



Directorate of Vocational Reviews Review Report

**TUV NORD Training Centre
Hidd
Kingdom of Bahrain**

Date Reviewed: 2-4 May 2016

VO111-C3-R032

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Introduction

The Directorate of Vocational Reviews (DVR), which is a part of the National Authority for Qualifications & Quality Assurance of Education & Training (QQA), conducted this review over three days by a team of three 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.

This Report summarises the 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	Satisfactory (3)
Quality of teaching / training and assessment	Good (2)
Quality of programmes	Good (2)
Quality of support and guidance	Satisfactory (3)
Leadership, management and governance	Inadequate (4)
Capacity to improve	Satisfactory (3)
Overall effectiveness	Satisfactory (3)

Review judgements

Overall effectiveness

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

Grade: Satisfactory (3)

The overall effectiveness of TUV NORD Training Centre is satisfactory. Despite the disruption that has recently occurred to the leadership and management team of the Centre, due to the sudden exit of the previous management team and most staff, which hindered the smooth start of the initial operation and impacted the implementation of the internal quality measures, the majority of learners generally gain useful, vocationally relevant skills across the well-structured and planned courses that meet stakeholders' needs well. Learners, who are mature and self-motivated, achieve their intended qualifications in a timely manner, particularly in the externally-accredited courses. The training centre provides a safe and conducive learning environment, facilitated by experienced and qualified trainers who use useful practical vocational examples and a wide range of training methods and activities. A variety of rigorous assessment methods are used to evaluate learners' understanding effectively. The records of learners' performance in the externally-accredited courses are well maintained and updated. However, insufficient records are kept for the non-accredited course. With the current small staffing and the recent appointment of the new management, only essential support and guidance is provided, as many processes and practices are not yet formalised to reflect those set at the corporate level, with detailed and informative manuals. While day-to-day practices are adequately managed, strategic and performance monitoring aspects at the training centre level are not yet given due priority. Tracing of missing previous records was another issue faced by the current management.

Capacity to improve

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

Grade: Satisfactory (3)

TUV NORD Training Centre has satisfactory capacity to improve. The recently appointed management team have access to a wide range of resources from the TUV Middle East corporate office in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), including a pool of qualified trainers, an extensive range of relevant technical training programmes and materials, professional links with industry and awarding bodies and a very useful set of policies and procedures together with detailed operational manuals. In addition, the training centre has moved to pleasant and well-maintained premises located in a strategic industrial area, where it has managed to secure good repeat business with a few major employers during the short span of its active operation. Notwithstanding the above, the recent changes of management and staff affected record keeping and the implementation of the quality assurance measures and standards set by the corporate office. The Centre currently has a relatively basic organisation structure, and a plan is in place to enlarge it to carry out the planned expansions. Although the periodic corporate audits are methodical, the local self-evaluation process is not critical enough.

Learners' achievement

How well do learners achieve?

Grade: Satisfactory (3)

Learners' achievement at TUV NORD Training Centre is satisfactory overall. The majority of learners generally gain useful knowledge and skills related to their chosen training courses, and achieve their qualifications or objectives in both the externally-accredited and local attendance courses. Employers and learners acknowledge that the theoretical knowledge and vocational skills gained are relevant to what they do at their workplace and enhance their understanding of their jobs. For instance, learners who took the 'Confined Space Entry' course for the first time show more confidence in working among their teams and have been granted approval to work in confined spaces at industrial sites. However, those who took the course as a refresher requirement found that it slightly added to their previous knowledge.

Learners attending the externally-accredited courses need to complete a pre-course assignment, and during the course a variety of continuous assessment tools including simulation activities, case studies, work related scenarios and a final examination by the international accrediting body, the International Register of Certificated Auditors (IRCA),

which clearly shows that learners make appropriate progress from their starting point. Almost half of the learners in the externally-accredited International Organization for Standardization 'ISO 9001-Quality Management Systems (QMS) Auditor/Lead Auditor' training course proceeded to Occupational Health and Safety Advisory Services' course 'OHSAS 18001 Occupational Health and Safety Management Systems' and completed both successfully. On the other hand, in the very short local attendance course open questions and in-class practical activities are conducted as part of continuous assessment, but progress is not sufficiently evident in this course, as many learners repeat a similar refresher course as part of their work regulation requirements.

The majority of learners are able to work independently through the different class activities, as well as in groups while performing role-plays, simulations and practical activities. All enrolled learners are mature working adults who are attentive and self-motivated during sessions and have a positive attitude towards their learning, as indicated from their interaction with their trainers and during various activities. They are able to reflect adequately on their attainment through the 'Delegate Feedback Form'. The overall retention and success rates were both 100%, where all enrolled learners completed their courses successfully and received the course certificate. In general, learners attend classes regularly. However, in a few cases records are not accurately maintained and punctuality is not always recorded.

The quality of provision

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

Grade: Good (2)

The quality of teaching, training and assessment at TUV NORD Training Centre is good overall. Trainers are experienced, qualified and knowledgeable, providing practical vocational examples and explanations relevant to the workplace. A wide range of training methods and activities are used which are effective in engaging and motivating learners. Trainers extensively use open and group discussions, case studies and various individual activities. Role plays and simulations are particularly used in the externally-accredited courses, while in the 'Confined Spaces Entry' local course the trainers utilise hands-on practical activities using employers' relevant onsite equipment. Learners' levels of understanding and ability to complete the given activities are assessed through a variety of rigorous practical and theoretical assessment methods including pre- and post-course assessment, direct and open questioning, and practical application of activities, particularly through properly assessed role plays in the externally accredited courses.

Throughout the learning experience, the trainers constantly provide useful verbal feedback to help learners improve, which is highly appreciated by the learners. However, no written comments or feedback are provided in marking written activities. While the records of learners' performance in the externally accredited courses are very well maintained and updated, no records are kept for learners' work or assessment of the 'Confined Spaces Entry' course. The sessions are well managed, covering all topics outlined and addressing all stated intended learning outcomes (ILOs), with the trainers using structured and informative lesson plans that have clear links to the ILOs. In addition, the externally accredited courses have a very informative trainers' guide which highlights all aspects related to the delivery of each slot of the session as planned, in line with the international standards of the external body.

The trainers cater for the different learners' backgrounds through using work related examples, specific explanations, and stimulating learners' analytical and critical thinking through the effective use of many case studies and real life scenarios from well-known national and international organisations. The externally-accredited courses are enriched with further reading and exposure to rich websites that advance learners' knowledge and understanding. Trainers utilise the available learning resources and materials including employers' own facilities to promote the learning experience effectively.

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

Grade: Good (2)

The quality of the programmes offered by TUV NORD Training Centre is good overall. The Centre utilises its professional experience, and close links with its clients through inspections and consultancy services, to determine the need for specific courses, such as those related to the certification of various quality and health and safety management systems. Initially, a feasibility study was conducted in 2012 to analyse the local market in terms of potential clients and the competitors providing relevant courses, and a timeline set to achieving potential targets for identified courses. In December 2015 the Centre conducted a free public seminar on ISO 9001:2015 and ISO 14001:2015 standards to brief interested candidates about updates on these courses and to ascertain market interest for such courses. In 2016 the institute has conducted another feasibility study to tackle changes in the market, identifying the need for certification relevant to information system security audits. TUV NORD corporate office has an effectively implemented policy regarding the course design cycle. This describes the process of how to design, develop and review courses. A trainer can make minor amendments, subject to the approval of the corporate office. Updates of the externally-accredited courses are governed by new versions released by the awarding body and cascaded to individual TUV training centres by the corporate office.

Courses on offer are well-structured and planned. Each course outline clearly specifies the main objectives and ILOs, with identification of all related training methods and assessment tools to be used throughout the course. A good range of resources with all the required materials and tools are made available by the corporate office. The latest course materials are always assured, to keep the targeted audience up-to-date with international standards. Original course materials and relevant case studies are used. The local courses are also well equipped to meet the needs and requirements of relevant stakeholders and to deliver the intended ILOs properly, including the use of employers' own facilities. The courses are enriched with a few extra-curricular activities such as invitations to relevant seminars or sharing international case studies. The 'Confined Spaces Entry' course is intended to be concluded by a practical site visit whenever access is granted. The courses offered are designed to target specific audiences identified in the course outlines, where the nature of their jobs requires this training.

How well are learners supported and guided?

Grade: Satisfactory (3)

Considering that so far the majority of learners have attended the one day 'Confined Space Entry' course onsite at their workplace, learners at TUV NORD Training Centre are sufficiently supported and guided to achieve better outcomes through a fit for purpose support and guidance mechanism, although the Centre has not yet developed a local policy and procedures for this. Learners and stakeholders have access to relevant advice and guidance about programmes through a number of ways such as emails, the training centre's website and social media, a brief induction and promotional leaflets. However, some of this information is basic and of general nature, available at a corporate level but, not sufficiently localised. Notwithstanding the above, learners pursuing the longer externally-accredited courses are made aware of these offerings. Initially, awareness of these courses is provided through a seminar and refresher courses to potential learners and stakeholders. Once learners are enrolled, detailed instructions for pre-course assignment, continuous assessment, and final examination are provided to them. Generally, stakeholders are made aware of learners' performances as most training takes place on employers' sites.

The learning environment is pleasant with suitable facilities. The classrooms are fit for purpose and well equipped with the necessary learning aids and resources such as flipcharts, data show projectors and laptops. Where needed, access to facilities for practical activities are planned with stakeholders. The arrangement for the delivery of courses is highly flexible to suit the needs of learners and stakeholders. For instance, courses are offered in three languages, Arabic, English and Hindi. Learners taking the externally-accredited courses are permitted to re-sit an examination within a year. TUV NORD Training Centre has a special needs policy that highlights appropriate arrangements for learners with special needs, although no cases have been reported yet.

Leadership, management and governance

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

Grade: Inadequate (4)

Apart from the day-to-day running of the training centre and reforming its operations, the impact of the recently appointed leadership and management team is not yet evident. Suitable governance is in place from the corporate office, overseeing the overall execution of objectives and holding the management accountable. While the training centre has a number of strategic objectives appropriate to the current phase of operations, with an overarching focused vision set at corporate level, action plans (where available) are not focused on monitoring the performance of the provision. An organisation structure sufficient for the current size of operation and a training administration process with assigned responsibilities and detailed in a clear flowchart are in place. However, the local operation is not sufficiently streamlined yet, resulting in inconsistent practices. Detailed corporate level guidance manuals with relevant procedures are available to ensure that the quality of the provision conforms to ISO standards. Yet implementation of the internal quality measures is not effective. While learners' achievement records for the externally-accredited courses are well maintained and appropriately monitored as required by the awarding body, there is an issue with the records for the non-accredited courses. The tracing of missed records created a challenge to the current management.

An effective procedure is in place at the corporate level to recruit qualified trainers, who are properly inducted and provided with access to very informative tutor guides and manuals. A form has recently been introduced to monitor trainers' performance during training sessions, though it is not yet in use. Trainers delivering accredited courses are annually updated through an exchange of experience gathering for all TUV NORD centres, to ensure consistency of delivery across all trainers. The provider has access to a pool of qualified trainers and resources from the corporate office and relevant links are maintained with other stakeholders. Adequate feedback is collected from learners and informally from employers. However, the feedback is neither aggregated nor analysed to inform improvement of the provision. The centre conducted a useful SWOT analysis as part of its feasibility study in 2012 and a generic audit is periodically done through the corporate office. In addition, the international awarding body IRCA also has the right to conduct unscheduled reviews as needed. However, the provider's Self-Evaluation Form (SEF) was submitted late, lacked sufficient details, and was not critical and the grades were highly overestimated. The premises are free from obvious hazards and comprehensive health and safety policies and procedures are in place, though some of these are not localised for Bahrain. While the necessary health and safety measures are in place, the expiration date for the fire extinguishers passed a month ago.

The provider's key strengths

- Learners achieve externally-accredited qualifications in a timely manner.
- Experienced and qualified trainers who use a wide range of training methods and rigorous assessment to engage and assess learners.
- Courses are well-structured and planned with a good range of learning resources.

Recommendations

In order to improve, TUV NORD Training Centre should:

- improve leadership and management by:
 - ensuring more effective implementation of internal quality assurance measures and enhancing the self-evaluation process
 - ensuring that learners' achievement records for all courses are properly maintained, closely monitored and analysed to inform decision making
 - conducting regular lesson observations to monitor trainers' performances and guide them on how to improve further
- ensure that learners develop relevant skills and knowledge and progress to the level set for the course
- introduce explicit policies and procedures to support learners to achieve better outcomes.

Appendix

Description of the provision

TUV NORD Training Centre was established in December 2013 as a subsidiary of TUV Middle East in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), which is a member of the German 'TUV NORD Group'. It is licensed by the Ministry of Labour and Social Development to offer courses in quality, health, safety and the environment. While the parent company has an extensive range of courses on offer, currently the training centre in the Kingdom of Bahrain has only four short and very short courses. These are the two externally-accredited ISO 9001 Lead Auditor Training course, and the Occupational Health and Safety Advisory Services OHSAS 18001 Lead Auditor Training course, as well as the two non-accredited the Control Of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) and Confined Spaces Entry courses. The TUV NORD Training Centre has the status of Approved Training Organisation from the International Register of Certificated Auditors (IRCA).

Since its inception in late 2013, the Centre has enrolled 83 learners; 72 in 2015 and 11 in 2016 up to the date of this review. Learners enrolling at the institute are employed adults and mostly sponsored employees.

The Centre is located in Hidd at Bahrain International Investment Park (BIIP), where it delivers a few of its courses and the remaining courses are held at employers' facilities. The Centre is managed by the general manager, who is also the training manager and a trainer, who leads a full-time team comprising a training coordinator and a trainer. The Centre has access to a pool of local and international trainers through the corporate office; these are deployed when needed.