



# **Directorate of Vocational Reviews Review Report**

**Future Institute for Training and Development (FITD)  
Manama  
Kingdom of Bahrain**

**Date Reviewed: 29-31 October 2013**

**VO013-C2-R061**

## Table of Contents

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<b>The Directorate of Vocational Reviews</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>Introduction</b> .....	<b>2</b>
Description of the provision.....	2
Scope of the review.....	2
<b>Table of review judgements awarded</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>Review judgements</b> .....	<b>4</b>
Overall effectiveness .....	4
Learners’ achievement .....	5
The quality of provision.....	6
Leadership and management.....	8
<b>The provider’s key strengths</b> .....	<b>10</b>
<b>Recommendations</b> .....	<b>11</b>

## The Directorate of Vocational Reviews

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The Directorate of Vocational Reviews (DVR) is part of the National Authority for Qualifications and Quality Assurance of Education and Training (QQA) that was officially set up in 2008 as an independent body governed and supervised by the Council of Ministers. Established to raise standards in vocational education and training, the DVR 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 DVR'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 four-point scale:

<b>Grade description</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
1: Outstanding	This describes provision or outcomes that is/are at least good in all aspects and outstanding in the majority.
2: Good	This describes provision or outcomes that is/are at least satisfactory in all aspects and good in the majority. There may be some particularly successful approaches or outcomes.
3: Satisfactory	This describes a basic level of adequacy. There are no major areas of weakness which substantially affect what learners, or significant groups of learners, achieve. There may be some features which are good.
4: Inadequate	This describes situations where major weaknesses in some areas affect the outcomes for learners and outweigh any strength in the provision.

## **Introduction**

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### **Description of the provision**

FITD is part of the Al Meer Group of companies. Established in December 2007, it offers vocational training courses in management and soft skills. The courses offered are non-accredited and cover topics such as customer services, team building, Training Needs Analyses (TNA) and Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP). The NLP courses are prepared and delivered in accordance to the guidelines of the International NLP Trainers Association (INLPTA).

FITD operates from one location in Isa Town. The company uses a pool of part-time trainers to conduct its training courses. Currently the institute does not have a dedicated manager; it relies on resources provided by the Al Meer Group of companies. During 2013 the institute enrolled 18 learners on four courses, all of whom are employed by the Al Meer Group of companies.

### **Scope of the review**

This review was conducted over a three days period, by a team of three reviewers. During the review, reviewers observed lesson, analysed data about the courses, examined learners' written and other work, studied documents and materials provided by the institute and met with staff, learners, employers and trainers.

In the previous review, the overall effectiveness and all other aspects of the provision were judged as satisfactory.

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

## Table of review judgements awarded

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<b>Overall Effectiveness</b>	
How effective is the provision in raising learners' achievement and meeting the full range of learners' and stakeholders' needs?	Grade: 4 Inadequate
<b>Learners' Achievement</b>	
How well do learners achieve?	Grade: 4 Inadequate
<b>Quality of Provision</b>	
How effective is teaching and/or training in promoting learning?	Grade: 4 Inadequate
How well do programmes meet the needs and interests of learners and stakeholders?	Grade: 3 Satisfactory
How well are learners supported and guided to achieve better outcomes?	Grade: 4 Inadequate
<b>Leadership and Management</b>	
How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all students?	Grade: 4 Inadequate

## Review judgements

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### Overall effectiveness

**How effective is the provision in raising learners' achievement and meeting the range of learners' and stakeholders' needs?**

#### **Grade: 4 Inadequate**

FITD overall effectiveness is inadequate as are all aspects of the provision except for the quality of programmes which is graded as satisfactory. Only minority of learners attending courses at FITD develop suitable vocational skills, gain expertise relevant to their profession and daily duties. However, the majority of learners do not progress well from their starting point and do not fully achieve their courses objectives. Learners generally are self-motivated during their course and enjoy the learning experience. However, a few do not show high level of enthusiasm. Some of the learners stated that the course they attend does not match their expectation. Although the majority of trainers are qualified and have the relevant experience and command of the subject they teach, only a few of them adopt a suitable range of teaching techniques to get the attention of all learners and encourage them to develop further. Trainers deliver sessions with little input from the outcomes of learners' pre-course and continuous assessments. FITD offers a suitable range of internally-designed courses that meets certain local market and a few learners' needs and aspirations. FITD ensures that employers receive useful relevant information prior to start of a course. While most FITD offerings are suitably structured and planned, the institute does not ensure always that the courses are reviewed on regular basis and updated accordingly. Although most trainers make themselves available to assist learners during their stay at FITD, the institute's support and guidance is not systematic nor inclusive. Learners do not always know how well they are performing and what they need to do to improve further. FITD has developed a useful strategic plan but it lacks a system to monitor its implementation. The management does not have a formal system for collecting feedback from employers and learners. FITD premises is equipped with basic resources and provides minimal learning requirements. Health and safety aspects relevant to the premises are not always communicated to learners before start of a course.

FITD's capacity to improve is inadequate. The self-evaluation form (SEF) completed for the review, although identifies area for improvements, is not sufficiently detailed and grades provided overestimate the provision. FITD has established recently an affiliation with the City & Guilds to offer a range of courses. Nonetheless the institute's records for the past two years show a limited increase on courses offering. Moreover, the number of enrolments has reduced tremendously. Down from 141 learners enrolled during 2012, only 18 learners have attended four courses during 2013. FITD's current organization structure does not meet its

requirement and the role and responsibilities of staff are not well defined. Moreover, there are number of key positions that are not properly populated. The management lacks sufficient and clear directions towards improving learners' achievement and the quality of training sessions.

## **Learners' achievement**

### **How well do learners achieve?**

#### **Grade: 4 Inadequate**

Learners' achievement at FITD is inadequate overall. From various learners' assessments records and work, a significant number of learners do not make the expected progress from their starting point and remain to face difficulties in completing their assignments and achieving their objectives. Moreover, the mechanisms used to assess learners' progress is not rigorous enough. Learners' progress is measured through pre- and post-course assessments and other in-class activities. However these are not always relevant to the course objectives and do not sufficiently reflect on the level of learners' understanding. While the majority of learners have stated on their course self-evaluation sheets that they were not achieving the course requirements well, and that the course does not add the value they aimed for, trainers' records show that those learners have achieved their courses requirements successfully. Notwithstanding the above, a few learners develop suitable soft skills such as on the NLP course and the Employers Development Programme (EDP) which are properly reflected on their assessments sheets.

Although, most learners receive attendance certificates and the recorded success rates are high at 98% and 100% in 2012 and 2013 respectively, it is not well reflected in the standard of learners' work and the level of their achievements. The retention rate is at 100 % which is expected for these types of courses. Learners attend regularly and punctuality is recorded usually. Although the institute judges learners' achievements solely on the basis of their attendance of 85% of the course duration. In a few cases certificate are awarded to learners with poor attendance

Through samples of scrutiny of learners' work and a few samples of recorded videos; the majority of learners are able to work individually and sometimes in a group. However, according to the learners' performance records, trainers' assessment of group work is not accurate and in few cases individual projects do not reflect on learners' own experiences or the level of understanding they have reached. The majority of learners are self-motivated and enjoy their learning. However, few learners commented that the courses they are

attending are boring and do not match their expectations. Only a few learners have opportunities to reflect critically on their work and identify what they must do to improve.

## **The quality of provision**

### **How effective is teaching and/or training in promoting learning?**

#### **Grade: 4 Inadequate**

The majority of trainers are suitably qualified with relevant experience. Only a minority of trainers however, employ a range of vocationally-relevant examples to promote better learning experience and link theory to real life environments. Better trainers use a range of useful interactive training methods and in-class practical activities, such as direct questioning, games, pair and group activities and presentations, to engage and motivate learners, and encourage their participations. These were noted on 'train the trainers' and 'report writing' courses. Only a few trainers use adequate approach to enable learners to further their understanding and solve problems as seen on the retail course. Trainers utilise available resources effectively to facilitate learning such as games, puzzles and extra reading materials.

Courses offered have a set of clear learning objectives stated in the course outlines. These are shared with the learners on the first day of the training. In a few cases, personal objectives are also stated and discussed yet, there is no systematic approach to ensure their relevance to the course and to measure to what extent these have been achieved. Lesson plans are not always well informed by the outcomes of the pre-course assessments or the continuous assessments of the learners. Only in a few cases, trainers use available information on learners' education background and their work experience to accommodate learners' varying needs, such as providing an instant Arabic translations for presentations to facilitate effective learning. Additionally, the pre- course assessments used do not measure learners' prior knowledge and skills adequately.

While trainers assess learners' work through in-class activities and the on-the-job-training (OJT) and some learners' records are kept, these assessments are neither rigorous nor have clear criteria. Moreover, the marking scheme used is not standardised. Whilst some learners are provided with constructive written feedback to inform them how to improve further. However, this is not done consistently.



## **How well do programmes meet the needs and interests of learners and stakeholders?**

### **Grade: 3 Satisfactory**

FITD offers a suitable range of internally-designed courses in soft skills and management that generally meet local stakeholder requirements, and learners' needs and aspirations. This also echoes the testimonial received from the majority of learners and employers. However, a few stockholders stated that FITD needs to expand the range of courses the institute offers. Most courses are suitably structured and planned but FITD does not always ensure that these courses are reviewed and updated in regular basis to respond to new market changes. All courses are provided with an informative course outline that includes useful briefing about the topics and contents to be covered. The institute shares courses outlines and objectives with stakeholders prior to the start of any course. However, the course structure could be improved further. Most courses are adequately resourced to meet the needs of learners and stakeholders. A few trainers enhance their sessions by using their own useful learning resources such as flash cards and games. The arrangement to enrich learning experience and provide additional activities is limited to some courses, such as the EDP course, which is occasionally supported with some OJT activities.

The institute arrangement to assess and gauge market needs is limited to direct contact with its current major clients' base and the usage of a training need analysis (TNA) tool to evaluate a specific client's requirement. The institute does not carry out purposeful market surveys to assess its current offerings and decide on the introduction of new courses.

## **How well are learners supported and guided to achieve better outcomes?**

### **Grade: 4 Inadequate**

While trainers and staff at FITD are generally responsive, approachable and provide extra supportive learning material as required, the institute's support and guidance is neither formal nor comprehensive, and does not help learners to progress further and achieve better on their chosen courses. The institute provides the stakeholders with basic information such as course outlines, targeted learners and assessments methods before the start of any course. Learners also have access to course brochures but, these do not provide accurate information about courses on offer. Moreover, FITD's website is not operational. Nonetheless, some trainers occasionally use their personal social media such as Facebook to provide information about a few courses. While FITD's learning environment is not sufficiently inspiring, it maintains the minimum requirements and is equipped with the basic learning resources needed. classrooms' ventilation, however, needs improvement. FITD

arrangement's for the delivery of it courses is flexible. Upon stakeholders' requests, courses are held at the employers' own premises and in suitable hospitality venues.

Learners at FITD do not know how well they are progressing during sessions nor what they need to do to improve. Feedback provided is sporadic. Whilst the institute provides the employers with information about their employers; such as grades and attendance rates, these do not plot an accurate picture about the progress individuals make or the skills gained as a result of attending a course. Moreover, the awarded grades are not always a true reflection of the standard reached by a learner.

## **Leadership and management**

### **How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?**

#### **Grade: 4 Inadequate**

FITD has clear vision and mission statements that are sufficiently focused on raising learners' achievements. The institute strategic plan provides useful details with some specific key performance indicators that are reviewed occasionally. However, the management does not have proper follow-up procedure to monitor and assess the implementation of its strategies. The institute's quality assurance procedure document is in place however, staff do not have a shared understanding about their responsibilities. The implementation of the quality assurance procedure is not monitored by the top management, and relevant documents are not updated routinely. The institute hired an external consultant to review the institute's internal quality assurance system and as a result areas for improvement were identified however, limited steps to address these are taken. FITD does not have a formal system for ascertaining employers' feedback. Most feedback received is on *ad hoc* basis and are not scrutinised by the institution. Although the marketing team contacts some major employers and carry out basic need analysis, the outcomes of these meetings are not recorded nor analysed. The current management structure does not fully meet the requirements of the organization. FITD remains largely dependent on the Al Meer Group to provide the required resources and policies, which are not effectively deployed. FITD only assesses and utilises learners' prior attainment for some courses, however, the outcomes are used by a minority of sessions only, where learners are put in a level most suitable to them. The management does not monitor sufficiently learners'

performance and progress. While some basic analysis is carried out, these are not used effectively to improve the provision.

While trainers' performance is monitored through basic lesson observation scheme, the system is not sufficiently streamlined or critical to further improve the quality of training at the institute. The institute's Self-Evaluation Form (SEF) submitted for this review provides basic information about the institute but, it is not sufficiently detailed. The SEF identifies a range of relevant improvements actions; however, these are not translated into an improvement plan. Moreover, grades provided overestimate the institute status. Most health and safety aspects are in place, however the institute does not have dedicated health and safety policy for the institute; it largely depends on the Al Meer Group policies. The institute's classrooms are not comfortable for learners and the ventilation system is not adequate.

## **The provider's key strengths**

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- Future institute makes flexible arrangement for the delivery of their courses.

## Recommendations

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In order to improve its provision, FITD should:

- device a system to assess learners development and progress and ensure that all learners make the expected progress on all courses
- enhance the teaching and learning experience through:
  - improving sessions plans and ensuring that plans are informed by prior assessments for better accommodation of learners' varying needs
  - ensuring that all learners and employers are updated systematically
  - ensuring that learners are provided with suitable support and guidance that help them to reach their potential
- establish a system to ensure that courses are regularly reviewed and updated
- strengthen the management role in monitoring the quality of provision through:
  - ensuring that achievement data are aggregated and trends are monitored over time
  - improving the current internal lesson observation scheme to be more critical and informative
  - ensuring that employers and learners feedback about the provision are regularly collected and utilised for further improvement.