



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

Directorate of Vocational Reviews

Review Report

Genetech Training & Development
Seef District
Kingdom of Bahrain

Date Reviewed: 26-29 December 2016

VO063-C3-R050

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Introduction

The Directorate Vocational Reviews (DVR), which is a part of the Education and Training Quality Authority (BQA), conducted this review over four days by a team of six 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 the provider and met with learners, employers, trainers, management and support staff.

In the previous review all main questions of Genetech Training & Development were graded as outstanding, except the effectiveness of training which was graded as good. The capacity to improve was graded as outstanding.

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

Grading scale

Outstanding	1	Good	2	Satisfactory	3	Inadequate	4
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Table of review judgements awarded

Main Question	Judgement
Learners' achievement	Good (2)
Quality of teaching / training and assessment	Good (2)
Quality of programmes	Outstanding (1)
Quality of support and guidance	outstanding (1)
Leadership, management and governance	Good (2)
Capacity to improve	Good (2)
Overall effectiveness	Good (2)

Review judgements

Overall effectiveness

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

Grade: Good (2)

Genetech's provision is good overall. Courses and the support and guidance provided are outstanding, while learners' achievement, quality of training and assessment, leadership, management and governance are judged as good.

The vast majority of learners develop effective knowledge and skills, and progress well throughout their course. In the IT professional courses most learners progress over course levels. Learners and employers are highly satisfied with the outcomes of the courses, which are developed based on their specific needs. Most learners achieve the qualifications they aim for and their course objectives. A few learners however, specifically in English and soft-skills courses, are not able to achieve all of their course objectives.

Genetech trainers are qualified and have good command of their specialisms. They use a variety of training methods which succeed in engaging and motivating learners effectively. Although trainers customise course delivery based on learners' needs, lesson plans are not always informed by learners' initial or continuous assessments. A range of effective formative and summative assessment tools are utilised, and learners are provided with constructive verbal and written feedback on how to improve further.

Courses are offered based on an excellent understanding of the market needs and trends. Genetech conducts thorough training needs analysis for clients and customises courses to meet their specific needs. Accordingly, a wide range of soft skills and IT professional courses are offered. Courses are well-structured, planned and resourced to meet the needs of learners and stakeholders. Externally accredited IT courses are supported with a wide range of extra-curricular activities to enrich learners' experiences.

Learners at Genetech are supported and guided well in order to achieve the best outcomes. Premises are well equipped and provide an inspiring learning environment. Advice and guidance about courses is sound and widely and easily accessible. Communication with stakeholders is effective in informing and supporting learners' achievement.

Leadership and management have clear strategic direction which focuses on improving learners' achievement and quality of provision. The performance of both learners and staff

are closely monitored. Trends of achievement are analysed and utilised to inform decision making. Quality assurance is effective in promoting continuous quality improvement. However, the efficiency of the internal lesson observation system needs further improvement to make it more informative and able to clearly identify areas for further development.

Capacity to improve

How strong is the provider's capacity to improve the quality of learning?

Grade: Good (2)

Genetech has good capacity to improve. Effective improvements have been carried out over the last three years, which include expanding the range of programmes offered by expanding partnerships and external accreditation. Genetech is an Oracle gold partner, an authorised Cisco academy, and a Microsoft silver partner able to deliver basic skills and professional certificates. In 2016 Genetech obtained the accreditation of the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants (CIMA), the Chartered Management Institute (CMI) and the Association of Accounting Technicians (AAT). The centre has also signed Memorandum of Understanding (MoUs) with international training organisations to develop course material and provide international trainers as needed. Improvements carried out include moving to the new and well-equipped premises in the Seef District, becoming a Pearson and Castle worldwide test centre, revamping the website and improving the learning management system, particularly that relating to communication with learners and stakeholders.

Currently Genetech management is working on a number of projects such as the Genetech Learning Centre, which provides learners with the opportunity for networking with each other and benefiting from the professional experience of international speakers. In addition Genetech management is working on converting more than 120 National Occupational Standards into training courses.

Genetech has sufficient and appropriate human and physical resources to enable improvements to be carried out. The senior management team are highly qualified and experienced, and the centre has access to a pool of local and internal professional trainers. The leadership and management have clear strategic planning which is properly focused on maximising learners' achievements and quality improvement. Quality assurance arrangements, although effective, not always consistently implemented. Enrolment number has been maintained for the last three years, however, it has declined in 2016. Repeat business is good, forming 35.3% of the total enrolment since the last review.

Learners' achievement

How well do learners achieve?

Grade: Good (2)

The vast majority of learners at Genetech develop effective knowledge and skills relevant to their chosen courses. This clearly shows in the sessions observed as well as in the standard of learners' work produced. Learners and employers interviewed are highly satisfied with the outcomes of training at Genetech, finding it beneficial in improving employees' performance at work and excelling in their careers. There are a number of cases where learners have been promoted within their organisations or obtained better jobs after completing their courses, or have been supported by the centre in gaining employment within the Kingdom of Bahrain or the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA). A few graduates have also been contracted within Genetech's pool of registered trainers.

Most learners in the externally-accredited IT courses achieve the qualifications they aim for in a timely manner. These comprise around 23% of the total enrolment, with pass rates as high as 94% particularly on the Oracle courses which form the highest percentage of the IT-learners. Most learners in other local courses achieve the outcomes/objectives, or their personal aims, for the courses they attend. However, a few learners specifically in English and soft skills courses failed to achieve all objectives within their course of study. Learners are presented with a certificate based on attaining the minimum attendance requirement and successful achievement of the course's minimum attainment of 60%. Learners' achievement is measured effectively through formative and summative assessment tools. Achievements are calculated based on post-assessment results, which comprise 60% of the final grade, and the trainer's observation of learner's behavioural aspects which make up the remaining 40%. Although the centre uses well-structured formative assessment tools the results of these are not clearly reflected in the final attainment of learners.

The vast majority of learners progress well throughout their courses, based on their starting point. Most learners in the externally-accredited IT courses progress over course levels, particularly the Oracle learners.

Learners at Genetech are attentive and have positive attitudes towards their learning. The more able learners have the ability to reflect on their level of attainment and defend their ideas. Learners are able to work well both independently and collaboratively, as seen in the sessions observed, the recorded videos of class activities and the available samples of learners' work.

Attendance and punctuality are well recorded and followed-up. The attendance rate is high across most courses. Attendance is recorded on an hourly basis, with lateness of more than half an hour being considered as absent, hence a few cases of absenteeism are recorded in the first hour.

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching/training and assessment in promoting learning?

Grade: Good (2)

Trainers at Genetech are qualified, knowledgeable and have theoretical and practical command of their specialisms. They provide accurate explanation of concepts, respond professionally to learners' questions and provide relevant vocational examples to illustrate the link between theory and practice. Appropriate lesson plans are used which specify the learning outcomes to be covered, the training and assessment methods, and materials needed. Although trainers customise their course delivery according to learners' needs, lesson plans are not always informed with learners' prior and continuous assessment. Most of the sessions observed were well planned and managed, usually starting by sharing the learning objectives/ILOs and recapitulation of the previous session. However, in a few cases time management was an issue, with some activities taking longer than expected.

Trainers use a variety of effective training methods to engage and motivate learners, including open discussion, role play, case studies, training games, practical and virtual IT activities. Learners' understanding and achievement of the course objectives are assessed through a range of well-structured formative and summative assessment tools. These include pre-course assessment that measures learner's prior knowledge of the course subject, continuous verbal questioning, various written and practical in-class activities and comprehensive post-course assessment. 40% of the marks in the final grading are usually allocated by trainers based on class observations which mainly evaluate a learner's behavioural aspects. This does not always provide accurate evaluation of learners' formative assessment outcomes or their overall performance, and the rubric used for evaluating these aspects does not match the evaluated criteria. Records of learners' performance are maintained and learners are provided with constructive verbal and written feedback on how to improve further. Individual learners' needs are well addressed, with the less able being supported well through one-on-one further explanations and extended time, while the more able are challenged by extended activities. Trainers use further questioning techniques to challenge learners. In the IT courses learners are encouraged to implement different solutions which stimulate self-learning.

The available learning resources and materials are utilised effectively to promote learning. These include smart boards, PowerPoint presentations, flip charts and actual and virtual IT laboratories.

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

Grade: Outstanding (1)

The courses offered are based on an excellent understanding of the market needs. Genetech monitors the labour market needs and trends on different levels as it refers to various global, regional and local relevant studies and analyses. It utilises the outcomes of all the above as well as the extensive knowledge of the senior management and members of the Board of Trustees to inform the provision. Accordingly, a good range of IT professional courses were introduced during the last three years including Oracle, Cisco and Microsoft courses. The centre also conducts effective training needs analysis through stakeholders and customises courses to meet their specific needs. A wide range of soft skills courses are conducted based on the requests of stakeholders, including 'Marketing Communication', 'Developing Effective Supervisory Skills' and others. Learners and stakeholders interviewed are highly satisfied with the courses which meet their needs effectively.

Genetech has a formal mechanism for designing, approving, updating and reviewing courses. This is implemented effectively. Courses are well structured and planned, with detailed course outlines that indicate the Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs), teaching and assessment methods. The externally-accredited courses are governed by the awarding IT vendors' standards and requirements. Genetech utilises Velsoft customisable courseware for the soft skills courses and tailors it according to the specific needs of stakeholders. This process includes customising the ILOs, PowerPoint presentations, and formative and summative assessments.

Courses are well-resourced to meet the needs of learners and stakeholders. Genetech has sufficient laboratories which are fully equipped with an appropriate number of stations, with up-to-date software and hardware which meet the standards of the IT vendors. The Cisco laboratory is resourced with routers and switches to support the necessary virtual activities. Learners are provided with original textbooks and have access to various web-based materials and assessments. In the locally designed soft skills courses learners are provided with material and customised PowerPoint presentations as references.

While the externally- accredited courses are supported with a wide range of extra-curricular activities to enrich the learning experience, such as the Oracle symposium and the Cisco portal, the soft skills courses are supported with appropriate extra-curricular activities such as guest speakers and site visits.

The prerequisites for externally-accredited courses are clearly stated in the course outlines. The soft skill courses are customised according to the specific needs of learners and employers. The targeted audience is clearly stated in the course outlines.

How well learners are supported and guided?

Grade: Outstanding (1)

Genetech has very effective mechanisms to support and guide learners to achieve better outcomes. Learners are provided with bilingual course induction material containing all details about course structure, duration, prerequisites and certification. The Trainee Manual is very informative about attendance policy, assessment scheme, health and safety guidelines, suggestions and complaints procedures, counselling and support to learners. Induction is facilitated by Genetech staff who support learners through initial registration and arrange course materials and requirements. A WhatsApp group enables learners and trainers to share experiences and views about their courses. Learners enrolled in the IT courses are provided with mock examinations to ensure that they are well prepared for their online examinations. They also have the opportunity to practice what they learn in the computer laboratories. They have access to various web-based resources including course material, reference books, activities, assessments, quizzes and e-seminars. In certain cases additional hours are provided to learners to support their learning. Trainers are accessible even outside the training hours to provide necessary support and guidance; for example, in one of the human resources courses the trainer helped learners to develop their thinking around the job descriptions and HR policies and procedures for their workplace. Financial support is provided to learners where needed.

The premises and facilities provide an inspiring learning environment through computer laboratories, e-learning rooms, reference books, amenities and prayer rooms. Educational information is displayed in both Arabic and English in the form of leaflets and data show in the reception areas in both the learning facilities and the administration block.

Learners and stakeholders have access to well-informed advice and guidance about programmes through detailed course leaflets, the highly informative website and accounts on social media sites. Communication with stakeholders is very effective, informing learners' achievement through a number of reports including the Training General Performance Report and the Learner's Achievement Report. The areas for improvement and recommended workshops for learners are also included in these details.

Arrangements for course delivery are highly flexible to meet the needs of learners and stakeholders. These include timing, venues and language of delivery. Effective arrangements are in place to identify and support learners with special needs, where applicable, through an explicit policy which provides guidelines for dealing with visually

impaired, hearing impaired, mobility impaired, dyslexic learners and those with speech impediment. For instance, a learner with hearing impairment was supported by providing a special instructor to deliver the course in sign language. Consequently the learner has made very high progress in MS Word skills and was highly satisfied with the support provided. Bilingual question papers are provided during written assessments to support learners with weak English proficiency.

Leadership, management and governance

How effective are leadership, management and governance in raising achievement and improving the quality of the provision?

Grade: Good (2)

Genetech's leadership, management, trainers and staff have a shared sense of purpose which shows in the clarity and consistency of practices. The self-evaluation process is thorough, regular and is utilised effectively to inform strategic planning and quality improvement. An internal assessment verification audit was carried out and the centre used a consultancy firm to conduct an external quality audit. Action plans are developed to address the identified areas for development. A very useful SWOT analysis was conducted and utilised to develop the strategic plan, which focusses on improving learners' achievement and the quality of the provision. Detailed annual operational plans are developed to manage specific tasks; these have clear key performance indicators, targets, accountabilities and time scales. Frequent meetings are held to monitor progress and ensure timely achievement of the goals.

Considering the type of courses offered and the number of enrolments, Genetech organisation structure is fit for purpose and covers the various processes required. Roles and responsibilities are clearly identified. Learners' achievement is closely monitored, with achievement data being kept, aggregated and analysed. Very useful analysis reports are produced and trends of achievement are monitored and used for further improvement.

Effective arrangements are in place to quality assure the provision, with clear and sufficiently detailed quality assurance policies and procedures. Learners' prior attainment is sufficiently assessed in all courses and the outcomes are utilised to customise course delivery. Internal verification activities are carried out, and some forms contain comments particularly about the quality of assessment. Assessment decisions are regularly reviewed to ensure their accuracy and consistency. Nevertheless, some practices are inconsistently implemented across the various courses.

Qualified trainers are recruited, sufficiently inducted and deployed effectively. Their performance is regularly monitored through session observations and learners' feedback. A suitable form is used for this purpose. However, the efficiency of the sessions observation system could be improved to make it more informative and better identify specific areas for development. Performance appraisal is in place, and staff are provided with training opportunities relevant to their roles and responsibilities.

Links with stakeholders are well established. Learners' feedback about the courses is regularly gathered, aggregated and analysed. Although communication with stakeholders is strong, particularly about their training needs, their feedback about the provision is inconsistently gathered. Repeat business is good, reflecting the high satisfaction of stakeholders with the training provided. Genetech has various partnerships, accreditation, and MoUs with IT vendors, awarding bodies and international training providers, and aims to expand the range of courses offered and improve the provision.

Genetech premises are safe and free of any obvious hazards. Health and safety measures are in place, creating a secure and healthy learning environment for learners and staff.

Members of the Board of Trustees are highly qualified and have wide professional experience, which they use effectively to monitor the overall performance of the centre, set its strategic direction and influence decision making.

The provider's key strengths

- The vast majority of learners develop effective knowledge and skills throughout the courses they attend, and most of them achieve the qualifications and course objectives they aim for.
- A variety of effective training methods and well-structured formative and summative assessment tools are used.
- Courses are well structured, planned and resourced to meet the needs of learners and stakeholders.
- Effective mechanisms are in place to support and guide learners to achieve better outcomes.
- Well-focused strategic planning that is based on regular and effective self-evaluation processes.
- Effective arrangements are in place to quality assure the provision.

Recommendations

In order to improve, Genetech should:

- ensure that learners on the local courses achieve all their course objectives
- ensure that the formative assessment clearly shows in the course records and that learners' performance is accurately evaluated
- improve the efficiency of the sessions observation system to be more informative and better identify areas for development.

Appendix

Description of the provision

Genetech Training & Development (Genetech) was established in 2006 and is licensed by the Ministry of Labour and Social Development. The centre offers a range of local completion courses in management, soft skills and business. It also offers externally accredited information Technology and Communication (ITC) professional certificates through companies such as Oracle, Cisco, and Microsoft Office (professional and basic skills). Few of the local completion courses are quality assured by Edexcel.

Genetech operates from a single centre located in Seef District. It employs a full-time general manager and part-time business development manager and quality manager. Marketing and social media staff, administration staff, and IT and support staff work on a full-time basis. The quality manager also conducts training courses. Genetech has access to a pool of around 50 trainers who are used as and when needed.

Since the last review which was conducted mid of January 2013, 1,404 learners have been enrolled: 398 in 2013, 394 in 2014, 416 in 2015, and 196 in 2016 up to the date of this review. Management, business and soft skills courses constitute 62% of the total enrolment. IT courses make up 33% and English comprises 5%. Local courses form 76% of the total enrolment, the externally-accredited courses 24%.