



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

Directorate of Vocational Reviews

Review Report

Score Training Institute
Nuwaidrat
Kingdom of Bahrain

Date Reviewed: 20-22 February 2017

VO099-C3-R053

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Introduction

The Directorate of Vocational Reviews (DVR), which is a part of the Education & Training Quality Authority (BQA), conducted this review over three days, by a team of four 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, Score Training Institute (Score) the overall effectiveness was judged as satisfactory, as were all other aspects of its provision.

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	Good (2)
Quality of support and guidance	Good (2)
Leadership, management and governance	Satisfactory (3)
Capacity to improve	Satisfactory (3)
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)

The overall effectiveness of Score Training Institute (Score) is good, as are all aspects of its provision except the effectiveness of leadership, management, and governance and the capacity to improve its provision which are judged as satisfactory. The majority of learners achieve the Association of Accounting Technicians (AAT)-UK qualifications they aim for in a timely manner. The vast majority of learners gain purposeful employment vocational skills and effective theoretical knowledge in finance and accountancy that is relevant to the workplace and to their professions. However, a few learners do not achieve all the set Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs) and the skills they gain are minimal. Courses are well structured, being designed and up-dated on a regular basis by the external awarding body. AAT courses are supported with effective online resources and clear assessment criteria that are divided into sets of knowledge and skills. Trainers are qualified and knowledgeable, enhancing their delivery with vocational examples and a range of effective case studies. Trainers utilise the available learning resources effectively to assess and engage learners throughout the courses. However, in the few less successful sessions teaching methodologies do not sufficiently engage passive learners.

Effective support is provided to learners throughout the courses. Administration staff and trainers are approachable, including providing advice and counselling on career development and other personal related matters. Throughout the course learners have access to a range of effective online course materials and support facilities, including examination tips. Adequate communication with employer is maintained by sharing learners' attendance and the results of learners' achievements who only sit in the examinations. Score management recently developed generic strategic and operational plans with objectives that are linked to learners' and trainers' performance. However, the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and accountability are not explicitly defined. Quality assurance outlines have been developed, but are not comprehensive. The management monitors trainers' performance regularly by conducting observations in random sessions, and areas to be improved further are acted upon by providing trainers with suitable development opportunities. Moreover, Score management maintains relevant records about learners' and closely monitors their achievement.

Capacity to improve

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

Grade: Satisfactory (3)

Even though it is good learning and training institute the capacity to improve is judged as satisfactory. Since the last review conducted by BQA, the ownership of the Institute and the nature of the business have changed, therefore the recommendations of the previous review report are not fully considered by the new management. A range of adequate quality assurance policies and procedures are in line with AAT requirements and the Institute utilises these to ensure the quality of learning and measure its impact. High success rates are maintained across all courses and enrolment is steady. The Self-Evaluation Form (SEF) provided for the review is sufficiently detailed, and the grades included are mostly similar to those of the review team findings. Recently, the Institute has introduced basic strategic and operational plans with objectives that are adequately focused on learners' achievement and training development.

Score maintains effective relationship with the external awarding body and offers AAT courses with progressive levels to match local market needs. The management plans to offer courses from awarding body relevant to taxation, and they are proposing to move to new premises. The Institute has a fit-for-purpose organisation structure with the physical and human resources appropriate to its day-to-day activities. It has access to qualified trainers who are deployed effectively. The management monitors trainers' performance sufficiently and areas to be improved further are acted upon by providing trainers with suitable development opportunities.

Learners' achievement

How well do learners achieve?

Grade: Good (2)

Learners' achievement at Score is good overall. The vast majority of learners gain purposeful vocational skills and effective theoretical knowledge in finance and accountancy that is relevant to their profession. However, a few learners do not achieve all the set ILOs and the skills they gain are minimal. Learners and employers interviewed expressed their satisfaction with the level of skills acquired on these courses, which prepare them competently for the final examinations. AAT courses has computerised with standardised rigorous assessment methods that are closely linked to the course ILOs. The Learners' Performance Data sheet

(LPD) submitted indicates that all learners enrolled in AAT courses and the majority of learners sit for the online examinations, and most of them obtain the qualifications they aim for in a timely manner. Their pass rates are comparable or above the AAT international pass rate, though a few learners are below this measure. The majority of learners' progress well throughout the course from their starting point, and a few learners successfully complete more than one qualification, which is clearly evident from the records of learners' achievement, formative assessment, computerised practical activities and the sessions observed.

As seen from session observations and the interaction between learners and trainers, learners have positive attitudes towards their learning, are self-motivated and engaged. It is evident from their participation in questioning and answering sessions that they have the ability to reflect on what they need to do to improve further. The majority are able to work independently and confidently during class practical activities. However, during these activities a few learners need trainer support to move forward. Retention rate as indicated on the LPD is high at 96%, and almost all learners attend regularly and on time and attendance rate is high. However, punctuality is not recorded and in a few cases it was an issue during the sessions observed.

The quality of provision

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

Grade: Good (2)

The effectiveness of training and assessment is good overall. Trainers are qualified and knowledgeable on the subjects they deliver, providing learners with relevant vocational examples and case studies. They make effective use of their work-related experiences that enable learners to enhance their learning. They usually start sessions with recapitulation of the main points and short quizzes to test the knowledge gained from previous session. They also share session ILOs and activities to be completed. Generic lesson plans are used which include the session ILOs and assessment methods as per the AAT level descriptors. Learners' prior and continuous assessment is utilised during delivery and influences assessment methods. However, the actual lesson plans are insufficiently detailed in covering aspects related to teaching strategies and learning resources. In most of the observed sessions, class activities are mainly well-managed. Trainers utilise a range of interactive teaching methods to engage and motivate learners such as questions and answers, PowerPoint presentations, references to the text book and brain-storming ideas. However, in the few less successful sessions teaching methodologies do not sufficiently engage learners.

Trainers use systematic assessment to continuously measure learners' progress, assessing their achievement and understanding of course ILOs'. Trainers assess learners' work effectively, mostly by using computer-based assessments such as quizzes from different sources, official AAT computerised graded assessments, AAT 'Green Light' assessment test, and a game-based learning platform 'Kahoot' mobile application. Instant verbal feedback is provided on learners' work during sessions and there is access to model answers. Learners also obtain relevant automated feedback when attempting 'Kahoot' and 'Green Light' assessments. However, individual learners' written work is not always corrected with sufficient feedback.

Trainers utilise the AAT available learning resources effectively and use updated courses materials to deliver sessions. In the majority of the sessions observed, trainers succeed in stimulating self-learning and higher order and critical thinking through online activities, extended questioning techniques and challenging learners' abilities. The different needs of individual learners are accommodated effectively throughout each session. Trainers maintain records about learners' performance and their progress on each course.

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

Grade: Good (2)

The effectiveness of programmes offered by Score is good overall. The Institute offers accounting qualification from AAT, namely Level 1 Certificate in Accounting, Level 2 Certificate in Accounting, Level 3 Diploma in Accounting, and Level 4 Certificate in Taxation and Ethics. The management has a fair understanding of the local market requirements for these courses and recently introduced a basic on-line market survey. This is supported by analysis of current issues in the accounting sector and clients' specific requests. As a result of this the Institute has recently introduced the qualification in taxation. Courses are periodically designed and updated by AAT to efficiently meet learners' and stakeholders' needs. The Institute ensures that only the latest course materials are used during courses. These are well-structured and planned to enhance learners' theoretical knowledge and practical skills. AAT courses have clear and manageable assessment criteria for each ILO, which is divided into sets of knowledge and skills. Additionally, AAT courses are supported with detailed written outlines. However, the distribution of training hours is not consistent across all levels.

The courses on offer are resourced effectively and supported with a range of training resources, course materials and online resources which include PowerPoint presentation, exercises and videos. The courses are also supported with e-learning resources which contain summarised notes, quizzes and web-based seminars. Courses are supported with relevant range of extracurricular activities such as glossaries, supplemental material and the latest news about taxation from newspapers articles and journals. Although Score has clear entry requirements, specifying the target audience and suitable levels regarding learners'

backgrounds and abilities in accounting, AAT does not stipulate eligibility criteria to enrol in these qualifications.

How well learners are supported and guided?

Grade: Good (2)

Learners are provided with effective support and guidance to help them achieve better outcomes. Administration staff and trainers are approachable, supportive and provide learners with useful information at the start of each course. Trainers support learners with issues relevant to their personal and workplace situations. Before starting a course, learners and stakeholders have access to well-informed advice and guidance about the AAT courses and their requirements through the Institute staff, informative brochures and the Institute's website. However, the website is not regularly updated and some links are not working. Learners attend an induction day and trainers provide useful information about career opportunities. Throughout the course learners have access to a range of effective online course materials and support facilities, including useful examination tips and on-line assessment tools.

Score has flexible arrangements for course delivery in terms of timing and language to suit the needs of learners. Learners are guided in using the facilities of AAT distance learning and internet-based support. Learners are provided with extra support sessions to bridge and build capacity, refreshment classes prior to examinations, opportunity to ask supplementary questions, extra materials and one-on-one support sessions. Almost all learners attending AAT courses are sponsored by Tamkeen, and the Institute maintains adequate communication with employers by sharing learners' attendance and results for those who sit the examination. The learning environment is fit for purpose, with adequate facilities. The Institute has a policy on equal opportunities and access. Learners with special physical needs such as learners in wheelchair or with hearing issues are accommodated on an individual basis to an appropriate level. However, no clear policy is in place to support learners with special needs.

Leadership, management and governance

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

Grade: Satisfactory (3)

The effectiveness of Score's leadership and management is satisfactory overall. The Institute recently developed clear vision and mission statements that focus on learners' achievement. Basic strategic and operational plans with objectives have been developed that are related to learners' and trainers' performance. However, the KPIs' and accountability are not explicitly defined. An adequate range of policies and procedures have been developed as part of the 'Student Manual'. However, the implementation of these tools is not fully utilised to inform decision-making as the approach is not fully cascaded. Arrangements of quality assurance have been developed but are not comprehensive. AAT external verifiers periodically visit Score, and the management takes appropriate corrective action based on their recommendations. Recently, the management conducted a useful SWOT analysis and relevant areas for improvement were identified. The SEF provided for the review is sufficiently detailed and critical, with the stated grades being mostly similar to those of the review team's findings.

Score has a fit-for-purpose organisation structure including roles and responsibilities. The management has allocated sufficient human resources within its organisation. Qualified staff are recruited, with most being deployed on a part-time basis. The management selects qualified and expert part-time trainers in the field of accounting, who deliver and enrich the course content effectively. Monitoring of trainers' performance is regularly carried out through an observations scheme with evaluative ratings and feedback that are shared with trainers. Areas to be improved further are acted upon by providing suitable development opportunities to build capacity, such as workshops in teaching/training methods.

The management maintains suitable records about learners achievement and closely monitors their achievements. At the end of each course stakeholders' views and comments are sought and aggregated, with action being taken based on these comments. Highly effective links are maintained with external body. A health and safety policy is in place, of which learners are made aware at the start of each course. The premises are free from hazard and well equipped with maintained fire extinguishers and sufficient emergency exits to provide a suitable and safe learning environment. Fire drills and risk assessments are conducted on a regular basis.

The provider's key strengths

- The majority of learners achieve the AAT qualifications they aim for in a timely manner.
- The qualified and experienced trainers who enrich learning experience by using relevant range of training methods to engage and motivate learners.
- The well-structured and resourced course materials that meet the needs of learners and stakeholders.
- The effective support and guidance that help learners to achieve better outcomes.

Recommendations

In order to improve, Score Training Institute should:

- further ensure that learners achieve courses ILOs to the required standards
- improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - devising and implementing a comprehensive quality assurance policy and procedures to improve the provision, including lesson planning
 - ensuring strategic KPIs' are rigorous and closely monitored by the management.

Appendix

Description of the provision

Score Training Institute (Score) was established in September 2011 to offer courses in soft skills, management, English language and basic health and safety. In October 2015, a new management took control and accordingly a new range of courses are offered, mainly the externally-accredited courses from the Association of Accounting Technicians (AAT)-UK, a non-profit organisation. The AAT courses offered are Level 1 Certificate in Accounting, Level 2 Certificate in Accounting, Level 3 Diploma in Accounting, and Level 4 Certificate in Taxation and Ethics. The Institute is licensed by the Ministry of Labour and Social Development (MoLSD).

Since October 2015 and until the review date the Institute has enrolled 989 learners in different subjects within each level, all in the AAT courses. Almost all learners are sponsored by Tamkeen and employed by private and government organisations. Score is managed by a General Director who is the owner and a trainer at the same time. It employs two administration staff who also take care of sales and marketing. The Institute has access to a pool of three trainers, an assessor, an Internal Verifier (IV), and a quality assurance consultant, all employed on a part time basis and brought in as required. Score operates from one location in Nuwaidrat.