by the awarding body, and the Center implements them as stipulated. Recently, certain reforms pertaining to learners' achievement of the qualifications and aspects related to the curriculum have been modified by the awarding body. In addition, the Center has taken initiatives to customize topics to meet the needs of their learners and map the tasks to the ncfе standards. These include topics such as writing up a Curriculum Vitae (CV), job application letters and interview skills.
- The Center has a fit for purpose process for designing, reviewing, updating and approving local courses. However, the implementation of this process is not

consistent, and actions taken are not always documented.

- The ncfе courses/programmes are suitably resourced with teaching and learning resources and assessments provided by the awarding body. Teachers and learners have personalised access to the awarding body's online portal. As for the local courses, trainers prepare the training material and activities within the specified topics.
- Edrak has a policy for recognising prior learning and entry and access to the courses/programmes. For the ncfе Functional Skills in English courses, a diagnostic language test and an interview are used to evaluate learners' language ability and the outcomes are used to inform learner's Individual Learning Plan as stipulated by the external awarding body. The Center utilises a diagnostic language test and a skills checklist for the ncfе level 2 Diploma in Skills for Business, and the local communication courses and uses the outcomes to inform the delivery of these courses. For the local soft skills courses, the target audience is stated in the course outlines.

Areas for improvement

- The inclusion of intended learning outcomes in the course specifications of the local courses.

Learners' support and guidance 'Satisfactory'

Judgement justifications

- Considering the nature and the duration of the courses conducted, learners at Edrak receive adequate support and guidance to help them achieve better outcomes. This includes an induction session provided at the beginning of a course to familiarise learners with different aspects related to their learning such as course details, assessment and attendance policies, learners' rights and guidance on health and safety arrangements. This information and more are stipulated in the 'Learners Support Guide' available in the reception area.
 - Trainers and staff are responsive to learners' and stakeholders' inquiries through telephone calls, meetings and emails. Learners have access to 'Schoolology', which is a mobile application mainly used for the ncfе courses/programmes to further reinforce learning.
 - Where needed, learners facing difficulties are supported through one-on-one sessions. There are cases where learners were supported to secure employment opportunities. However, Edrak lacks comprehensive and explicit policy and procedure on learners' support and guidance.
 - Learners and stakeholders are provided with adequate advice and guidance on courses on offer and what is expected from learners to complete the course/programme they choose. Also, the Center shares with them proper course outlines.
- Learners and stakeholders have access to information about the courses offered through various means, such as the Center's website, in addition to the purposeful utilisation of social media applications such as Instagram and YouTube to market the offered courses, specifically the ncfе Functional Skills Qualification in English courses and ncfе Level 2 Diploma Skills for Business programme.
 - The externally accredited courses – mainly the ncfе Functional Skills Qualification in English courses– are enriched with relevant extra-curricular activities which appropriately enhance the learning experience. There is evidence of a few learners who have benefited from two different internships programmes where they were exposed to real work environment. The courses are also enriched with activities relevant to preparation of curriculum vitae (CV) and how to be prepared for a job interview. The arrangements for the delivery and scheduling of courses are sufficiently flexible to suit the needs of learners and stakeholders in terms of preferred course timings, dates, choice of venues and language of course delivery.
 - Stakeholders are regularly informed about learners' attendance. Individualised written reports of learners' performance are shared upon course completion. However, a number of these reports are neither critical nor sufficiently detailed.

- Edrak has suitable arrangements to support learners with special needs. The Center has a 'Physical Disability Documentation Form' in place to identify learners with special needs. The few cases in need were provided with adequate support. However, Edrak lacks detailed and explicit policies and procedures to identify and support learners with special educational needs and /or disabilities.

Areas for improvement

- learners' support and guidance policy and procedure; including those with special needs and /or disabilities.

Effectiveness of leadership, management and governance 'Satisfactory'

Judgement justifications

- Edrak strategic planning is business driven, focused on expanding the range of the offered courses and providing training solutions to corporate clients. Operational plans are developed with general timescale and accountabilities; however, success measures are not always clearly stated. brief and generic annual brief and generic SWOT analysis is developed annually. Nevertheless, a wholistic and critical self-evaluation process is not conducted regularly to inform strategic planning.
- The Self-Evaluation Form (SEF) submitted for this review is fairly informative and highlights some relevant areas for improvement; however, the provided grades overestimate the provision by two points.
- Learners' achievement is sufficiently monitored. Achievement data are kept for the majority of the conducted courses. In the ncfе externally accredited courses, the controlled assessment decisions are subject to internal and external verification. Also, the results of the internal assessment tools used in these courses are analysed by the management and utilised to identify areas for development. Nonetheless, learners' achievement data are neither aggregated nor analysed in the local courses. Although attendance is recorded on individual course level, attendance rates are not analysed to inform decision making.

- Trainers' performance in the classroom is sufficiently monitored through peers' observations. The outcomes of these are usually shared with trainers; however, there are no follow-up observations to ensure continuous quality improvement. Staff performance appraisal is in place, and staff are provided with opportunities for in-house training relevant to their job.
- Considering the number enrolment and the type of the offered courses, Edrak organization structure is fit for purpose and is supported with sufficient number of qualified staff who are suitably deployed. Roles and responsibilities are clearly identified.
- Insufficient quality assurance arrangements are in place. Edrak has a quality manual which includes a set of policies and procedures; however, a number of these are not detailed enough to ensure consistency and standardisation of practices. For example, while there is a brief guidelines on verification, internal assessment in the ncf e externally accredited courses and local courses are not verified to ensure that assessment is clearly mapped to the set course standards/ objectives. Furthermore, some practices are left for individual staff discretion rather than

having a system that ensures consistency across the Center's operations.

- Edrak's learning environment is fit for purpose. The premises include four classrooms that are equipped with training aids, sufficiently furnished, lightened and airconditioned. However, some classrooms are relatively small. Health and safety essentials are in place and learners are provided with relevant instructions at the beginning of each course.
- Links are maintained well with stakeholders and their feedback is sufficiently gathered. Learners' feedback, although regularly gathered upon course completion, is not always aggregated and analysed. There are a few cases where learners' verbal feedback is utilised for improvement. Edrak conducts some community outreach initiatives to promote their offered courses such as conducting lectures in youth clubs and speeches at Majalis.
- Edrak has a Board of Director that monitors the Center overall performance and contributes to its strategic direction.

Areas for improvement

- The self-evaluation to be implemented regularly and utilised to inform strategic planning.
- The quality assurance system and documentations.
- Aggregation, analysis and utilization of learners' feedback.

Appendix (1): Provider information

Name of the provider (English)	Edrak Training Center					
Name of the provider (Arabic)	مركز إدراك للتدريب					
Licensing body	Ministry of Labor and Social Development (MLSD)					
Year of establishment	13/10/2016					
Age range of learners	18 to 60 years old					
Number of learners *	Male	354	Female	458	Total	822
Learning areas	Externally accredited	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Northern Council for Further Education (ncfe) Functional Skills Qualification in English at entry level 1 ncfe Functional Skills Qualifications in English entry level 2 ncfe Level 2 Diploma in Skills for Business 				
	Local achievement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Professional Business English 				
	Local attendance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Management and soft skills Business and administration Communication 				
Institution's listing status	Not yet listed on the National Qualification Framework (NQF)					

* Number of male and female learners is according to the last details provided by Edrak Training Center.