



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

Directorate of Higher Education Reviews Programme Review Summary

**Ahlia University
College of Arts & Science
Bachelor's Degree in Mass Communication & Public
Relations
Kingdom of Bahrain**

Site Visit Date: 8 – 10 May 2023

HA080-C3-R080

I. Introduction

In keeping with its mandate, the Education & Training Quality Authority (BQA), through the Directorate of Higher Education Reviews (DHR), carries out two types of reviews that are complementary. These are: Institutional Reviews, where the whole institution is assessed; and the Academic Programme Reviews (APRs), where the quality of teaching, learning and academic standards are assessed in academic programmes within various colleges according to specific standards and indicators as reflected in its Framework.

Following the revision of the APR Framework at the end of Cycle 1 in accordance with the BQA procedure, the revised APR Framework (Cycle 2) was endorsed as per the Council of Ministers' Resolution No.17 of 2019. Thereof, in the academic year (2019-2020), the DHR commenced its second cycle of programme reviews.

The Cycle 2 APR Review Framework is based on four main Standards and 21 Indicators, which forms the basis of the APR Reports of the Higher Education Institutions (HEIs).

The **four** standards that are used to determine whether or not a programme meets international standards are as follows:

Standard 1: The Learning Programme

Standard 2: Efficiency of the Programme

Standard 3: Academic Standards of Students and Graduates

Standard 4: Effectiveness of Quality Management and Assurance

The Review Panel (hereinafter referred to as 'the Panel') decides whether each indicator, within a standard, is 'addressed', 'partially addressed' or 'not addressed'. From these judgments on the indicators, the Panel additionally determines whether each of the four standards is 'Satisfied' or 'Not Satisfied', thus leading to the programme's overall judgment, as shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Criteria for Judgements

Criteria	Judgement
All four Standards are satisfied	Confidence
Two or three Standards are satisfied, including Standard 1	Limited Confidence
One or no Standard is satisfied	No Confidence
All cases where Standard 1 is not satisfied	

The APR Review Report begins with providing the profile of the programme under review, followed by a brief outline of the judgment received for each indicator, standard, and the overall judgement.

The main section of the report is an analysis of the status of the programme, at the time of its actual review, in relation to the review standards, indicators and their underlying expectations.

The report ends with a Conclusion and a list of Appreciations and Recommendations.

II. The Programme's Profile

Institution Name*	Ahlia University
College/ Department*	College of Arts & Science
Programme/ Qualification Title*	Bachelor's Degree in Mass Communication & Public Relations
Qualification Approval Number	Higher Education Council Approval Letter No.: 81-ATM/ 2 2008
NQF Level	-
Validity Period on NQF	-
Number of Units*	-
NQF Credit	-
Programme Aims*	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide learners with in-depth knowledge, and skills needed to exhibit sustainable competence in mass communication & public relations field. 2. Enable learners by developing problem-solving skills, to design, analyze, and implement solutions for solving multiple issues in the field of mass communication and public relations. 3. Enable learners to successfully engage in research and lifelong learning, in ways that serve the societal needs. 4. Contribute to the development and improvement at the level of the mass communication profession, and building connections and links between the Mass Communication Department and the local community.
Programme Intended Learning Outcomes*	A1. Concepts and Theories: Demonstrate a critical knowledge and understanding related to the concepts, processes, theories, and professional practices of the mass communication and public relations'

discipline, which qualifies the student to work with the highest level of awareness and skill.

A2. Contemporary trends, Problems and Research: Using specialized methodologies, and research approaches that are appropriate to the mass communication and public relations' field, studying relevant topics and problems using a variety of resources, and drawing the proper conclusions and solutions to them, by following appropriate statistical methods and applications.

A3. Professional Responsibility: Detailed knowledge of the various responsibilities, and norms related to procedures, in addition to steps necessary to produce media material in accordance with the standards adopted by mass communication and public relations' institutions.

B1. Problem-solving Skills: Dealing with advanced situations and some complex situations, and problems that include unexpected variables regarding the requirements and management of media work, as well as applying possible solutions to the issues encountered in the field of mass communication and public relations.

B2. Modeling and Design: Employing communication skills in its forms and codes, through planning and implementing projects and media materials, by using various means, codes, and techniques of mass communication and public relations, with a high level of efficiency and professionalism.

B3. Application of Methods and Tools: Employing the necessary information and communication technologies; to produce print, audio, visual, and digital press media materials; such as text editing software, publishing, graphic design, media website design and programming, and multimedia production.

C1. Analytical Skills: The use of specialized skills, to monitor and analyze data related to various concepts, theories, processes, laws, practices, and procedures applied in the field of media work, in addition to conducting critical analysis and evaluation of information, concepts, skills and practices for various specialized issues.

C2. Synthetic Skills: The synthesis of information, concepts and practices within the framework of preparing an integrated work of

	<p>communication materials and products, and issuing evaluative judgments within the framework of different communication situations, based on the data and information available from different resources.</p> <p>C3. Creativity Skills: Demonstrate creativity and innovation within complex situations, issues, or problems during the formulation and production of media materials.</p> <p>D1. Communication Skills: Communicating efficiently with peers, and working within a team, along with the ability to adapt ideas and approaches to be convenient for the target audience.</p> <p>D2. Leadership and Teamwork Skills: The ability to lead groups, work in a team, and demonstrate cooperation and constructive interaction, in order to accomplish tasks and make decisions.</p> <p>D3. Organizational and Developmental Skills: The ability of self-development academically, and professionally, as well as applying the continuous self-learning skills.</p> <p>D4. Ethics and Social Responsibility Skills: Applying the principles and laws of freedom of opinion, expression, and media, and adhering to the ethical and professional responsibilities of the mass communication and public relations' profession, along with professional codes of ethics.</p>
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* Mandatory fields

III. Judgment Summary

The Programme's Judgment: Confidence

Standard/ Indicator	Title	Judgement
Standard 1	The Learning Programme	Satisfied
Indicator 1.1	The Academic Planning Framework	Partially Addressed
Indicator 1.2	Graduate Attributes & Intended Learning Outcomes	Addressed
Indicator 1.3	The Curriculum Content	Partially Addressed
Indicator 1.4	Teaching and Learning	Addressed
Indicator 1.5	Assessment Arrangements	Addressed
Standard 2	Efficiency of the Programme	Satisfied
Indicator 2.1	Admitted Students	Partially Addressed
Indicator 2.2	Academic Staff	Addressed
Indicator 2.3	Physical and Material Resources	Addressed
Indicator 2.4	Management Information Systems	Addressed
Indicator 2.5	Student Support	Addressed
Standard 3	Academic Standards of Students and Graduates	Satisfied
Indicator 3.1	Efficiency of the Assessment	Addressed
Indicator 3.2	Academic Integrity	Partially Addressed
Indicator 3.3	Internal and External Moderation of Assessment	Addressed
Indicator 3.4	Work-based Learning	Addressed

Indicator 3.5	Capstone Project or Thesis/Dissertation Component	Addressed
Indicator 3.6	Achievements of the Graduates	Partially Addressed
Standard 4	Effectiveness of Quality Management and Assurance	Satisfied
Indicator 4.1	Quality Assurance Management	Addressed
Indicator 4.2	Programme Management and Leadership	Addressed
Indicator 4.3	Annual and Periodic Review of the Programme	Addressed
Indicator 4.4	Benchmarking and Surveys	Addressed
Indicator 4.5	Relevance to Labour Market and Societal Needs	Partially Addressed

IV. Conclusion

Taking into account the institution's own self-evaluation report, the evidence gathered from the interviews and documentation made available during the virtual site visit, the Panel draws the following conclusion in accordance with the DHR/BQA *Academic Programme Reviews (Cycle 2) Handbook, 2020*:

There is Confidence in the Bachelor's Degree in Mass Communication & Public Relations of the College of Arts & Science offered by the Ahlia University.

In coming to its conclusion regarding the four Standards, the Panel notes, with appreciation, the following:

1. There is an effective plan for excellence in teaching and learning that encourages student engagement in the learning process. The plan is concerned with using learning methods that support student participation, such as: 'self-reflection', 'role play', and 'case study'. The plan also encourages students to engage in the labour market and professional practice, whether through projects, site visits, hosting speakers, or conducting research that serves the industry, in addition to considering the development of lifelong learning skills.
2. There is a clear and effective quality assurance system, which is regularly monitored, developed and improved.
3. There is an effective advisory board, at the level of the programme, that contributes to aligning its outcomes to the needs of the labour market.

In terms of improvement, the Panel recommends that the Ahlia University and the College of Arts & Science should:

1. Ensure that risks are clearly and regularly identified at the programme level, and that an annual report is submitted by the Head of the Department to the Dean of the College, and the Risk Management Committee at the University, as stated in the university's policy in this regard.
2. Review and evaluate the programme's title, in both languages, in light of the mission, objectives, and the study plan of the programme, as well as the requirements of the labour market.
3. Benchmark the learning outcomes in a more precise and detailed way to ensure that programme outcomes and courses are aligned with their international equivalents.
4. Review the structure of the study plan, in order to achieve a balance between mass communication courses and public relations courses, to allow the student to intensely concentrate on a specific discipline during his studies, and pave the way for his career path.

5. Review and revise the study plan in light of new changes in the labour market, in addition to evaluating and adjusting course tracks, based on the CILOs, and formulating them in a way that ensures knowledge progression, and smooth transition from one course to another.
6. Review the admission policy, and reconsider the part related to the admission of students, whose academic achievement is less than (60%), in light of stakeholders' feedback and the results of the conducted benchmarks at the local and international levels, so that the admission requirements and regulations become more aligned with the local and international academic norms of the discipline.
7. Develop rigid procedures to address cases of academic misconduct, and plagiarism in particular.
8. Maintain a record to monitor and document cases of academic misconduct and plagiarism, as well as the actions taken.
9. Set a periodic report reflecting the use of data related to the level of students' progression, and the graduates' destination, in verifying the fulfillment of academic standards.
10. Conduct labour market studies based on official digital data, as well as research and data that are up-to-date, valid, relevant and appropriate, with a focus on the labour market in the Kingdom of Bahrain and the Gulf region.