



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

# Directorate of Higher Education Reviews

## Programme Follow-Up Visit Summary

**Bachelor's Degree in Mass Communication & Public  
Relations**

**College of Arts & Science**

**Ahlia University**

**Kingdom of Bahrain**

**First Follow-up Visit Date: 23-25 April 2019**

**Review Date: 8-11 May 2017**

HC105-C2-F019

## Table of Contents

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The Programme Follow- up Visit Overview .....	2
1. Indicator 1: The Learning Programme .....	4
2. Indicator 2: Efficiency of the Programme.....	5
3. Indicator 3: Academic standards of the graduates .....	6
4. Indicator 4: Effectiveness of quality management and assurance .....	8
5. Conclusion.....	9
Appendix 1: Judgement per recommendation.....	10
Appendix 2: Overall Judgement. ....	11

## The Programme Follow-up Visit Overview

The follow-up visit for academic programmes conducted by the Directorate of Higher Education Reviews (DHR) of the Education & Training Quality Authority (BQA) in the Kingdom of Bahrain is part of a cycle of continuing quality assurance reviews, reporting and improvement.

The follow-up visit applies to all programmes that have been reviewed using the Programmes-within-College Reviews Framework, and received a judgement of 'limited confidence' or 'no confidence'.

This Report provides an account of the follow-up process and findings of the follow-up panel whereby the Bachelor's Degree in Mass Communication & Public Relations (BMCPR), at the Ahlia University (AU) was revisited on 23-25 April 2019 to assess its progress in line with the published Programmes-within-College Reviews Framework and the BQA regulations.

### A. Aims of the Follow-up Visit

- (i) Assess the progress made against the recommendations highlighted in the review report (in accordance with the four BQA Indicators) of AU's BMCPR since the programme was reviewed on 8-11 May 2017.
- (ii) Provide further information and support for the continuous improvement of academic standards and quality enhancement of higher education provision, specifically within the BMCPR programme at AU, and for higher education provision within the Kingdom of Bahrain, as a whole.

### B. Background

The review of the BMCPR programme, at AU in the Kingdom of Bahrain was conducted by the DHR of the BQA on 8-11 May 2017.

The overall judgement of the review panel for the BMCPR programme, of AU was that of '**no confidence**'. Consequently, the follow-up process incorporated the review of the evidence presented by AU to the DHR, the Improvement Plan submitted to BQA, the Progress Report and its supporting materials and the documents submitted during the follow-up site visit and those extracted from the interview sessions.

The external review panel's judgement on the AU's BMCPR programme for each Indicator was as follows:

**Indicator 1:** The learning programme; '**not satisfied**'

**Indicator 2:** Efficiency of the programme; **'satisfied'**

**Indicator 3:** Academic standards of the graduates; **'not satisfied'**

**Indicator 4:** Effectiveness of quality management and assurance **'satisfied'**

The follow-up visit was conducted by a (Panel) consisting of two members. This follow-up visit focused on assessing how the Institution addressed the recommendations of the report of the review conducted on 8-11 May 2017. For each recommendation given under the four Indicators, the Panel judged whether the recommendation is 'fully addressed', 'partially addressed', or 'not addressed' using the rubric in Appendix 1. An overall judgement of 'good progress', 'adequate progress' or 'inadequate progress' is given based on the rubric provided in Appendix 2.

### **C. Overview of the Bachelor's Degree in Mass Communication and Public Relations**

The College of Arts & Science at AU was established in 2001. Currently, the College offers two bachelor's degree programmes, namely: Bachelor of Interior Design, and Bachelor of Mass Communications and Public Relations. The Bachelor's Degree of Mass Communications and Public Relations was first offered in the academic year 2003/2004 through the Department of Mass Communications and Public Relations. Since then, the Programme has been revised many times. The latest revision of the programme was conducted in response to the BQA's recommendations. During the follow-up visit, the total number students was 158 students, while the total number of full-time academic staff contributing to the programme was six, and the total number of part-time academic staff was three.

## 1. Indicator 1: The Learning Programme

*This section evaluates the extent to which the BMCPR programme of AU, has addressed the recommendations outlined in the programme review report of May 2017, under Indicator 1: The learning programme and as a consequence provides a judgment regarding the level of implementation of each recommendation for this Indicator as outlined in Appendix 1 of this Report.*

<b>No.</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>Judgement</b>
<b>1.1</b>	Revise course prerequisites to further ensure course progression results in knowledge accumulation by students, increase the number of arts courses, and enhance the practical content of the curriculum.	<b>Partially Addressed</b>
<b>1.2</b>	Revise the course syllabi, to ensure that the programme covers in depth and breadth all the important conceptual and professional elements and practices relating to Mass Communication and Public Relations.	<b>Partially Addressed</b>
<b>1.3</b>	Revise the curriculum to ensure the balance between the two specializations Mass Communication and Public Relations, in line with the qualification title.	<b>Fully Addressed</b>
<b>1.4</b>	Ensure that the credit hours allocated to the internship properly reflect the efforts exerted by students, and revise the internship syllabus to better reflect the practical nature of the course.	<b>Partially Addressed</b>

## 2. Indicator 2: Efficiency of the Programme

*This section evaluates the extent to which the BMCPR programme of AU, has addressed the recommendations outlined in the programme review report of May 2017, under Indicator 2 Efficiency of the programme and as a consequence provides a judgment regarding the level of implementation of each recommendation for this Indicator as outlined in Appendix 1 of this Report.*

<b>No.</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>Judgement</b>
<b>2.1</b>	Draw part-timers from the professional world and ensure that faculty members teach within their areas of specialization.	<b>Fully Addressed</b>
<b>2.2</b>	Further develop the TV studio to allow students to have a full studio experience and environment while preparing and producing TV programmes.	<b>Partially Addressed</b>
<b>2.3</b>	Increase the number of discipline-related printed materials and texts in the library, and provide the BMCPR students with sufficient study spaces to work individually or as a group.	<b>Partially Addressed</b>
<b>2.4</b>	Strengthen the role of the academic advising to ensure that effective academic support is provided.	<b>Fully Addressed</b>
<b>2.5</b>	Hire specialized full-time laboratory/studio assistants to provide technical support for students in their practical courses and graduation projects.	<b>Fully Addressed</b>

### 3. Indicator 3: Academic standards of the graduates

*This section evaluates the extent to which the BMCPR programme of AU, has addressed the recommendations outlined in the programme review report of May 2017, under Indicator 3: Academic standards of the graduates and as a consequence provides a judgment regarding the level of implementation of each recommendation for this Indicator as outlined in Appendix 1 of this Report.*

<b>No.</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>Judgement</b>
3.1	Ensure that the two institutional attributes of graduates, which are leadership quality and English proficiency, are developed within the graduates of the programme.	<b>Partially Addressed</b>
3.2	Revise the benchmarking policy to include all aspects of the programme and its outcomes, and benchmark against institutions with comparable philosophies.	<b>Partially Addressed</b>
3.3	Expand the scope of Turnitin submissions to include all types of assessment tasks and ensure the consistent implementation of this practice.	<b>Partially Addressed</b>
3.4	Evaluate the effectiveness of its mechanism for aligning assessment tools to Course Intended Learning Outcomes and associated Programme Intended Learning Outcomes and for assessing their achievement within the BMCPR programme.	<b>Fully Addressed</b>
3.5	Assess the effectiveness of its internal moderation process within the BMCPR programme.	<b>Fully Addressed</b>
3.6	Opt for diversity, and transparency in selecting external examiners, further implement the external examiners recommendations and improve the mechanism of following up with them.	<b>Fully Addressed</b>
3.7	Enhance the students' experience within the graduation project through exposing students to practical projects and involving professionals from the field in the evaluation process.	<b>Partially Addressed</b>

3.8	Enhance assessing and grading practical projects through the use of suitable rubrics, in order to ensure consistency and fair grading of all types of projects.	<b>Fully Addressed</b>
3.9	Ensure that the College advisory board meets regularly and provides concrete contributions to students' learning, through the establishment of a clear process to implement the Board's recommendations and enhance its independency.	<b>Fully Addressed</b>



#### 4. Indicator 4: Effectiveness of quality management and assurance

*This section evaluates the extent to which the BMCPR programme of AU, has addressed the recommendations outlined in the programme review report of May 2017, under Indicator 4: Effectiveness of quality management and assurance and as a consequence provides a judgment regarding the level of implementation of each recommendation for this Indicator as outlined in Appendix 1 of this Report.*

<b>No.</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>Judgement</b>
<b>4.1</b>	Develop a clear structure for decision-making processes related to periodic reviews of its programme based on clear analysis of the inputs of all stakeholders.	<b>Partially Addressed</b>
<b>4.2</b>	Adopt more robust mechanisms to respond to stakeholders' survey results, and to communicate outcomes back to stakeholders.	<b>Fully Addressed</b>
<b>4.3</b>	Develop and implement – in collaboration with the programme team - a formal mechanism to link the annual performance appraisal to the professional development activities attended by individual staff members.	<b>Partially Addressed</b>
<b>4.4</b>	Introduce an effective and formal systematic mechanism for the continuous scoping of the labour market needs, to ensure the currency and relevancy of the programme.	<b>Fully Addressed</b>

## 5. Conclusion

Taking into account the institution's own progress report, the evidence gathered from the interviews and documentation made available during the follow-up visit, the Panel draws the following conclusion in accordance with the DHR/BQA Follow-up Visits of Academic Programme Reviews Procedure:

**The Bachelor's Degree in Mass Communication & Public Relations programme offered by Ahlia University has made "Adequate Progress" and as a result, the programme will not be subjected to another follow-up visit.**

## Appendix 1: Judgement per recommendation.

Judgement	Standard
<b>Fully Addressed</b>	The institution has demonstrated marked progress in addressing the recommendation. The actions taken by the programme team have led to significant improvements in the identified aspect and, as a consequence, in meeting the Indicator's requirements.
<b>Partially Addressed</b>	The institution has taken positive actions to address the recommendation. There is evidence that these actions have produced improvements and that these improvements are sustainable. The actions taken are having a positive, yet limited impact on the ability of the programme to meet the Indicator's requirements.
<b>Not Addressed</b>	The institution has not taken appropriate actions to address the recommendation and/or actions taken have little or no impact on the quality of the programme delivery and the academic standards. Weaknesses persist in relation to this recommendation.

## Appendix 2: Overall Judgement.

Overall Judgement	Standard
<b>Good progress</b>	The institution has fully addressed the majority of the recommendations contained in the review report, and/or previous follow-up report, these include recommendations that have most impact on the quality of the programme, its delivery and academic standards. The remaining recommendations are partially addressed. <b>No further follow-up visit is required.</b>
<b>Adequate progress</b>	The institution has at least partially addressed most of the recommendations contained in the review report and/or previous follow-up report, including those that have major impact on the quality of the programme, its delivery and academic standards. There is a number of recommendations that have been fully addressed and there is evidence that the institution can maintain the progress achieved. <b>No further follow-up visit is required.</b>
<b>Inadequate progress</b>	The institution has made little or no progress in addressing a significant number of the recommendations contained in the review report and/or previous follow-up report, especially those that have main impact on the quality of the programme, its delivery and academic standards. For first follow-up visits, a second follow-up visit is required,