



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

Vocational Review Unit

Review Report

Leaders Institute for Training and Development
Manama
Kingdom of Bahrain

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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

Leaders Institute for Training & Development (Leaders) was established in April 2009. Licensed by the Ministry of Labour, it offers non-accredited short courses in soft skills, English Language, Information Technology (IT) and health and safety, mainly to corporate learners. Two-thirds of the enrolment on courses are internally assessed and awarded a completion certificate; on the others, learners are awarded a certificate on the basis of their attendance.

Leaders has one centre in Manama. It is run by a managing director, along with a training manager, an operations manager, two business developers, two administrative officers, an accountant and a group of part time trainers. The institute has trained 431 learners since its inception.

Scope of the review

This review was conducted over three days by a team of three reviewers. During the review, reviewers observed training sessions, analysed data about the qualifications learners achieve and the courses they complete, and talked with the managing director, trainers, administration and support staff, learners and employers.

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

Overall judgement

Effectiveness of provision

Grade 3: Satisfactory

The provision offered by Leaders is satisfactory overall. Learners' achievement, the effectiveness of training, the range of programmes and the leadership and management of the institute are all satisfactory. The support and guidance provided to learners is good.

Learners' achievement and retention are very high on non-accredited short courses leading to completion certificates, at 100%. The assessment conducted on these courses is fit for purpose. Learners develop appropriate skills. Although pre- and post- assessments take place, these are not sufficiently analysed to measure the progress of learners. Learners are satisfactorily self motivated, enjoy their courses and work collaboratively. Attendance is well recorded and it is high, at above 95%; learners' punctuality is satisfactory. Leaders does not effectively measure or record learners' achievement on courses leading to attendance certificates.

Trainers are suitably qualified with relevant experience. They make appropriate use of a range of training techniques, and of work-related examples and case studies. Lessons start punctually, and, in most cases, begin with a useful recap of previous learning, and a discussion about the objectives of the session. Telephone interviews and a screening test are used to ensure that learners have the skills needed for their course. Most lessons are suitably planned; however, the outcomes of initial assessment are, occasionally, not properly incorporated into lesson plans. Trainers adequately assess learners' understanding during lessons and provide useful verbal feedback; additional written feedback is provided on English language courses. Trainers make satisfactory use of learning resources.

Leaders provides varied and relevant enrichment activities for its learners. The institute surveys market needs satisfactorily, and provides an adequate range of courses. It responds adequately to individual employers' requests and appropriately customises courses when required. However, although employers and learners express general satisfaction with the courses offered, some have requested more externally accredited courses. Most of the courses provided by Leaders are stand-alone and do not provide sufficient progression opportunities.

Learners receive very effective support. Those who are particularly talented, motivated or punctual are given incentives in the form of gifts awarded after their courses. Learners are provided with CDs that contain extra materials and course photographs. Leaders gives sufficient consideration to health and safety and has an appropriate health and safety policy

which is explained to learners. The institute has an adequate learning environment. Many courses are held in suitably equipped hotels. Learners and employers have access to Leaders' updated and informative website and brochures, and to effective guidance from staff.

Leaders has an appropriate strategic plan in place, and vision and mission statements which are sufficiently focused on raising learners' achievement. Its strategic objectives are not time bound and lack a clear division of responsibilities. Lesson observations are undertaken but a minority of trainers have not been observed, and a few of those who have been observed have not received written feedback. Learners' and employers' feedback is adequately collected; however, the detailed written comments made on feedback forms are not always used in action planning. Staff are provided with adequate training opportunities and their performance is appropriately evaluated.

Capacity to improve

Grade 2: Good

Leaders has appropriate plans to improve the range and quality of its provision. The institute has recently introduced some courses leading to external accreditation, including administration courses leading to BTEC qualifications, and courses in Project Management Professional (PMP) from Tenstep which is an American organization recognized by Project Management Institute (PMI). Plans to offer courses from other international awarding bodies, including the UK's Institute of Sales and Marketing Management (ISMM) and the American Academy of Financial Management (AAFM), are appropriate and well advanced. In preparation for the implementation of these internationally accredited courses, Leaders is introducing an internal verification process, currently in its pilot stage. In June 2010 the institute began offering a non-accredited Career Progression Program in Personal Productivity Improvement, in conjunction with BDO Jawad Habib. It is contracted to train two cohorts of 21 learners.

In February 2010, Leaders introduced a Customer Relation Management (CRM) system and a Learning Management System (LMS), which maintain data on individual learners. The institute is improving its website to include online resources for trainers and learners, space for the sharing of ideas and views, and a list of recommended courses. Leaders has appropriate policies and procedures for assuring quality, and is working towards the ISO9001:2008 standard. The institute has a good rate of repeat business, currently standing at 50%. Leaders has sufficient physical and human resources to carry out its improvement plans.

Although the self-evaluation form (SEF) is informative and provides evidence to support the statements made, it does not identify areas for improvement found by the review team, and over-estimates the quality of the provision.

Summary of grades awarded

Overall judgement	Grade
Effectiveness of provision	Grade 3: Satisfactory
Capacity to improve	Grade 2: Good
Review findings	
How well do learners achieve?	Grade 3: Satisfactory
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 2: Good
How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	Grade 3: Satisfactory

Main judgements and recommendations

Strengths

- **Enrichment activities.** Leaders provides a good variety of relevant enrichment activities for learners, including presentations by guest speakers, videos, games and the use of websites which provide additional information about the topics being covered.
- **Support for learners.** Trainers readily provide help and advice, during and after courses. When courses are conducted off-site, a member of Leaders' staff is available to ensure that things run smoothly. Learners are sent SMS reminders before and during the course. On one course, an extra day's training was provided, at the request of the group, at no additional charge. The institute awards gifts to talented learners, to those who participate best, and to those who attend most regularly and punctually. All learners are provided with CDs that contain extra materials and photographs.

Areas for improvement

- **Measurement and recording of learners' achievement on courses leading to attendance certificates.** On one-third of its enrolment on courses, Leaders judges learners' achievement solely on the basis of their attendance. The institute does not measure or record learners' progress, or seek to ensure that they have gained the skills they set out to obtain.
- **Progression routes.** Most courses provided by Leaders are stand-alone, and do not provide sufficient opportunities for learners to progress, or further develop their skills.
- **Self-evaluation.** Leaders' SEF is informative and provides evidence for its statements. However, it does not identify the areas for improvement addressed by the review team. The grades given in the SEF are too high.

Recommendations

In order to improve, Leaders should:

- measure and record learners' achievement effectively in all courses
- provide suitable progression routes for learners
- ensure that self-evaluation is regular and objective.