



الهيئة الوطنية
للمؤهلات وضمان جودة التعليم والتدريب
National Authority for Qualifications &
Quality Assurance of Education & Training

Directorate of Vocational Reviews

Review Report

London Training Centre
Jidhafs
Kingdom of Bahrain

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The Directorate of Vocational Reviews

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:

Grade description	Interpretation
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 strengths in the provision.

Introduction

Description of the provision

London Training Centre (LTC) was established in 2001 and licensed by Ministry of Labour. It offers short courses in hospitality, business management, personal development, first aid, and safety. The institute is an approved centre by the Institute of Commercial Management (ICM) of UK to run its hospitality, business management and personal development courses. The institute has enrolled 138 learners in 2011, 537 learners in 2012 and 30 learners up to the time of review in 2013.

LTC has one Centre which is based in Jidhafs and is operated by a team consisting of a managing director, HR & administration manager, training & development manager, quality & learning resources manager, operation manager / sales & marketing officer, accountant, training coordinator, an executive secretary and part-time internal and external verifiers. LTC has a pool of 24 part-time trainers.

Scope of the review

This review was conducted over a three days period, by a team of four reviewers. During the review, reviewers observed sessions, 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 was judged as satisfactory as were the learners' achievement, the quality of programmes, the support and guidance and leadership and management, whereas, the quality of training was judged as good.

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

Table of review judgements awarded

Overall Effectiveness	
How effective is the provision in raising learners' achievement and meeting the full range of learners' and stakeholders' needs?	Grade: 2 Good
Learners' Achievement	
How well do learners achieve?	Grade: 2 Good
Quality of Provision	
How effective is teaching and/or training in promoting learning?	Grade: 2 Good
How well do programmes meet the needs and interests of learners and stakeholders?	Grade: 2 Good
How well are learners supported and guided to achieve better outcomes?	Grade: 2 Good
Leadership and Management	
How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all students?	Grade: 2 Good

Review judgements

Overall effectiveness

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

Grade: 2 Good

The overall effectiveness of LTC is good, as are all other aspects of its provision, with the majority of learners gaining good skills and knowledge. The training they receive also improves their attitude and ethical awareness, all of which they apply in their workplace. This is a result of using a good range of training techniques and activities to engage and motivate learners through classwork such as practical exercises and questioning techniques, which learners receive from LTC's well-qualified and experienced trainers, as well as the highly effective support they receive before, during and after the course. Most trainers assess learners by using effective form of continuous assessment, usually in the form of classwork presentations, direct and open questioning or short quizzes. LTC offers a wide range of business and management, English, IT, hospitality and tourism and soft skills courses which meet the needs of learners and employers very well. Courses are well-designed and structured, regularly reviewed and updated and are well-resourced to meet the needs of learners. The institute's learning environment is fit for purpose. Arrangements for delivery of courses are flexible to suit the needs of learners and stakeholders.

LTC has an effective strategic plan which is developed based on a detailed SWOT analysis. The plan has specific goals translated into action plans that are well monitored. The management structure is effective in meeting LTC's objectives. The institute has a system to assess prior attainment of learners, and monitors and analyses learners' achievement. Adequate arrangements for collecting, analysing and acting on views of learners and employers are in place. The quality of training is assured through an adequate sessions observation schemes, however the feedback to the trainers is not detailed. Health and safety policy and procedures are effective to secure a safe and healthy environment for learners and staff.

LTC has a good capacity to improve. The management has taken a number of improvement initiatives including the full implementation of the previous QQA review's recommendations. Moreover, the management is expanding the institute's business by increasing the range of offered courses, such as coaching (leadership skill), selling smarter and critical thinking. The institute is working with a consultant firm on a total quality management system to improve the quality of the provision. LTC has also introduced quality assurance procedure to ensure the quality of the provision, worked on improving

the learning resources by introducing Smart boards in the classrooms with the support of the Labour Fund (Tamkeen). The institute has sufficient and appropriate human and physical resources to undertake further improvement, maintain good relationship with stakeholders and appropriately address concerns raised by the learners and their employers. The enrolment has increased from 138 learners in 2011 to 537 learners in 2012 and repeat business is adequate over the last two years, however, the number of affiliated bodies with LTC decreased during 2011 and 2012, due to a decrease in the number of enrolment in courses offered through these bodies.

Learners' achievement

How well do learners achieve?

Grade: 2 Good

The majority of learners are gaining good skills and knowledge, improving their attitude and gaining more ethical awareness, which they apply in their workplace, as a result of attending courses at LTC. Also the majority of learners are progressing well on IT , English , soft skills and management courses which represent almost 75% of enrolment for 2011,2012 and 2013 along with Tamkeen's funded program. Employers feedback confirmed an improvement in employees' work attitude, knowledge and skill after attending and completing LTC courses. Learners written work demonstrates better understanding and improvement in English and numeracy skills considering their starting point. From the sessions observed, most learners are making the expected or better progress through formative assessment, interacting with their trainers and other classmates, participating in activities and training games and discussing relevant topics as part of their learning experience. According to learners' progress records and samples of their classwork, learners are achieving good progress towards achieving the intended learning outcomes of the course. Learners are provided with ample chances to work together and are benefiting from sharing relevant examples.

Interviews with learners and observations of sessions indicate that most learners take pride in their work, are self-motivated and enjoy their courses. In addition to working in groups, learners are provided with opportunities to work independently specially on assignments and presentations. However, only a few learners were able to reflect critically on how well they are progressing and plan for improvement without the aid from the trainers. Nonetheless, all learners were able to complete the assignments and tasks given to them.

The institute has a clear policy for attendance and punctuality and keeps records of learners' attendance and punctuality. According to sessions observed and the attendance reports, attendance and retention rates are high at around 100% for almost all courses. Learners are allowed to make up for any session they miss. For the last three years, most learners attended regularly with an average attendance rate of 93%. However, from the sessions observed, there were a few cases of learners arriving 15 to 25 minutes late.

The quality of provision

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

Grade: 2 Good

All trainers have relevant years of experience in the field they train. They deploy their experience by using a good range of training techniques and activities to engage and motivate learners through classwork, practical exercises and questioning techniques. One of the training methods used relies on a learner-centred approach in which learners are engaged to take the utmost role in the discussions and the activities. Furthermore, most trainers use effective forms of continuous assessment, usually in the form of classwork presentations, direct and open questioning or short quizzes to check learners' understanding and progress in a session. An appropriate verbal feedback is provided, yet the written feedback provided on classwork assignments and homework is insufficient. In most cases, sessions start on time and objectives are shared with learners; these sessions are timely and well managed. From the observed sessions and learners' feedback, accommodation of learners' specific needs is well catered for to support both less and more able learners.

LTC mainly conducts short and soft skills courses, where all learners are effectively assessed using pre- and post-tests and group work activities during the courses. On the other hand, for some courses like Essential Skills for Training Certificate (ESTC) which falls under Tamkeen's umbrella, a specific and effective grading system with pre-defined elements is in place. Also, LTC has part-time internal and external verifiers, however, their work is mainly limited to checking the implementation of the assessment process and not verifying the assessment tool and the assessed work.

In effective sessions, trainers and learners interact with each other appropriately through challenging questioning and responses, thereby enhancing learners' understanding of the session content. All trainers keep appropriate records of learners' progress with a degree of detail, which includes the grades of the pre- and post-tests and other activities conducted within the course. All progress reports are shared with the learners and communicated to their employers on a regular basis, enabling them to reflect on their achievement. A wide range of learning resources is used in the classrooms such as data show, Smart board, whiteboard, flipcharts and relevant textbooks and materials.

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

Grade: 2 Good

LTC offers a wide range of business and management, English, IT and hospitality and tourism courses as well as soft skills courses which meet the needs of employers and learners very well. All the mentioned courses are of short duration, between one to five days, and are internally-designed non-accredited courses. LTC is an approved centre for ICM courses, but this approval is not utilised by the institute. Almost all courses provided by LTC are effectively planned, structured and resourced to meet the needs of stakeholders. Most learners and employers interviewed are highly satisfied with the range and selection of courses offered, which are meeting the learners' specific needs and aspiration. Most of the employers enrol their employees in additional courses with the institute. Courses are well-structured and materials used are detailed, informative and regularly updated. Moreover, effective supplementary activities are used alongside with the materials.

All courses offered by LTC are based on a comprehensive training needs analysis (TNA) of local companies, and good utilization of Tamkeen's gap analysis reports. All these courses are often customized to meet the needs of employers. The samples of TNA reports reviewed, were very effectively structured and outlined the specific needs of each individual employers. Through the effective TNA prepared for several clients, LTC conducted the ESTC programme in corporation with Tamkeen, and a number of special course for job seekers in corporation with Ministry of Labour. An effective annual review, or when it is needed, is undertaken to ensure course titles and contents remain current. For example Work Ethics courses were reviewed and updated three times in response of learners and stakeholder needs. Courses are provided with a range of relevant resources to support learning such as; computers, audio equipment, smart board and relevant materials. An appropriate range of relevant additional activities are used that include using various extra curriculum activities.

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

Grade: 2 Good

LTC staff and trainers are approachable, cooperative and supportive well before, during and after the courses. Learners are provided with effective personal and administrative support opportunities helping them achieve better. Advice and guidance are provided to learners on course selection, personal support and career guidance. The institute has a well devised system for tracking learners' progress and attendance. Individual learner's report for each course is produced and shared with learners and employers effectively and timely. Through these reports, learners know how well they are progressing and employers are aware of their employees' progression and attendance. Course information is clear, comprehensive and available in advance. To enhance learners' understanding of some course materials, simple direct translations into Arabic language are provided on power-point presentation slides. In addition, the institute has extended effective support to hearing impaired learners by assigning a sign language trainer to deliver their course. LTC provides high achiever learners with a complementary seat in any course of their choice.

LTC is flexible enough in arranging the courses to accommodate the stakeholders' training needs in terms of the timing and structure of the course. Learners and employers have access to an informative, user-friendly and well-structured website giving access to relevant information and course-related materials. Also, the institute uses 'social media' as an alternative communication method with the learners and employers. The institute's learning environment is fit for purpose and arrangements for the delivery of course are flexible to suit the needs of learners and stakeholders. Training is carried out either at LTC's premise or in different hospitality venues. The institute provides a dedicated prayer room and learners have access to useful library and internet services.

Leadership and management

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

Grade: 2 Good

LTC has a strategic plan with specific goals developed based on a SWOT analysis focused towards improving learners achievements. These goals are reflected in the institute's action planning which is monitored well by the top management, yet the timeline specified in the action plans is not managed for a few of the objectives. The institute maintains useful quality manual and internal and external verification procedures are in place. LTC has a clear vision, mission and value statements which are focused on learners' achievements and are shared with staff. The institute's management structure covers the provision's key functions with defined roles and responsibilities.

The institute recruits from a pool of highly qualified and experienced part-time local and international trainers. They are inducted and deployed according to their area of learning. Occasional meetings are held between the management and trainers to reflect on improvement matters. Trainers' performance in class is monitored adequately through a session-observation form, and trainers are provided with feedback to improve, however the feedback is not always detailed nor is it critical.

The institute has a clear policy that all courses should have a pre- and post-assessment. Arrangement to assess prior attainment is documented, and in majority of cases the structure and content of the pre-assessments is effective and relevant to the course content. The institute effectively utilises placement tests for English language courses in placing learners properly on the right level. A functional data base system has been developed recently to record course outcomes and learners' achievement. The content of each course file is verified by the institute's internal and external verifier, however, scrutinising the samples provided revealed that the verifiers were not always successful in identifying issues related to learners' assessment and course work activities. Effective and useful links are maintained with relevant stakeholders of local and some international institutions and relevant section of the community. The views of learners and employers for each course are collected, aggregated and analysed, and the outcomes of these views are shared with employers. However, the questionnaire forms used are not detailed enough. The institute's management team places a high priority on the health and safety of learners and staff with an appropriate and shared written policy in place and an adequate risk assessment being carried out in a periodic manner. The institute's safety equipment are up-to-date and first aid kits are available. The self-evaluation form (SEF) is sufficiently detailed and contains an appropriate amount of evidence to support the judgement, however, grades are over estimated for some aspects.

The provider's key strengths

The key strengths of the provider are:

- The institute has a strategic plan with specific goals which is developed based on a SWOT analysis and focused towards improving learners achievements
- Trainers are qualified, have good command of their specialism and use a good range of teaching methods and activities
- Effective links are maintained with a wide group of local and international organisations
- Most learners achieve course objectives and learning outcomes
- A highly effective TNA is used by the institute to gauge the different training' needs for different employers
- Management, trainers and staff are helpful and provide effective support to help learners achieve better.

Recommendations

In order to improve, London Training Centre should:

- improve the process of internal and external verifications to assure the quality of assessment
- ensure that the process and outcome of internal session observations is always detailed and critical
- ensure critical and relevant feedback is provided to learners .