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

# Vocational Review Unit
## Review Report

**London Training Centre**
**Manama, Kingdom of Bahrain**

**Date reviewed:** 15th - 17th June 2009

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# The Vocational Review Unit

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:

| Grade description | Interpretation |
| --- | --- |
| 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

## Description of the provision

London Training Centre (LTC) was established in 2001. 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 UK's Chartered Institute of Environment and Health (CIEH) to run health and safety courses. Since 2006, a total of 478 adult learners have attended LTC courses.

LTC has one centre, which is currently based in Manama. It is operated by a team consisting of the managing director, the centre's consultant, a manager, a secretary, a marketing executive, a sales administrator and a programme coordinator. Two specialists are currently being recruited for the positions of market analyst and quality assurance administrator. All LTC's trainers are part time except for the managing director, who conducts training sessions as well.

In 2007, LTC was selected by the Bahrain Development Bank as an example of a successful small business organisation that provides hospitality training to Bahrainis.

## Scope of the review

The review was conducted over a period of three days by a team of four reviewers. During the review, the team observed learning sessions, examined learners' work, analysed data about the qualifications learners achieve and the courses they complete and talked to staff, learners, trainers and employers.

This report summarises reviewers' findings about LTC and their recommendations for improvement.

# Overall judgement

## Effectiveness of provision

### Grade 4: below satisfactory

LTC is below satisfactory overall. The quality of training, the range of programmes offered and the support provided to learners are all adequate. The leadership and management of the provision, however, are insufficiently effective in raising the achievement of learners. Learners' achievement was not graded because insufficient data was available.

Learners, particularly those on hospitality and safety courses, gain a range of good vocational skills that they are able to use at work. Learners' attendance is recorded and reports are sent to employers at the end of each course. Trainers are suitably qualified and use a good variety of vocationally relevant examples. Learners' varying needs are adequately accommodated. Resources and materials are satisfactory. Trainers do not use detailed lesson plans, although they usually share the course objectives with learners.

Learners' achievement and progress are not monitored. Learners are awarded attendance certificates upon completion of 75% or more of the course hours but this does not show the extent to which they have achieved their learning objectives. Initial assessment is insufficiently thorough. At times learners are put on courses for which they lack the necessary basic skills.

The courses offered by LTC lack progression opportunities and coherence. Learners receive insufficient guidance on course selection or career progression. LTC's website is basic and does not provide information on the courses offered. LTC maintains some contact with employers through telephone calls and email messages. Learners' feedback is analysed and has at times been used to inform improvement. An adequate level of enrichment activities is used on courses. Learners find LTC trainers supportive. The centre has adequate facilities but health and safety procedures are not fully implemented or clearly explained to learners and trainers.

Although lesson observations are conducted, only verbal feedback is given to those observed. There is no performance management system. LTC's mission and vision statements, and the strategic and operational plans, are insufficiently focused on the improvement of learners' achievement. No data are collected on learners' achievement.

## Capacity to improve

### Grade 3: satisfactory

Since 2006, LTC has increased both enrolments and the rate of repeat business from employers. Managers are taking suitable steps to extend and improve the provision. They are broadening the range of programmes offered by launching courses accredited by CIEH and Medic. These include CIEH level 1 & 2 awards in health and safety in the workplace, a CIEH level 2 award in conflict resolution and personal safety, a CIEH level 3 award in hazard analysis critical control points for food manufacturing, and a MEDIC first aid course. In addition, two specialist staff members are being recruited, a market analyst and a quality assurance administrator, who will take responsibility for implementing LTC's comprehensive written quality assurance document.

LTC currently limits its ability to improve the quality of the provision by its inadequate collection and monitoring of data on learners' achievement. Although the self-evaluation form identifies a few areas for improvement, it is over-generous and does not address the major areas of weaknesses.

## Summary of grades awarded

| Overall judgement | Grade |
|---|---|
| **Effectiveness of provision** | **Grade 4:below satisfactory** |
| Capacity to improve | Grade 3: satisfactory |
| **Review findings** | |
| How well do learners achieve? | Insufficient evidence to grade |
| How effective is training? | Grade 3: satisfactory |
| How well do programmes meet the needs of learners and employers? | Grade 3: satisfactory |
| How well are learners guided and supported? | Grade 3: satisfactory |
| How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners? | Grade 4: below satisfactory |

# Main judgements and recommendations

## Strengths

- **Learners' skills development.** Learners gain a range of relevant, well-focused vocational skills from their courses, which they take back and use at work. Some learners, particularly those on hospitality and safety programmes, have progressed well in their jobs after attending training at LTC.

- **The use of vocationally relevant examples, activities and group work.** Trainers at LTC employ a good variety of vocationally relevant examples, role plays, presentations and group work to engage and motivate learners, and encourage their participation.

## Areas for improvement

- **The measures to record and monitor learners' achievement and skills development.** LTC judges learners' achievement solely on the basis of their attendance. Certificates are awarded to those who attend 75% or more of the course hours. Although learners develop skills during their courses, LTC does not adequately monitor their progress or measure what they have achieved.

- **Initial assessment.** LTC carries out only verbal initial assessment at the start of the courses, which is insufficient. Some learners do not have the basic skills necessary for the programmes they attend.

- **Progression opportunities.** There is a lack of progression opportunities and coherence in the provision, as most of the courses conducted are stand-alone, offering neither a coherent series of levels, or links to other courses at LTC. The company does not carry out any systematic analysis of market needs.

- **The collection and analysis of achievement data.** LTC's failure to collect or analyse learners' achievement data means that information necessary to judge overall performance and take the steps needed to raise achievement is lacking. LTC's mission and vision statements are not sufficiently focused on improving learners' achievement.

- **Self-evaluation.** The self-evaluation form is insufficiently detailed, over generous and does not address the major areas of weakness in the provision

## Recommendations

In order to improve provision, LTC should:

- introduce a system to record and monitor learners' achievement and progress

- implement systematic initial assessment

- extend the range of progression opportunities

- aggregate and analyse achievement data and use it to plan improvement

- ensure that self-evaluation is regular and objective.