Directorate of Higher Education Reviews

Programmes-within-College Reviews Report

Master of Business Administration

College of Administrative Sciences

Applied Science University

Kingdom of Bahrain

Date Reviewed: 26-28 May 2014

HC041-C2-R041

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Acronyms

AACSB	The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business
ASU	Applied Science University
BA	Bachelor of Accounting
BAF	Bachelor of Accounting and Finance
BBA	Bachelor of Business Administration
BMIS	Bachelor of Management of Information Systems
BPS	Bachelor of Political Science
DHR	Directorate of Higher Education Reviews
GPA	Grade Point Average
HEC	Higher Education Council
HoD	Head of Department
HRIS	Human Resources Information System
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
ILO	Intended Learning Outcome
MAF	Master of Accounting and Finance
MBA	Master of Business Administration
MHRM	Master of Human Resources Management
MIS	Management Information Systems
PILO	Programme Intended Learning Outcome
QA	Quality Assurance

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QAAC	Quality Assurance and Accreditation Committee
QAA-UK	The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education – United Kingdom
QQA	National Authority for Qualifications & Quality Assurance of Education & Training
SER	Self-Evaluation Report
SIS	Student Information System

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1. The Programmes-within-College Reviews Process

1.1 The Programmes-within-College Reviews Framework

To meet the need to have a robust external quality assurance system in the Kingdom of Bahrain, the Directorate of Higher Education Reviews (DHR) of the National Authority for Qualifications & Quality Assurance of Education & Training (QQA) has developed and is implementing two external quality review processes, namely: Institutional Reviews and Programmes-within-College Reviews which together will give confidence in Bahrain's higher education system nationally, regionally and internationally.

Programmes-within-College Reviews have three main objectives:

- to provide decision-makers (in the higher education institutions, the QQA, the Higher Education Council (HEC), students and their families, prospective employers of graduates and other stakeholders) with evidence-based judgements on the quality of learning programmes
- to support the development of internal quality assurance processes with information on emerging good practices and challenges, evaluative comments and continuing improvement
- to enhance the reputation of Bahrain's higher education regionally and internationally.

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

Indicator 1: **The Learning Programme**

The programme demonstrates fitness for purpose in terms of mission, relevance, curriculum, pedagogy, intended learning outcomes and assessment.

Indicator 2: **Efficiency of the Programme**

The programme is efficient in terms of the admitted students, the use of available resources - staffing, infrastructure and student support.

Indicator 3: **Academic Standards of the Graduates**

The graduates of the programme meet academic standards compatible with equivalent programmes in Bahrain, regionally and internationally.

Indicator 4: **Effectiveness of Quality Management and Assurance**

The arrangements in place for managing the programme, including quality assurance, give confidence in the programme.

The Review Panel (hereinafter referred to as 'the Panel') states in the Review Report whether the programme satisfies each Indicator. If the programme satisfies all four Indicators, the concluding statement will say that there is 'confidence' in the programme.

If two or three Indicators are satisfied, including Indicator One, the programme will receive a 'limited confidence' judgement. If one or no Indicator is satisfied, or Indicator One is not satisfied, the judgement will be 'no confidence', as shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Criteria for Judgements

Criteria	Judgement
All four Indicators satisfied	Confidence
Two or three Indicators satisfied, including Indicator 1	Limited Confidence
One or no Indicator satisfied	No Confidence
All cases where **Indicator 1** is not satisfied	

1.2 The Programmes-within-College Review Process at the Applied Science University

A Programmes-within-College review of the College of Administrative Sciences (CAS) was conducted by DHR of the QQA in terms of its mandate to review the quality of higher education in Bahrain. The site visit took place on May 26 -28, 2014 for eight academic programmes offered by CAS. These programmes are: Bachelor in Accounting and Finance (BAF), Bachelor in Accounting (BA), Bachelor in Business Administration (BBA), Bachelor in Political Science (BPS), Bachelor in Management of Information Systems (BMIS), Master in Accounting and Finance (MAF), Master in Business Administration and Master in Human Resources (MHR) programmes.

This report provides an account of the review process and the findings of the Panel for the MBA based on the Self-Evaluation Report (SER) and appendices submitted by the Applied Science University (ASU), the supplementary documentation made available during the site visit, as well as interviews and observations made during the review site visit.

ASU was notified by the DHR/QQA on 24 October 2013 that it would be subject to a Programmes-within-College review of the programmes offered by its College of Administrative Sciences. On 3 March 2014, it was agreed that the exact date of the site visit would be 26-28 May 2014. In preparation for the review, ASU conducted its

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College self-evaluation reports of all its programmes and submitted the SERs with appendices on the agreed date on 27 February 2014.

DHR constituted a Panel consisting of experts in the academic field Business Administrations, Accounting and Finance, Political Science, Management Information Systems, and in higher education who have experience of external programme quality reviews. The Panel comprised ten external reviewers.

This Report records the evidence-based conclusions reached by the Panel based on:

(i)   analysis of the Self-Evaluation Report and supporting materials submitted by the institution prior to the external peer-review visit
(ii)   analysis derived from discussions with various stakeholders (faculty members, students, graduates and employers)
(iii)   analysis based on additional documentation requested and presented to the Panel during the site visit.

It is expected that ASU will use the findings presented in this report to strengthen its MBA programme. DHR recognizes that quality assurance is the responsibility of the higher education institution itself. Hence, it is the right of ASU to decide how it will address the recommendations contained in the Review Report. Nevertheless, three months after the publication of this Report, ASU is required to submit to the DHR an improvement plan in response to the recommendations.

DHR would like to extend its thanks to ASU for the co-operative manner in which it has participated in the Programmes-within-College review process. It also wishes to express its appreciation for the open discussions held in the course of the review and the professional conduct of the faculty in the MBA programme.

1.3   Overview of the College of Administrative Sciences

The College of Administrative Sciences is one of three colleges within the Applied Science University (ASU). The Programme Handbook 2013-2015 of the College states that the College was established in 2005 with a mission to meet the needs of Bahrain community and the region for specialised and qualified cadres in administrative sciences, business administration, accounting, finance, MIS and political science.

The College currently comprises four departments, namely: Business Administration, Accounting and Finance, Management Information Systems, and Political Science. The College offers five undergraduate programmes (Bachelor in Business Administration, Bachelor in Accounting, Bachelor in Accounting and Finance, Bachelor in Management Information Systems, Bachelor in Political Science)

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and three postgraduate programmes (Master in Business Administration, Master in Human Resources Management, Master in Accounting) across the four departments.

The College employs 34 teaching staff members of which 30 are full-time faculty members. The SER indicates that the total number of students registered in the College during the academic year 2012-2013 was 1,137.

1.4   Overview of the Master in Business Administration

The Master of Business Administration (MBA) is managed by the Department of Business Administration, and was offered first in the summer of the 2008-2009 academic year with 29 students enrolled. Since 2010, there have been 12 graduates of the programme working at different industries. The programme has been reviewed in 2012-2013 and resulted in introducing many changes that were implemented in 2013-2014 academic year. The programme is delivered in Arabic. There are nine full-time faculty members contributing to the delivery of the MBA programme.

1.5   Summary of Review Judgements

Table 2: Summary of Review Judgements for the Master in Business Administration

Indicator	Judgement
1: The Learning Programme	Satisfies
2: Efficiency of the Programme	Satisfies
3: Academic Standards of the Graduates	Satisfies
4: Effectiveness of Quality Management and Assurance	Satisfies
Overall Judgement	**Confidence**

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2.   Indicator 1: The Learning Programme

The programme demonstrates fitness for purpose in terms of mission, relevance, curriculum, pedagogy, intended learning outcomes and assessment.

2.1   The Master of Business Administration (MBA) has an academic planning framework that clearly states the programme aims and learning outcomes. The institution's vision and mission statements are well-cascaded and linked to the College of Administrative Sciences mission and aims; which are, in turn, cascaded to the MBA programme level and are reflected in the programme aims and learning outcomes. During interviews with the senior management, the Panel learned that the programme aims have been updated in 2013 in light of the internal and external programme reviews. The Panel appreciates that the programme aims are clearly stated and contribute to the achievement of the institution's mission and vision.

2.2   The MBA programme is based on the American system of credit hours and requires students to complete a total of 36 credit hours for the award of the degree with six credits out of the 36 allocated for the dissertation. The curriculum is divided into six academic semesters, which shows the progression of students' knowledge such as introducing 'Methods of Scientific Research' course early in the programme to help students gain skills to write and analyse research paper and case studies later in the programme. In general, there is a balance between theory and practice across all courses. The Panel met with students and alumni who were appreciative of the curriculum content and in particular the opportunity for students to gain practical experience in the form of business case analysis. The Panel reviewed the coursework workload and noted that it is appropriate and consistent with regional and international practices. Students interviewed during the site visit also expressed their general satisfaction with the workload involved in undertaking the courses. The SER clarifies how the development of knowledge and skills, application, analysis and synthesising are demonstrated at various levels of the programme; and this was confirmed during interviews conducted at the time of the site visit with both faculty members and students. The Panel appreciates that the curriculum is well-organised and demonstrates academic progression and that students workload is appropriate.

2.3   The Self-Evaluation Report   clarifies that the MBA programme has been benchmarked against similar programmes offered by local, regional and international institutions which are either AACSB accredited or partway towards such accreditation. The Panel found that the core syllabus covers all subject disciplines taught in a general MBA programme. In addition, each course syllabus is in general well-presented and standardized by the programme and study plan review committee, and includes enough information and guidelines for the course requirements. However, the Panel noted some discrepancies that need to be

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addressed. For example, the course codes needs to be standardized between course files and registration system to reflect the current status of the programme. The Panel recommends that the College address this issue. The Self-Evaluation Report states that the academic staff are encouraged to include their own publications in the teaching material. However, this was not evident in the course files. Therefore, the Panel encourages the staff to embed materials from their research into the teaching materials. The Panel is satisfied that the curriculum is up-to-date and contains the general knowledge along with the specialized one to enhance students' managerial skills which are required for a postgraduate degree in Business Administration.

2.4   Programme Intended Learning Outcomes (PILOs) are described in the Programme Specification. These cover knowledge and understanding, cognitive skills, practical and professional skills, and key transferable skills – each one of these is sub-divided into more detailed sub-categories.The PILOs have been subjected to a number of reviews last of which was during the academic year 2012-2013. An examination of these demonstrates that they are linked appropriately to the MBA Programme aims. During interview sessions, staff members showed clear understanding of the skills and competencies the programme seeks to develop and the importance of demonstrating achievement of the PILOs. The Panel appreciates that the PILOs are appropriately aligned to the programme aims and the University mission and that these PILOs reflect the range of knowledge and skills expected in an MBA programme.

2.5   There is a course specification for each course detailing the Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs) and the type of assessments used to assess the achievement of these CILOs. A mapping matrix is used to reflect that the CILOs are mapped to the PILOs. Generally, the CILOs are well-structured and clearly defined and mapped to the PILOs. The SER clarifies that all course specifications for the programme have been amended recently to incorporate higher level learning outcomes particularly in the higher level courses of the programme. The academic staff interviewed also confirmed that they have received training on how to write CILOs and appropriately map them to the PILOs. The Panel appreciates the work exerted by the department on developing course ILOs and mapping them to the programme ILOs.

2.6   The MBA Programme caters for students working on full-time jobs. Work-based learning is included as case studies, team projects and presentations. Staff interviewed clarified that these tasks allowed students to enhance their soft skills. Furthermore, the topics of students' dissertations are related to their work to enable them to link theory with practice. The Panel is satisfied that work-based learning is incorporated into the curriculum, and contributes to the achievement of the PILOs.

2.7   There is a University Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy that guides the delivery of the MBA programme. The policy encourages the usage of a wide variety of teaching and learning methods to achieve the learning outcomes. The Panel noted from the interviews that the policy is communicated well to students and faculty of the programme. The teaching principles and methods are based around the use of blended learning and flexible learning strategies which employ appropriate pedagogical approaches to allow students to demonstrate that they have met the intended learning outcomes. ASU has implemented a Moodle platform to support the learning process. The Moodle system is used for uploading courses materials, chatting and making announcements. After reviewing different course files, the Panel finds a wide range of teaching methods used across the programme. During interviews with staff, the Panel was provided with examples of how these strategies were implemented. Examples provided included the use of face-to-face tutorials, dedicated office hours for consultation, discussion groups, short quizzes and tests to build student confidence and allow them to reflect on the progress of their learning. Students confirmed in interviews that they enjoy their classes and gain a significant set of skills which positively reflects on their professional as well as personal lives. However, some students highlighted that there is a need to introduce a training for SPSS software to help them when analysing and writing their dissertations. Therefore, the Panel recommends that the department provide training in SPSS software to address students' request. From interviews conducted during the site visit with academic and administrative staff, students and alumni, it became clear that the range of pedagogical approaches are effective in supporting students who have different backgrounds when admitted to the programme. Moreover, the flexibility offered by the programme delivery and the provision of the e-library allowed time-constrained students to progress in a way which a more traditional delivery systems would not facilitate. The Panel appreciates the wide range of teaching and learning pedagogies utilised to support the achievement of the programme's aims and ILOs and students' different learning needs.

2.8   There are clear and understandable policies and procedures on assessment of students' achievements both on University and programme levels. These policies are communicated to students *via* different media such as the course specifications and E-learning platform. The assessment arrangements are stated in the Assessment and Feedback Policy and in the Programme Handbook. It was confirmed during meetings with both staff and students that they are aware of these policies and procedures. The Panel appreciates the documented policy for plagiarism and copyrights protections. In addition, there is an appeal procedure in place to ensure fairness of students' grades. As described in the syllabus and course materials provided to the Panel at the time of the site visit, there is a blend of assessment methods to test and link theory to practice. This includes mid-term and final examinations, assignments and projects. Interviews with students and alumni

confirmed that students are always made aware of the assessment tools and strategies that are to be used in each course. Nonetheless, the Panel notes that grade distribution is governed by the University policy and is unified for all courses in the programme despite their level or the course content and the type of CILOs to be achieved. The Panel recommends that the College revise the current grade distribution policy and develop a more flexible policy to suit the nature and level of the course. The Panel confirmed during the interview sessions with students that the system of providing feedback to assist the learning process is consistently applied in all courses, and timely feedback is provided. Students also highlighted that the feedback they receive help them to identify strengths and weaknesses in their work. The Panel appreciates that students and staff are fully aware of the assessment policy which supports the evaluation of the achievement of the learning outcomes.

2.9   In coming to its conclusion regarding The Learning Programme, the Panel notes, *with appreciation*, the following

- The programme aims are clearly stated and contribute to the achievement of the institution's mission and vision.
- The curriculum is well-organised and demonstrates academic progression and student workload is appropriate.
- The curriculum is up-to-date and contains the general knowledge along with the specialized one to enhance students' managerial skills which are required for a master degree in Business Administration.
- The Programme Intended Learning Outcomes are appropriately aligned to the programme aims and reflect the range of knowledge and skills required for an MBA degree.
- The work exerted by the department on developing course intended learning outcomes and mapping them to the programme intended learning outcomes.
- A wide range of teaching and learning pedagogies is utilised to support the achievement of programme aims and intended learning outcomes.
- The variety of utilised teaching methods to effectively support students' different learning needs.
- There is an assessment policy that supports the achievement of learning outcomes and is well-known to the academic staff and students.

2.10   In terms of improvement the Panel **recommends** that the College should:

- ensure that course codes are standardized between course files and the registration system

- provide students with training in SPSS software to help them when writing their dissertations.
- revise the current grade distribution policy and develop a more flexible policy to suit the nature and level of the course.

2.11   **Judgement**

On balance, the Panel concludes that the programme **satisfies** the Indicator on **The Learning Programme**

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3.   Indicator 2: Efficiency of the Programme

The programme is efficient in terms of the admitted students, the use of available resources - staffing, infrastructure and student support.

3.1   Admission to the MBA programme is in accordance with the University-wide admission policy for graduate studies. The policy is published on the University website, the University catalogue and the MBA Programme Handbook. A detailed admission procedure is contained in the Admission and Registration policy and includes rules for accepting transfer students from other institutes. The Panel appreciates the transparency of the admission policy for the newly admitted and transferred students. In terms of the policy, admission to the MBA programme requires a completed Bachelor degree with a minimum score of 60% and at least one-year work experience. Applicants have to undergo a personal interview and set an English placement test. During interview sessions with both academic and administrative staff responsible for admissions, the Panel received confirmation that the admission policy is always implemented.

3.2   The majority of students entering the programme have sufficient professional experience to enable them to benefit from the programme and enhance their learning across a range of Business Administration areas such as managing workplaces, business functions and complexity. Students with non-business Bachelor degrees are required to take three foundation courses to equip them with the needed knowledge for the programme. The Panel appreciates that the profile of admitted students is suitable for the MBA programme.

3.3   The programme is managed by a Programme Coordinator/Leader, and individual courses are managed by assigned course tutors. There is also a functioning academic committee structure which includes the Department Council, Programme and Curriculum Review Committee and Examinations Committee The Panel was provided with minutes of meetings and noted the department's efforts in having student representation in these meetings and using electronic methods such as e-mails to facilitate interaction and communication with students. The Panel noted from the interviews with students that the Student Council is active in advancing the interests of the ASU student body. The Panel notes with appreciation the active engagement of students in enhancing the management of the MBA programme. The Panel appreciates that there are clear lines of responsibility and accountability embedded in the department's structures and processes with regard to the management of the MBA programme.

3.4   There are nine faculty members, seven full-time PhD holders and two part-time staff with Master's degree, contributing to the delivery of the MBA programme. The

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student-staff ratio in the programme is 15:1 which is in accordance with the HEC requirements. However, these faculty members contribute to the delivery of other undergraduate and graduate programmes, increasing the actual students–to-staff ratio and the teaching load of staff members. In this situation, it becomes difficult to be up-to-date in the field, develop new teaching methods and contribute to the community. The Panel examined the CVs of the academic staff who are teaching on the programme and noted that there is an appropriate range of academic qualifications and specializations for all major fields of the MBA programme. Interviews with academic staff indicated that their workload is manageable for teaching although it does not allow much time for research related activities and professional practice. The Panel appreciates the professionalism of the academic staff and their commitment to the successful delivery of the programme. Nonetheless, the Panel recommends that ASU reconsider the teaching load of the staff to ensure that all programmes of study are appropriately underpinned by research in order to enhance the University Research Strategy–2013-2016.

3.5   ASU has a central Human Resources Department that is responsible for the development and implementation of policies relating to recruitment, appraisal and promotion of faculty. The Self-Evaluation Report reported that the Business Administration Department identifies its requirements for new faculty by developing an annual plan based on projected student intakes. The department's involvement in the recruitment process includes short-listing candidates and interviewing them by a committee consisting of the Head of Department (HoD) and two other faculty members. The committee's recommendations are then forwarded to the Dean for approval, and passed on to the Human Resources Department for final endorsement and processing. All staff are involved in a formal appraisal system. The appraisal sheet covers most of the faculty activities during the academic year research activities such as teaching load, development of the learning process, contribution to student support activities, community services, and professional consultation. ASU has recently developed a well-documented promotion policy that involves the Department, College and University. The policy stipulates that promotion files are reviewed by three committees at different levels. The faculty members are assessed based on their achievements and performance mentioned earlier. During interviews with staff, the Panel learned that there were no promotions in recent years and that only one staff member is currently applying for promotion. The Panel recommends that the University expedite the implementation of its newly-developed staff promotion policy to ensure the retention of the highly qualified and experienced faculty.

3.6   ASU has a functioning Management Information System (MIS) and a Student Information System (SIS). Examples of documents generated by the SIS include: list of registered students, list of courses, examination schedule, admission profile, and

student registration history. The students can also use the system to register courses and view their records. The Self-Evaluation Report states that the SIS has been implemented effectively during the last three years and supports the students in choosing their appropriate course load with the guidance of their academic advisors. The SIS enables academic staff to enter examination marks directly into the system and is used to generate a host of reports for management decision-making. Students have restricted access to the system *via* a secured login protocol and are able to access their examination results and academic records online. The Panel observed a demonstration of the SIS conducted during the site visit and noted that there are sufficient security features to ensure the integrity of the system. Interviews with support and academic staff members confirmed that the reports they receive from the system are adequate for their needs, and allow for effective identification and monitoring of 'at risk' students. Moreover, there is an effective Human Resource Information System (HRIS) that includes all needed personnel data and reports that help in making informed decisions. There are also effective information systems for the Finance Department and the library and e-learning resources. The Panel appreciates the effective use of the information systems across the University to serve in different aspects; especially the MIS and SIS to support teaching and learning.

3.7 ASU has policies and procedures in place to ensure the security of learners' information. This includes having backup copies of records on-site and off-site and data administration arrangements related to authorizations for the different levels of users. There is also a policy in place to ensure security of records through a defined authorization mechanism, storage of data, privacy of information, exchange of information, the usage of anti-virus and security tools, and security agreements with users. Users are provided with a unique user-name and password for logging onto the system. All passwords are encrypted and pass along a firewall path through a server to the database. The Panel appreciates these arrangements in place to protect students' records. All marks entered into the system are printed and reviewed independently by an assigned faculty member before being submitted to the HoD for approval, and thereafter to the Dean for authentication. An additional validation is done by the Registration Department through a 'second marks entry.' The marks and results are confirmed on the system and could then be accessed by students. Interviews with academic and administrative staff confirmed the implementation of the approval and validation procedures. The Panel also learned from the interviews conducted during the site visit and the SER that ASU has a Disaster Recovery Plan in terms of which data from the SIS is backed-up periodically to a remote site to forestall any potential loss of data through disasters such as fire. The Panel appreciates the rigour of the implemented procedures to ensure the security of learner information and accuracy of results.

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3.8   ASU has a purposely-built campus, where they moved to in September 2013, which offers staff and students a pleasant environment in which to work and study. The expansion of the University allows it to accommodate the enrolled students. There are 39 classrooms and seven computer laboratories. There are other facilities such as the library, staff offices, a *Wi-Fi* enabled cafeteria, a bookstore, and a health clinic. The lecture rooms, all of which are equipped with computers and electronic projectors, are designed in different ways to accommodate different teaching styles. Each floor of the academic building has a seating area for students to relax or to use for small group work or breakout sessions. The library is adequately resourced with books related to the MBA programme, reading spaces, computers, conveniently placed LCDs to aid in allocating books, as well as online journals, periodicals and databases in both English and Arabic. The Panel was provided with a copy of the University Library Handbook and learned from interviews with the staff members that the library budget allocation is managed by following certain guidelines for the issuing and renewal of library material to staff and students. There is a large auditorium used for conferences and external events. The Panel notes the investment ASU has made in providing physical and material resources to support the delivery of the MBA programme, and appreciates that ASU has good facilities to support the students' learning experiences.

3.9   The SER states that tracking is conducted to provide data on student access to the E-library where the system enables the library staff to get a real-time count of learners online who are using the E-library. The tracking system also enables academic staff in the computer laboratories to record the students' names and their assigned tasks. Each student has a unique user name and password to register into the electronic library. The Panel learned from interviews conducted with MBA students that there is also an e-learning system (E-Brary) to allow both staff and students to download lectures, case studies and assignments. Although the tracking system facilitates staff and students communication; yet the Panel recommends that ASU to establish a comprehensive resource tracking system to track students and staff usage and utilise its outcome to support decision-making.

3.10   As stated earlier, there are arrangements in place to provide support for students in the laboratories and for the use of e-resources. This is represented by having the technical support unit for the University, staff in the library, IT assistant in the laboratory and the teaching assistants in the College. In addition, ASU has a social care unit headed by a University staff member and an academic advisor for advising on academic issues. During the touring session, the Panel discussed with some students the support services offered by the University. The students were pleased with the availability and quality of the supporting staff. During the touring session, the Panel studied the services delivered by the social care unit to address non-academic students' challenges. The Panel viewed the files of some cases where

student's problems were resolved through consultation with the social care unit. The Panel appreciates the arrangements in place and the support system provided by the academic advisors, the library, the student care unit, and the IT unit.

3.11   An orientation and induction programme is offered at the commencement of each semester by the Deanship of Student Affairs and the Student Council where opportunity is provided for all students including transferred ones to undertake a campus tour to familiarise themselves with the University facilities and to be introduced to the administrative and academic staff. The Panel was pleased to note the active involvement of the Student Council and senior students, as well as academic advisors, in the orientation process. There are three compulsory orientation programmes; on the University, faculty and programme levels. Training in the use of library resources was also noted as an important part of the orientation process. The Panel views the face-to-face orientation day to be very helpful in preparing students for their studies, and is pleased that efforts are made to provide material online for the benefit of those who are unable to physically attend the orientation sessions. All students are provided with University Catalogue 2013-2015 for further information. Students confirmed the orientation process during the interview sessions, and added that course tutors in their first contact sessions demonstrated the use of the web portal to access course material. The Panel appreciates the special care that is given to students with special needs and to transferred students. The Panel appreciates the effectiveness of the conducted orientation and induction programme for new and transferred students.

3.12   Student progress is continually tracked by academic advisors with the assistance of HoDs through the SIS to timely identify and provide support for at-risk students. At-risk students are those with a cumulative GPA of less than 3.0 in any given semester throughout their study period of the MBA programme. During the site visit, the Panel was provided with a 'Students at-Risk Policy-2013-2014' which clearly stated the key responsibilities of students, the Registration Department, Dean of Students, and academic advisors in identifying and providing support for at-risk students. The Panel is pleased to learn that students are being monitored before their GPA reaches 72%. Such students are blocked from online registration system and are required to discuss and agree an 'academic advisory plan' with their academic advisor before they are allowed to register for any course. The advisor then meets with the student regularly and keeps a record of the progress made and the results of the discussion. All students are made aware of staff office hours, which are posted on staff offices doors to arrange to meet their advisors accordingly. During interviews, the Panel found that the academic advisors, together with the Registration Department and HoDs, have been actively involved in identifying and counselling students ahead of time. The Panel appreciates the mechanisms that are in place to

identify at-risk students and provide counselling and academic support whenever necessary.

3.13   Informal workspaces are provided at convenient places for students to interact and have small group discussions. Moreover, the library is modern and comfortable with areas to allow students to discuss topical issues. During staff interviews, they clarify that MBA Students are always encouraged to discuss different topics whether formally during class or informally in the different recreation areas in the University. The Panel appreciates conducting the annual "Jobs Fair" day by the Deanship of Student Affairs where students are exposed to potential employers. In addition, the Panel notes that a Business Club has been formed to provide extracurricular activities to facilitate the informal sharing of student experiences. The Panel is satisfied that the overall learning environment is conducive to expand the student experiences and knowledge through informal learning.

3.14   In coming to its conclusion regarding the Efficiency of the Programme, the Panel notes, *with appreciation*, the following:

- The efforts of the College to ensure that the admission requirements for the MBA programme are implemented and equivalent to similar institutions in Bahrain and the region.
- There are clear lines of responsibility and accountability embedded in the structures and processes related to the management of the MBA programme.
- The professionalism of the academic staff and their commitment to the successful delivery of the programme.
- The effective use of the information systems across the University to serve in different aspects; especially the MIS and SIS to support teaching and learning.
- The rigorous implemented procedures to ensure the security of learner information and accuracy of results.
- ASU has good facilities to support students' learning experiences.
- Appropriate support is provided to the programme students by the library, the IT unit, Social Support Centre and academic advisors.
- The effectiveness of the conducted orientation and induction programme for new and transferred students.
- Appropriate mechanisms are in place to identify at-risk students to provide counselling and support whenever necessary.

3.15 In terms of improvement, the Panel **recommends** that the College should:

- revise the workload of the academic staff to allow more time for research and scholarly activities to ensure that teaching and learning is appropriately underpinned by research
- expedite the implementation of its newly-developed Academic Promotion Policy to ensure the retention of the highly qualified and experienced faculty
- establish a comprehensive resource tracking system to track students and staff usage and utilise its outcome to support decision-making.

3.16 Judgement

On balance, the Panel concludes that the programme **satisfies** the Indicator on **Efficiency of the Programme.**

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4   Indicator 3: Academic Standards of the Graduates

The graduates of the programme meet academic standards compatible with equivalent programmes in Bahrain, regionally and internationally.

4.1   The graduate attributes of the MBA programme are clearly stated in the *Programme Handbook*. The Self-Evaluation Report clarifies that the MBA curriculum was recently revisited to ensure the inclusion of attributes such as communication skills, teamwork, independent thinking and problem solving. There is clear evidence that the learning experience offered through the programme is appropriate for achieving these attributes to enable students to acquire the necessary skills to enter the labour market. During interviews with employers, they expressed their satisfaction with the graduates level and standards. Furthermore, employer questionnaire show that they are highly satisfied with the quality and specifications of the graduate as they emphasise the programme's ability to prepare students to have a clear understanding and knowledge of all the fields in business administration. Students also expressed their satisfaction with programme aims and ILOs. During interviews, they indicated a significant change in their careers in terms of knowledge and skills. The Panel appreciates that graduate attributes are clearly linked to the programme aims and ILOs and that the programme delivery enables the graduates to acquire these attributes.

4.2   The MBA programme is benchmarked against standards of other MBA programmes offered by local, regional and international institutions that are either AACSB accredited or partway towards AACSB accreditation. The programme is also benchmarked with the subject guidelines of the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) of UK for MBA programmes. The Panel acknowledges that these benchmarking efforts have led to significant improvements in the MBA programme. However, the Panel notes that these exercises have been conducted mostly informally. The Panel learns that ASU has developed a formal benchmarking policy. The Panel recommends that the Department put in place appropriate mechanisms for implementation of its newly developed benchmarking policy and formalise partnership agreements with institutions it wants to benchmark itself against.

4.3   ASU's assessment policies and procedures are contained in the new Assessment and Map. Course specifications stipulate the different assessment methods used and the CILOs are explicitly mapped to all graded work. Specific sections of each assignment or examination are identified as relating to one of the four CILO areas. During interviews with the academic staff members, the Panel notes that assessment strategies are designed with due regard to the CILOs, and would typically include mid-term and final examinations, assignments and case studies. Interviews with students and alumni confirmed that students are always made aware of the

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assessment tools and strategies which are used in each course, as well as the feedback mechanism. The Panel examined samples of students' work and noted that the academic staff are committed to implement the University assessment policy to ensure consistency. The Panel appreciates the staff's effort in using different assessment tools to support the delivery of the MBA programme.

4.4   The SER clarifies that the department's process to ensure the alignment of both mid-term and final examinations to CILOs where an internal examiner completes an evaluation form determining the alignment of the assessment to CILOs. Moreover, the results of the students' assessment are submitted in a matrix form to the Programme Coordinator to highlight the percentage of attainment for each CILO. The Panel reviewed the provided samples of students' assessed work and found that the successful implementation of assessments indicates that the assessed CILOs have been achieved. The Panel appreciates the effective mechanisms used to align assessment with course intended learning outcomes to ensure that CILOs have been achieved and graduates academic standards are met.

4.5   The SER clarifies the internal moderation system at ASU. Final and mid-term examination questions are set by a course lecturer and reviewed by an appointed internal examiner. The mechanism was first adapted in 2013-2014 academic year during which the department forms the examination committee to handle the moderation process. The Lecturer submits the examination paper at least 48 hours before the students sit for the examinations. The internal examiner has to ensure the relevance of the questions to the course and the appropriateness of the assessment tools to measure the achievement of the learning outcomes and the distribution of marks. However, the Panel has concerns about the effectiveness of this mechanism. Practically, if changes are recommended to be addressed in less than 48 hours of the date of the examination. Moreover, examination papers will be exposed to a large number of people. The Panel suggests that as the department further implements the policy, it should assess the effectiveness of this mechanism. The internal examiner also reviews a sample of the marked scripts (including all failures, scripts with marks above 80%, and some randomly selected scripts) to ensure consistency of grading by course lecturer. The Panel noted from the provided evidence that the mid-term examination is not moderated systematically. Moreover, assignments and other forms of assessments, which are allocated more than 30% of the total mark, are not subjected to moderation. The Panel recommends that ASU expand its internal moderation system to cover all forms of assessment in addition to mid-term and final examinations.

4.6   The Self-Evaluation Report states that the current system for external moderation is to send the external examiner at the Yarmouk University of Jordan the final examination question papers, the model answers and the course syllabus two weeks before the final due date. Staff interviewed, clarified the process by indicating that

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the Yarmouk University selects the faculty members to act as external examiners for the MBA courses. Then the Departmental Examination Committee discusses the external examiner feedback to take suitable actions. The Panel raised their concerns that this arrangement places an over-reliance on the Yarmouk University and does not allow enough time for the teaching staff to amend the final examination. The Panel recommends that the College should directly select and appoint its own external examiners from different local, regional and international universities. Moreover, the Panel urges the College to reconsider the two weeks period to ensure that sufficient time is given to staff members to accurately amend the examinations.

4.7   The Panel examined a range of students' assessed work and concluded that the level of students' achievements as presented in the samples provided is appropriate to the level and type of the programme. Standards are acceptable, and grades awarded in general accurately reflect students' efforts and abilities. The provided samples of course files indicate an improvement in students' work in the courses offered recently and that the level of achievement is satisfactory compared with similar programmes. Students are engaged in various activities and assessments; this engagement in turn allows them to apply the learned theories in real life situations and on different cases. Students interviewed during the site visit acknowledged the implementation of the theoretical knowledge in their professional life, which was also confirmed by employers. During interviews, students and staff confirmed that there are clear and transparent assessment criteria, marking scheme, and constructive feedback (written, oral and one to one basis) and that the assessment tools are well-aligned with the PILOs and CILOs; and are known to staff members and students. Alumni and employers surveys are used to gather information on the level of students' achievements. Interviews with alumni and employers show an acceptable level of satisfaction on students' achievements. The Panel appreciates that students' assessed work is appropriate to the level and type of the programme.

4.8   The MBA programme follows the university's policy with respect to allocating 70% or above to measure the level of students' achievements of the CILOs and PILOs. The Panel examined some course files and a range of students' assessed work and confirmed that students' achievements in the MBA programme are appropriate to a postgraduate degree. The records also show that grades awarded for individual elements of assessment accurately reflect students' effort and ability. The evaluation of grading is done by the internal and external examiner and by the Department Examination Committee. After interviews with different academic staff, the Panel is satisfied that final grades are approved not only by course instructors but also by the HoD and the Dean in order to ensure that students are equally treated within the programme and across all programmes offered by the College. The level of students' achievements is also measured by distributing surveys to employers and alumni to gather information on the level of MBA students' achievements. Interviews

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conducted with alumni and employers showed an acceptable level of satisfaction on students' achievements. The Panel acknowledges the systematic manner in which assessment results and grade distributions are scrutinized.

4.9   The SER contains a range of statistical data about admitted students, graduation rates and first destination of the graduates from the inception of the programme in 2007 up to 2013. The data provided states that 23 out of 61 students have graduated, which indicate that 66% of the students have completed their degree in three years while the remaining 34% are in the dissertation phase. The Panel inquired about the 34% of students who are still in the dissertation phase and was told that this was due to personal reasons. The Panel encourages ASU to investigate and have data about this issue. The Staff clarified that no new students were admitted during the last two years because of the suspension of the programme by the HEC. The Panel is of the view that the Department has to keep updating its system with respect to students' retention, progress and graduation.

4.10   There is a well-stated and detailed document stating 'Dissertation Regulations and Procedures' covering all dissertation steps from finding the research problem, choosing the academic supervisor, going through the internal and external supervision, field study and data analysis, and ending with the dissertation defence. The Self-Evaluation Report states that the dissertation's final draft goes through several scrutiny steps such as the internal examiner approval of the final draft, writing a report to the HoD, checking against plagiarism, submitting the draft to the Dean for postgraduate studies and identifying the examination committee/panel (internal and external examiners). The Panel reviewed a number of dissertations and is satisfied that their academic standard is aligned with a Master's level. The alumni interviewed by the Panel expressed appreciation for the support they received from their supervisors. Both students and alumni confirmed that the dissertation rules, procedure and assessment are clear, transparent and consistently implemented. After interviewing students, alumni, employers and internal and external examiners, the Panel is satisfied that the topics of the dissertations tackle and solve real work problems. The Panel appreciates the mechanisms that are in place to monitor and ensure the quality of MBA dissertations.

4.11   The University has well-structured policies and regulations with respect to the registration of the dissertation for all of its postgraduate programmes. A student may register for the dissertation after passing 50% of the programme credit hours. However, in practice, all students have registered for their dissertation after they have completed all their courses. The Panel appreciates the formulation of the assessment committee, which assess and review the MBA dissertation. Furthermore, the Panel appreciates the role of the supervisors in directing students through the dissertation phases. The Panel notices that dissertation examination procedures are

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well-designed and identified in the University policy. The Panel interviewed two external examiners who expressed a high level of satisfaction regarding the implementation of the dissertation policy. The Panel examined samples of assessed dissertations and noted that dissertation examination procedures are well-designed and implemented. The Panel found that all the dissertations contain a practical aspect where students deal with real problems in the world of business or their work environment. The Panel appreciates the choice of the dissertation topic and its standards. The Panel met with faculty members and students who confirmed that supervisors implement the policies consistently, monitor, and follow students' progress closely. However, through interviews, the Panel noted a high and direct reliance on the thesis supervisor. The Panel encourages the programme team to work collaboratively to enhance students' independency when working on their dissertations.

4.12   The MBA Advisory Board consists of academic staff and external industrial experts from government and private sectors in Bahrain. It also includes employers and alumni. The 'Programme Advisory Board Policy' clarifies that the role of the Advisory Board is to provide advice and make recommendations to the Colleges on all aspects of the programmes and curriculum from an industrial, business and expert perspective; and also assist in fostering links between the University and the business sector. The current Advisory Board has been formed recently and still has not have a significant impact on the programme. Consequently, the Panel suggests the programme team to keep a strong and continuous relation with the new Board to ensure the integration of the board's suggestions into the MBA programme.

4.13   The Self-Evaluation Report states that ASU conducts two annual surveys to measure the level of satisfaction towards its graduates; one survey for employers and the other one for alumni. These surveys are analysed to provide an effective feedback to the quality of the programme and the academic standards of its graduates. However, the Panel noted that these are not conducted systematically. The Self-Evaluation Report confirms the satisfaction of both alumni and employers as indicated by the recent survey analysis. During interview sessions with the employers and alumni, it was evident that employers have high level of satisfaction with the MBA programme graduates whom they have employed. The alumni expressed their satisfaction with what they learnt and highlighted that they managed to transfer what they learnt at ASU to their workplace. The Panel appreciates the high level of employers and graduates satisfaction with the programme; and recommends that the College develop and implement a mechanism to systematically measure their satisfaction with the programme and its outcomes.

4.14   In coming to its conclusion regarding the Academic Standards of the Graduates, the Panel notes, *with appreciation*, the following:

- Graduate attributes are clearly linked to the programme aims and intended learning outcomes and that programme delivery enables the graduates to acquire these attributes.

- The staff's effort in using different assessment tools to support the delivery of the MBA programme.

- The effective mechanisms used to align assessment with course intended learning outcomes to ensure that graduates academic standards are met.

- Students assessed work is appropriate to the level and type of the programme.

- The systematic manner in which assessment results and grade distributions are scrutinised.

- The choice of dissertation topic and its standards.

- The role of the MBA supervisors in directing students through the dissertation phases.
- Employers and graduates are highly satisfied with the programme and its outcome.

4.15   In terms of improvement, the Panel **recommends** that the College should:

- put in place appropriate mechanisms for the implementation of the newly developed benchmarking policy and formalise partnership agreements with the institutions ASU wants to benchmark itself against
- expand the internal moderation system to cover all forms of assessment in addition to mid-term and final examinations and revise the 48 hours given to moderate examinations
- directly appoint external examiners from local, regional and international universities to ensure that the academic standards of ASU award are comparable to various universities
- establish a formal mechanism to regularly monitor retention, progression, graduation and dropout rates
- develop and implement a formal mechanism to systematically measure both employers and alumni's satisfaction with the programme and its outcomes.

4.16   **Judgement**

On balance, the Panel concludes that the programme **satisfies** the Indicator on

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Academic Standards of the Graduates.

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5   Indicator 4: Effectiveness of Quality Management and Assurance

5.1   The ASU management system comprises a range of policies, procedures and regulations at University, College and Department levels that faculty members are familiar with and are involved in the implementation of those that are relevant to their duties. Examples of existing policies and procedures include: Learning Teaching Assessment Strategy, Moderation Policy, Students at-Risk Policy, Research Policy and Benchmarking Policy. The Panel met with some academic and administrative staff, including representatives from the department's QA Unit, who confirmed that these policies and procedures are applied effectively and well-communicated to both staff and students. During interview sessions, staff members were well-informed about these procedures and indicated their involvement in developing these procedures. The Panel appreciates that staff members are familiar with these policies and are involved in the development of those that are relevant to their duties.

5.2   The MBA Programme is managed by a Programme Coordinator who is not the HoD. Both work collaboratively to run the programme. The Self-Evaluation Report states that the structure supporting the Programme Coordinator to manage the programme consists of the Department, Programme and Curriculum Review Committee, Examination Committee, Course Coordinators, and the Student Council, which has representation at all departmental meetings. Various internal bodies such as University, College and Department Councils are utilised to ensure that the responsibilities of all members involved in the delivery of the programme are executed in an effective manner and that leadership is provided where needed. The Panel met with some academic and administrative staff, including representatives from the QA Unit, who showed a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities and were able to demonstrate many ways in which the policies and procedures are applied to enhance the quality of delivery of the MBA programme. The Panel appreciates that the MBA programme is managed in a manner that demonstrates effective and responsible leadership.

5.3   The Quality Assurance and Accreditation Center (AQQC) has an overall responsibility for ensuring that the programme adheres to the requirements of the ASU's quality assurance system. The SER demonstrates a number of ways in which the Department ensures that the quality management system in relation to the MBA programme is monitored and evaluated. During interviews, the Panel learned that a comprehensive Quality Assurance Manual has been developed recently to enhance the delivery of all academic and administrative operations. The Panel further learned that quality assurance policy is operationalized at the College and departmental levels *via* the College and departmental QA units, which are overseen

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by a University-wide QA coordinating group consisting of the QAAC director and the Colleges QA Coordinators, among others. For example, the responsibility of the departmental QA Unit is to ensure that the assessment methods are properly aligned to the programme and course intended learning outcomes. In addition, the programme is evaluated annually within the Department and through a formal review in four year intervals by the Programme and Curriculum Review Committee to assess its effectiveness and relevance. The Panel acknowledges that the quality assurance management system is clearly specified, implemented, monitored, and evaluated across the College.

5.4   As stated earlier, the QAAC at ASU has oversight responsibility for quality assurance and improvement at the University, and is responsible for ensuring proper alignment of quality assurance processes and monitoring the professional development of staff. During interview sessions, the Panel was informed that one of the primary objectives of the Centre is to inculcate a quality culture among both academic and administrative staff. The Panel was provided with evidence on QAAC conducting regular events and workshops to acquaint staff members with best practice approaches in teaching and learning and inviting facilitators from other higher education institutions in Bahrain to exchange good practices. Policies and procedures relating to quality assurance are made available on the University intranet for easy access by staff. Both academic and support staff interviewed showed a clear understanding of the quality management arrangements and their role in ensuring the quality of the provision. The Panel appreciates the commitment of the ASU staff in ensuring the quality of delivery of the MBA programme.

5.5   The Self-evaluation Report states that ASU has a procedure for the development of new programmes. In terms of the procedure, proposals for introducing new programmes go through internal and external approvals. The former starts with the Programme and Curriculum Review Committee (PCRC), after which the proposal is presented to the College and then to the University to get their approval. Once approved, the external procedure starts by submitting the approved proposal to the HEC so that the new programme is licenced. The Panel notices that no new programmes have been introduced in the last three years. The Panel is satisfied that the procedure ASU has put in place for the development and approval of new programmes is adequate but encourages the University to clarify the trigger factors for introducing new programmes.

5.6   The SER stated that at the end of each academic year, an internal self-evaluation report for the MBA programme that includes recommendations for the improvement of the programme and courses is developed and submitted to the QACC. The SER demonstrates a number of ways in which the Department reviews and evaluates the MBA programme. These include regular course evaluation reports, student feedback,

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student satisfaction surveys, alumni and employer surveys, regular departmental council and programme team meetings, examinations and moderation, and a functioning programme Advisory Board. During interview sessions, the faculty members explained the mechanism in place to revise the course specifications, and the cycle to approve the suggestions and changes to the courses. The cycle involves the Programme Coordinator and the Department Council to approve the changes to the course and align it to programme aims and ILOs. The Panel met with students and alumni who confirmed that they were able to provide feedback on various aspects relating to the quality of the provision. The academic staff also confirmed that the process of student evaluation has led to many improvements in the teaching of specific courses. The Panel notes the annual programme review, and recommends that the Department develop a clear follow-up mechanism to ensure that recommended enhancements are implemented. Moreover, the Panel encourages the Department to revise its programme review mechanism to align its procedure tightly with the ASU curriculum change procedures as specified in the Quality Assurance Manual.

5.7   The Self-Evaluation Report clarifies that in terms of the ASU Programme Review Policy, the Programme and Curriculum Review Committee (PCRC) is responsible for reviewing the MBA programme in a four year cycle. The review process requires the PCRC to gather feedback from teaching staff, students and other stakeholders such as employers and alumni of each batch to ascertain the relevance and currency of the programme, and to assure alignment of the PILOs to the college vision and mission statements. The Panel was informed during the interviews that the last periodic review was conducted in 2013 in preparation for this external review in 2014. The Panel appreciates the tenacity with which the programme is reviewed.

5.8   ASU conducts surveys of its students and graduates, as well as employers of its graduates. Evidence was provided during the site visit of some recent surveys and subsequent Department meetings that have been held to consider the findings of the surveys. Whilst students' feedback on courses and teaching and learning is sought systematically at the end of each semester, employers and alumni surveys are not conducted regularly or systematically. The Panel, however, did not find any evidence of a mechanism that is used to systematically analyse stakeholder surveys to inform decision-making. The Panel recommends that ASU adapt a more formal procedure in analysing and responding to stakeholder surveys, and provide timely feedback to stakeholders on actions taken to address any identified issues.

5.9   ASU has a Staff Development Centre which oversees the professional development of the academic staff and is responsible for evaluating the effectiveness of staff training programmes. In addition, there is an Academic Staff Development Policy that stipulates the basis for an academic staff development budget and specifies

some development initiatives and activities that are supported as part of academic staff professional development. These include providing financial assistance for conference attendance and financial support and release time for academic staff to enhance their qualifications or undertake other scholarly activity. During the site visit, the Panel visited the Staff Development Unit at ASU. The Panel learned that the unit ensures continuous development plan is in place for all faculty members. This is achieved through annual workshops, and participation in professional training and signing memorandum of understanding with professional bodies. The unit keeps electronic records of all faculty members who attended the professional development activities. The Staff Development Policy is translated to a yearly plan along with its allocated budget. The Staff Development Policy encourages the participation in conferences, sabbatical leave, study leave and other development activities. A number of the interviewed academic staff confirmed that they have benefited from the staff development programme. The Panel acknowledges the arrangements in place to provide professional development opportunities for faculty members. The appraisal system used also includes a section on the staff training needs. However, the Panel did not see evidence of a formal process to link the professional development needs of academic staff to the actual activities conducted. The Panel recommends that the Department develop and implement a formal mechanism to link the annual performance review process of all faculty members to their professional development needs.

5.10   The Department relies on internal and external stakeholders to gather intelligence about the local labour market from its dedicated staff members and the external members of the programme Advisory Board, many of whom have several years of experience in the local labour market. In addition, ASU has links through employers and its alumni to market intelligence. However, the Panel was not provided with evidence of a systematic scoping of the labour market. The Panel recommends that the College develop and implement a formal mechanism for continuous scoping of the labour market needs to ensure that programmes are up-to-date.

5.11   In coming to its conclusion regarding the Effectiveness of Quality Management and Assurance, the Panel notes, *with appreciation*, the following:

- There is a set of defined policies and procedures that staff members are well-informed of and are involved in the development of those that are relevant to their duties.
- The MBA programme is managed in a way that demonstrates effective and responsible leadership.
- The quality management system and arrangements in relation the MBA programme are effective and consistently implemented and reviewed.

- The commitment of the ASU staff in ensuring the quality of delivery of the MBA programme.
- The frequency and tenacity with which the MBA programme is reviewed.

5.12   In terms of improvement, the Panel **recommends** that the College should:

- adapt a more formal procedure in analysing and responding to stakeholder surveys, and provide timely feedback to stakeholders on actions taken to address any identified issues
- develop and implement a formal mechanism to link the annual performance review process to the professional development activities attended by individual staff members
- develop and implement a formal mechanism for scoping the labour market needs to ensure that programme is up-to-date.

5.13   **Judgement**

On balance, the Panel concludes that the programme **satisfies** the Indicator on **Effectiveness of Quality Management and Assurance.**

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6.   Conclusion

Taking into account the institution's own self-evaluation report, the evidence gathered from the interviews and documentation made available during the site visit, the Panel draws the following conclusion in accordance with the DHR/QQA *Programmes-within-College Reviews Handbook, 2012*:

There is confidence in the Master of Business Administration (MBA) of College of Administrative Sciences offered by the Applied Science University.

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