Directorate of
Higher Education Reviews
Programme Review Summary

Applied Science University
College of Administrative Sciences
Bachelor of Political Science
Kingdom of Bahrain

Site Visit Date: 11 – 13 April 2022

HA051-C3-R051

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 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	

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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.

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II. The Programme's Profile

Institution Name*	Applied Science University
College/ Department*	College of Administrative Sciences
Programme/ Qualification Title*	Bachelor of Political Science
Qualification Approval Number	Decision of the Council of Ministers No.: (F D 140-2004) Placement No.: Q19-074
NQF Level	8
Validity Period on NQF	5 years from the date of placement
Number of Units*	45
NQF Credit	540
Programme Aims*	The "Bachelor of Political Science" programme aims to achieve the following objectives: 1. Meet the needs of Bahraini society and regional countries by graduating qualified specialists in political science capable of problem solving and to work in the diplomatic field, international and regional organizations, civil society organizations, ministries, public and private institutions, the media, and public opinion-making institutions. 2. Prepare graduates for the labour market by providing them with basic and advanced knowledge in various branches of political science, as well as adequate skills such as theoretical and practical knowledge, communication skills, and critical thinking. 3. Prepare graduates to conduct scientific research in various political science fields, either in groups or individually. 4. Enable students to pursue postgraduate studies in the field of political science and other relevant fields. 5. Contribute to political socialization, deepen values of good citizenship, and strengthen behavioural and national values which are based on substantial dialogue, tolerance, and respect for others.

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Programme Intended Learning Outcomes*	**After completing the programme, the student will be able to:** • Acquire critical knowledge, understanding of fundamental principles, concepts and approaches in political science and related fields. • Demonstrate critical knowledge, understanding of contemporary issues, some specialized theories and standards, as well as methods of scientific research in different fields of political science. • Use specialized skills to apply theories and concepts related to political science and affiliated fields, to address complex problems in the political environment. • Use specialized skills in applying scientific research approaches, and techniques, to investigate tactful political issues and problems. • Use a range of specialized methods and approaches in the field of political studies and corresponding fields; to identify problems and challenges at the levels of national, regional, and international political environments. • Conduct a critical analysis of information and practices in the field of politics and related areas; to explore and apply solutions for complex political and international problems. • Utilize special skills to communicate with peers and specialists, as well as to process, present and interpret data through applying IT techniques (using appropriate applications). • Work at a specialist level in a changing and transformative political environment within work groups, in addition to taking responsibility for decision-making and others' actions.

*   Mandatory fields

III. Judgment Summary

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The Programme's Judgment: Confidence

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Standard/ Indicator	Title	Judgement
Standard 1	**The Learning Programme**	**Satisfied**
Indicator 1.1	The Academic Planning Framework	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	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	Addressed
Indicator 3.3	Internal and External Moderation of Assessment	Partially addressed
Indicator 3.4	Work-based Learning	Addressed

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Indicator 3.5	Capstone Project or Thesis/Dissertation Component	Addressed
Indicator 3.6	Achievements of the Graduates	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	Addressed

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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 of Political Science of College of Administrative Sciences offered by the Applied Science University.

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

1. The efforts of the programme team in consistently developing the curriculum, using the periodic review outcomes, and the recommendations of stakeholders and field supervisors.
2. The notable integration between theoretical and practical aspects within the courses, and the programme in general.
3. The availability of advanced software and electronic systems at the University.
4. The financial aid and support provided by the University to students in need, by considering their circumstances and postponing their tuition fees, especially during the Covid-19 pandemic.
5. The efficiency of the different parties involved the internship.
6. The efforts of the programme managers in ensuring consistent implementation of the quality assurance policies.
7. The programme's efforts to meet the needs of the labour market, by updating the course specifications, in light of the recommendations reported by different sources.

In terms of improvement, the Panel recommends that the Applied Science University and the College of Administrative Sciences should:

1. Write strategies in detail within the college's risk register, so that they do not appear to be repeated from year to year, despite the change in the risk situation.
2. Include the course learning outcomes within the benchmark practices.
3. Advance the Arabic language course to be offered in the first semester of the first year, with the first English language course, given the importance of language skills in all students' written and oral work. Alternatively, the University's first elective course could be delayed to the first semester of the second year.
4. Advance the Theories of International Relations course, which is a key course in international relations, to be offered in the second semester of the third year and

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consider delaying the Comparative Foreign Policy course to the second semester of the fourth year.

5. Review the learning resources of the courses periodically; to ensure that they are updated, in addition to using foreign references in advanced courses, especially in the third and fourth years.

6. Provide students and other stakeholders with Arabic versions of the admission & registration handbook and the academic misconduct & plagiarism policy to make it easier for them to become more familiar with the rules and restrictions included within.

7. Include the grade grievance procedures in the student handbook and ensure that they cover the grades of all assessments in addition to the final examination grades.

8. Encourage faculty members, especially assistant professors, to apply for promotion, by providing them with an enabling environment to complete the promotion's requirements, and by removing any conflicts of interest during the application process.

9. Select the internal moderator according to his/her precise specialization, his/her experience in teaching the course, or his/her interest in the subject of the course in his/her research.

10. Review the assessment and moderation policy; to include the post-assessment external moderation.

11. Communicate the survey's analysis outcomes to the stakeholders, as well as improvements made to the programme based on these outcomes.

12. Carry out periodic scoping studies of the labour market, to ensure that the programme keeps pace with changes in the labour market.

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