



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

# **Vocational Review Unit**

## **Repeat Review Report**

**London Training Centre**

**Jidhafs**

**Kingdom of Bahrain**

**Date Reviewed: 21 – 23 December 2010**

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## The Vocational Review Unit

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The Vocational Review Unit (VRU) is part of the Quality Assurance Authority for Education and Training (QAAET), an independent body set up under Royal Decree No.32 of 2008 amended by Royal Decree No. 6 of 2009. Established to raise standards in vocational education and training, the VRU is responsible for monitoring and reporting on the quality of vocational provision, identifying strengths and areas for improvement, establishing success measures, spreading best practice and offering policy advice to key stakeholders, including the Ministry of Labour and the Ministry of Education.

Reviews are based on the VRU's *Review Framework*, and carried out on providers' premises by teams of carefully selected and highly trained reviewers. All providers are invited to nominate a senior member of their staff to participate in the planning of the review, and to represent them during review team meetings. Reviewers examine a range of evidence before arriving at a series of judgements and awarding grades for the quality of the provision.

Review grades are awarded on a five-point scale:

<b>Grade description</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
1: Outstanding	This describes provision or outcomes that is/are at least good in all or nearly all aspects and is/are exemplary or exceptional in many.
2: Good	This describes provision or outcomes that is/are better than the basic level. Practice will be at least sound and there may be some particularly successful approaches or outcomes.
3: Satisfactory	This describes a basic level of adequacy. No major areas of weakness substantially affect what learners, or significant groups of learners, achieve. Some features may be good.
4: Below satisfactory	This describes situations where major weaknesses in some areas affect the outcomes for learners and outweigh any strengths in the provision.
5: Very weak	This describes situations where there are major weaknesses in all, or almost all, areas and where, as a result, learners are very poorly served.

## **Introduction**

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### **Description of the provision**

London Training Centre (LTC) was established in 2001 through licensing by the Ministry of Labour. It offers short courses in Hospitality, First Aid, Safety, Management and self-development. The centre is approved by Medic of the USA to run First Aid courses and by the Chartered Institute of Environment and Health of UK (CIEH) to run Health and Safety courses. Since the last review LTC received further approvals to run English, Business and management courses accredited by City and Guilds (C&G) and London Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI). A total number of 194 adult learners have attended the courses conducted by LTC since the last review.

LTC has one centre which is based in Jidhafs. LTC has now a new organisational structure. It is operated by a team consisting of the owner who is the chief operating officer, a part-time quality and planning manager, a training and development manager, a marketing executive, an accountant and one administrative staff. Five more staff are planned to be recruited on a full-time basis during 2011 including a quality assurance administrator, a training coordinator, a marketing officer, an English language trainer and an executive secretary. All the trainers of LTC are part-timers except for the owner and the quality and planning manager who conduct training sessions as well. LTC now has a quality assurance committee and a Board of Directors consisting of three members.

### **The repeat review**

LTC was first reviewed in June 2009. Although the quality of training, the range of programmes offered, and the support provided to learners were satisfactory, there was insufficient evidence to grade learners' achievement, and the leadership and management of the provision were below satisfactory. LTC was therefore subject to a repeat review. The repeat review comprised two one-day monitoring visits and a final three-day visit. During the repeat review, reviewers observed training sessions, analysed data about the qualifications learners achieve and the courses they complete, and talked with the management, trainers, administration and support staff, learners and employers.

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

## Overall judgement

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### Effectiveness of provision

#### Grade 3: Satisfactory

The overall effectiveness of London Training Centre is now satisfactory. While teaching and training practices are good, learners' achievements, quality of programmes, support and guidance offered to learners, as well as effectiveness of leadership and management are all satisfactory.

The majority of learners gain useful knowledge and to some extent develop relevant vocational skills and attitudes. The initial and post-course assessments introduced after the last review indicate that learners make just moderate progress. Generally, the majority of learners are enjoying their learning experience at LTC. Conducted courses have a 99 per cent retention rate, which is expected for the nature of these courses. Learners are attending regularly and their punctuality is generally acceptable.

Trainers at LTC use summative and formative assessment effectively on all courses conducted since late 2009 to assess learners and provide them with helpful verbal feedback. LTC's trainers are suitably qualified and make effective use of various training techniques to encourage and motivate learners. Trainers follow basic lesson plans, course objectives are available and shared with learners on all courses and sessions are generally well managed. Nevertheless, the outcome of the initial assessment is only used to focus the content of the course to suit the average group level rather than accommodating individual learner's needs.

LTC continues to offer a range of short courses in management and self-development, hospitality, first aid and safety. Since the last review, LTC has started to expand its range by having more externally accredited courses and a few courses with progression. Most of the interviewed employers expressed their general satisfaction with the range of courses. Detailed course content with clear objectives is in place and available in advance for employers only. Trainers provide extra enrichment material such as videos, creative thinking games, articles and magazines to broaden the learning experience.

Learners at LTC receive useful *ad hoc* support from trainers and staff on issues related to the courses and on personal matters. LTC has suitable health and safety measures in place. Recently LTC has made appropriate efforts to promote awareness on health and safety matters. However, guidance on health and safety is not always communicated to learners. The LTC centre has premises and facilities that are fit for purpose. However, lighting inside the classrooms is insufficient. A small library that contains useful learning material is

available for learners. LTC's website is under development and contains insufficient course information.

Those with leadership responsibility now have a clear strategic focus on improving the quality of the provision which is reflected in detailed strategic plans for 2010 and 2011. Since late 2009, LTC started to put into practice improved training processes and standardised course documentation and records. The management now monitors individual course assessment records; however, these records are insufficiently analysed to highlight areas for further improvement and trends over time. The provider uses appropriate selection criteria to recruit part-time qualified trainers. Lesson observation arrangements are in place to monitor trainers' performance but the actual observations are not always carried out by adequately trained senior staff. Learners' feedback is systematically collected and aggregated after each course. However it is insufficiently analysed to inform improvement. Furthermore, formal feedback from employers on the quality of the provision has only recently started. The provider continues to maintain useful links with employers and other stakeholders. The SEF is sufficiently informative and identified some areas for improvement. However, part-time trainers are insufficiently involved and it overestimated most grades.

## **Capacity to improve**

### **Grade 2: Good**

After the first review, LTC management revamped its strategic planning and made major shifts in emphasis from solely business focused strategic plans to quality improvement plans for 2010 and 2011. This resulted, for example, in significant improvements in identified key areas related to measuring and monitoring learners' achievement. The plans are monitored by quarterly reporting of targets achieved and comments on those not achieved.

The provider now has sufficient resources to implement and monitor improvement plans including support from the quality improvement team which carries out biannual internal quality audits on a specially devised and detailed self-assessment checklist. One pilot audit was performed in early December 2010 and its outcome is being aggregated for subsequent analysis. The organisational structure has been streamlined; roles and responsibilities are now made clearer and there is a plan to recruit five new full time staff during 2011 to fill the identified vacancies. Some applicants have already been shortlisted.

A second key priority addressed by LTC, after the first review, was improvement on documents and standardisation of procedures. The quality procedure manual has been completed and printed in both Arabic and English. Relevant forms and checklists are in place and they have been put in use since late 2009. The course files are now well organised

and follow logically the procedures set in the quality manual. An informative trainee handbook, detailed trainer handbook and a useful human resources manual are now available. LTC has also started to expand its range of courses. It has now put more importance on introducing more accredited courses. It has added courses from City and Guilds (C&G) and London Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI) in 2010 and recently it has started communication with the Institute of Leadership and Management (ILM).

Another important development since the last review is the development of an appropriate management information system (MIS). The system has essential functionalities to capture learners' details, assessment records, course and trainers' information. It stores employers' contacts and needs and there are plans to capture learners' and employers' feedback. LTC management has now started to collect and monitor achievement data, performance data and various feedback. However, such useful aggregated data is not yet fully analysed and utilised to inform further improvement.

The SEF is sufficiently informative and identified some areas for improvement but it overestimated most grades. Both management and administrative staff were involved in completing it. However, part-time trainers were insufficiently involved.

## Summary of grades awarded

Overall Judgement	Original Grade	Repeat Review Grade
Effectiveness of provision	Grade 4: Below satisfactory	Grade 3: Satisfactory
Capacity to Improve	Grade 3: Satisfactory	Grade 2: Good
<b>Review Findings</b>		
How well do learners achieve?	Insufficient evidence to grade	Grade 3: Satisfactory
How effective is training?	Grade 3: Satisfactory	Grade 2: Good
How well do programmes meet the needs of learners and employers?	Grade 3: Satisfactory	Grade 3: Satisfactory
How well are learners guided and supported?	Grade 3: Satisfactory	Grade 3: Satisfactory
How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	Grade 4: Below satisfactory	Grade 3: Satisfactory



## Main judgements and recommendations

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### Strengths

- **The measurement of learners' development is recorded through an effective trainee needs analysis and detailed individual performance report.** Since late 2009, the provider has developed and implemented measures to assess learners' progress and achievement which have provided LTC with an effective method of assessing learner progress.
- **Good use of summative and formative assessments on all courses conducted since late 2009 and helpful verbal feedback is provided.** This is regularly conducted through pre-course and post-course assessments, question and answer techniques and class activities. All courses now have at least one final, summative test.
- **Effective use of various training techniques and resources to encourage and motivate learners.** Teaching and training is now well planned with trainers using a range of effective methods which motivate learners and are used well to check their understanding and assess their progress.
- **Those with leadership responsibility have a clear strategic focus on improving the quality of provision which is reflected in detailed strategic plans for 2010 and 2011 and clear responsibilities defined in regularly monitored action plans.** In addition, time frames and set targets are realistic. Improved practices include having standardised course documentation and more effective recording of learner progress.

### Areas for improvement

- **Insufficient use of initial assessment to accommodate individual learners' different needs to raise all learners' achievement.** Although LTC conducts initial assessment at the beginning of each course, the outcome of this assessment is not used well enough to plan for and to accommodate individual learner's needs.
- **Insufficient analysis of achievement data, performance data and various feedbacks to inform improvement including raising learners' achievement.** Although learners' feedback is systematically collected and aggregated after each course, it is not analysed well enough to inform improvement. In addition, formal feedback from employers on the quality of the provision has only recently been collected.
- **Guidance on health and safety is not always communicated to learners.** Although LTC has prepared a trainee handbook that contains sections on health and safety, guidance on these matters are not always communicated to learners especially those taking courses on venues outside LTC premises.

## **Recommendations**

In order to improve provision, London Training Centre should:

- improve learners' achievement by:
  1. ensuring effective use of initial assessment to accommodate individual learners' different needs
  2. carrying out appropriate and thorough analysis of achievement data, performance data and various feedback to inform improvement.
- ensure that all learners receive appropriate guidance on health and safety.