



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

# **Directorate of Higher Education Reviews**

## **Programme Follow-Up Visit Report**

**Master of Business Administration  
Department of Business Administration  
University College of Bahrain  
Kingdom of Bahrain**

**First Follow-up Visit Date: 6-7 February 2017**

**Review Date: 19–23 January 2014**

HC025-C2-F011

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## 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 review, 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 (the Panel), whereby the Master of Business Administration (MBA), at the University College of Bahrain (UCB) was revisited on 6-7 February 2017 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 UCB's MBA since the programme was reviewed on 19-23 January 2014.
- (ii) Provide further information and support for the continuous improvement of academic standards and quality enhancement of higher education provision, specifically within the MBA programme at UCB, and for higher education provision within the Kingdom of Bahrain, as a whole.

### B. Background

The review of the MBA programme, at UCB in the Kingdom of Bahrain was conducted by the DHR of the BQA on 19-23 January 2014.

The overall judgement of the review panel for the MBA programme of UCB was that of '**No confidence**'. Consequently, the follow-up process incorporated the review of the evidence presented by UCB to the DHR, the improvement plan, 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 UCB's MBA programme for each Indicator was as follows:

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

**Indicator 2:** Efficiency of the programme; **'not satisfied'**

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

**Indicator 4:** Effectiveness of quality management and assurance **'not 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 19-23 January 2014. 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 Master of Business Administration**

The MBA programme is offered by the Department of Business Administration since the academic year 2004-2005 and graduated its first batch comprising three students in 2005-2006. In 2010-2013, the admission to the programme was suspended by the Higher Education Council (HEC), and hence, there has been a continuous decrease in the number of students enrolled in the programme, until the HEC lifted the admission ban on the MBA programme in 2013-2014. The statistics provided in the previous site visit showed that there were 45 students registered in the programme doing their thesis since 2011. According to the most recent numbers provided by the institution, 254 students have graduated since the commencement of the programme and the number of registered students in the MBA programme was 24 in 2016-2017. There are also 13 faculty members in the Department; nine are full-time members and four are part-time members and the current staff to student ratio is 1:8, based on the provided statistics.

## 1. Indicator 1: The Learning Programme

*This section evaluates the extent to which the MBA programme of UCB, has addressed the recommendations outlined in the programme review report of January 2014, 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.*

**Recommendation 1.1:** *revisit the purpose and aims of the MBA degree generally and consider the exploration of a unique niche for their programme.*

**Judgement:** *Not Addressed*

According to the progress report, UCB commissioned Bogor Agricultural University of Indonesia to conduct an external review of its MBA programme, and accordingly revised the programme purpose and aims. The external review took place during the academic year 2015-2016 and based on this review, the number of concentrations of the MBA was reduced from five to two: Islamic finance and Management. During the site visit interviews, the Panel was informed that the modified aims are mapped to the institution mission and the Programme Intended Learning Outcomes (PILOs) are aligned with these aims. The old programme aims concentrated on three main capacities; namely, leadership, application of knowledge and problem solving. The review panel found these aims 'appropriate to the philosophy underpinning the MBA degree and lending credibility to its unique nature' as indicated in the review report. These aims remain present in the revised programme aims with a simple deletion of the word 'capacity'. Expertise in Islamic finance, ethics and leadership knowledge were added to the MBA programme aims. However, the Panel notes that expertise in Islamic finance only applies to one concentration and students from the Management concentration do not take any courses in Islamic finance as a mandatory requirement for graduation. Moreover, senior management of UCB emphasized during interviews Islamic finance as the unique niche of the programme but failed to justify its placement as an aim for the programme as a whole. The Panel also notes that the revisions made to the programme ILOs were limited to the domain of Knowledge and Understanding while the ILOs of the other three domains (Subject-Specific Skills, Thinking Skills, and General and Transferable skills) were not revised. The Panel also notes that the provided list of PILOs leans more towards those of undergraduate programmes, as indicated by the review panel. Therefore, the Panel concludes that the Department did not take appropriate actions to address this recommendation.

**Recommendation 1.2:** *ensure progression in the complexity and balance of Concentration courses.*

**Judgement:** *Not Addressed*

According to the progress report, UCB has restructured the MBA programme core courses and pre-requisites for the concentration courses. The revised curriculum consists of six core courses (18 credits) and six concentration courses (18 credits) in addition to the graduation project of six credits. However, the six core courses remain the same as in the old curriculum and are not suitable for students enrolling in the MBA without a business-oriented degree or managerial experience, which was one of the main two concerns of the review panel. The second main concern raised in the review report is that 'the progression from core to concentration courses in terms of disciplinary knowledge is inadequate for the MBA programme'. Furthermore, several courses are not at an appropriate level for an MBA programme, as noted by the review panel during the previous site visit. In addition, the Panel notes that the only difference between the two versions of the curriculum is the elimination of the electives in the updated version and restricting students to rigid concentration requirements. Moreover, there is no sufficient evidence presented to indicate that the Department has conducted a comprehensive review of the course syllabi. Therefore, the Panel concludes that the Department did not take appropriate actions to address the recommendation and urges the Department to ensure adequate progression from core to concentration courses.

**Recommendation 1.3:** *develop a mechanism that ensures there is an appropriate monitoring for the articulation of the programme and course structuring, and the level and norms of the programme.*

**Judgement:** *Not Addressed*

The progress report indicates that UCB has established a mechanism for annual programme review and revisiting course specifications, with the latter being conducted at the beginning of every semester. During interviews with faculty and senior management, the Panel was informed that senior faculty teaching on the MBA programme meet to review the course specifications and forward suggested changes to the Head of Department (HoD) for verification and approval. The progress report and the interviews held with faculty and senior management also indicate that UCB introduced the pre-assessment and post-assessment of examinations in order to 'improve the level of monitoring the courses'. As per the Assessment Policy, the moderation of assessment is conducted internally while only final examinations are externally post-moderated. The evidence provided and interviews with senior management confirmed that pre-moderation and post-moderation of examinations are in place. Nevertheless, there is no evidence to demonstrate that the developed

mechanisms (i.e. the annual review and external moderation) have produced marked improvements in the programme delivery and the academic standards. Hence, the Panel concludes that weaknesses persist in relation to this recommendation and urges UCB to strengthen its internal moderation system and revise the role of external moderators in order to benefit from their feedback on the course structuring and the overall standard of the programme.

**Recommendation 1.4:** *revise and review the programme ILOs and how these might creatively be tested to measure their appropriateness to the level of the degree and alignment to the mission, programme aims and objectives.*

**Judgement:** *Not Addressed*

The current MBA programme ILOs are 18 in total and classified into four categories, Knowledge and Understanding (A1-A4), Subject-Specific Skills (B1-B3), Thinking Skills (C1-C5), and General and Transferrable Skills (D1-D6). The Panel studied the PILOs and notes that, the current PILOs lean more towards those of undergraduate programmes (see Recommendation 1.1). The revisions made to the PILOs were limited to the domain of Knowledge and Understanding and the Panel is concerned that the revised PILOs are not well articulated as the previous ones. Moreover, PILO A3 ('Development and employment of the leadership tools for effective team building') is similar to PILO D1 ('Acquire skills of self-disciplines, reflection, analysis and leadership'). PILO A4 ('How to manage the impact of globalization on firm's operations') is also similar to C3 ('Analysis of the essentials of business and organizations in order to have the ability to effectively manage change in global business environment'). In addition to the noted similarity between the PILOs listed in different domains, the Panel noted some similarities between the PILOs listed in the same domain. For example, PILO D2 ('Communicate complex ideas and arguments in a variety of written and oral presentations') is similar to D6 ('Select, employ the appropriate means of effective and efficient business communication (i.e. written and oral reports, papers and presentations)').

According to the progress report, the Department is currently in the process of revising the PILOs again and are expected to be completed by the end of the current academic year 2016-2017. During the interviews with the MBA senior management and faculty, the Panel was informed that the PILOs will be re-written in alignment with Graduate Attributes (GAs) and the mission of the institution. Nonetheless, the Panel was not provided with evidence such as detailed minutes of meetings, benchmarking reports, and related workshops to ensure that these tasks will be carried efficiently. Therefore, the Panel concludes that the Department did not take proper actions to address this recommendation.

**Recommendation 1.5:** *revise the number of both programme and individual course ILOs structured around the key aims of the programme and its graduate attributes.*

**Judgement:** *Not Addressed*

During the interviews with the MBA senior management and faculty, the Panel was informed that the PILOs were revised in 2015-2016 and an external programme reviewer recommended further revisions to take place and PILOs to be re-written in alignment with the MBA's GAs. However, the Panel notes that the action taken was limited to the deletion of PILO A3 ('Become aware of the principles of ethical behaviour in managerial decision making) at an earlier stage, which was added again to the current list of PILOs as ('The principles of ethical behaviour in managerial decision making') without an action verb. Moreover, PILOs B2 ('Analysis of financial data and other business-related quantitative and qualitative data to develop further insight and understanding') and B5 ('Analysis and evaluation of management practice from a theoretical standpoint, and apply practical solutions when needed') were also deleted. The Panel acknowledges that the deletion of these two PILOs reduced the number of overlaps but as noted earlier in this Report further revision is required to ensure that the PILOs are measurable and appropriate to the level of the MBA programme.

A serious concern that was noted in the review report is the lack of evidence to demonstrate the use of proper mechanisms to align the PILOs with GAs and to ensure these attributes through proper assessment. To address this concern, the Department should ensure that the PILOs are clearly written, measurable and appropriate to the MBA programme level. In addition, there was no evidence presented to the Panel on the roles research, the Industrial Advisory Board or external professional partners play in investigating and identifying paths to strengthen the GAs across courses offered in the MBA programme. The mapping of the PILOs with the revised programme aims, which was presented to the Panel does not also show a clear linkage of each PILO with a specific programme aim. Furthermore, during the follow-up visit, the Panel was presented with evidence that individual course ILOs were mapped to the PILOs. A recurring problem was noted in several courses such as FIN501 and MGT506 as the number of Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs) is large (17 CILOs) and have to be achieved within a limited semester duration of (8 weeks). Therefore, the Panel concludes that the Department has not taken appropriate actions to address the recommendation.



**Recommendation 1.6:** *revise the course ILOs to be constructed as tasks, which when successfully performed suggest the attainment of the skill by the student.*

**Judgement:** *Not Addressed*

UCB assigns the writing of the CILOs to the subject teachers, taking into consideration their synchronization with the PILOs, as revealed to the Panel during interviews with MBA faculty and senior management. At the beginning of every semester, the CILOs are revised by the instructors and forwarded to the HoD for verification and approval. The Panel found that some of the courses have ILOs that clearly express the course contents and specifications such as MGT501; while, other course ILOs are too general which makes measuring their achievement a difficult task, e.g. MIS505 and MGT502. The Panel sought clarification on such incidents from the senior management who reported that the CILOs of these courses are still in the revision process and are expected to be completed by the end of the current academic year (2016-2017), as noted in the progress report.

From evidence provided and interviews with MBA faculty assigned with the responsibility of writing the course ILOs, the Panel concluded that insufficient training was provided to faculty. The Panel examined the updated course specifications with the revised CILOs and found that in a number of courses the stated CILOs do not include consistent simple specific action verbs that lend themselves to measurement. Furthermore, although the CILOs of the provided sample of courses were mapped to the PILOs and are well documented, the table presented does not provide in several instances an overall simple and correct identification of the points of linkage between the two. For example, in course MGT506 (Human Resource Management), CILO A4 ('Have knowledge of different approaches to leadership, and principles and differentiated attributes of effective and high-value teams) is linked to PILO A4 ('How to manage the impact of globalization on a firm's operations'). In other instances, the CILOs are simple rewordings of the PILOs rather than specific 'tasks which when successfully performed suggest the attainment of the skill by the student' as recommended by the review panel. Therefore, the Panel concludes that weaknesses persist in relation to this recommendation.

**Recommendation 1.7:** *revise the teaching and learning methods to meet the norms of MBA programmes and the pursuit of innovative teaching methods required to engage students in higher order skills development and the capacity to apply their newly acquired knowledge effectively in the work environment.*

**Judgement:** *Partially Addressed*

The Teaching and Learning Policy was first approved in April 2013 and was implemented in the first semester of the academic year 2013-2014. It was last revised

in July 2016 and the revised version with changes in the teaching methods and addition of a quality assurance and monitoring section was put into effect in September 2016. The policy lists a variety of teaching methods and during interviews with senior management, the Panel was informed that faculty are encouraged to adopt student-centred methods such as class exercises, case studies, independent/group projects, seminars, field visits and guest speakers which was confirmed during interview session with students. According to the interviews with senior management and faculty members, the teaching and learning methods will be further revised to include more independent learning. This revision is expected to be completed by the end of the current academic year (2016-2017) as indicated in the progress report. Faculty members also informed the Panel that they employ a number of the student-centred teaching methods in accordance with the level of the course and these methods are clearly listed in the course specifications.

The Panel examined the course files during the follow-up visit and confirmed that case studies, presentations, assigned home reading, discussions and projects were utilized and samples of students' work were available and well documented. However, the Panel found that the textbook driven approach to teaching and learning at the MBA level is still the dominant approach and the course outlines are structured on a chapter-by-chapter basis. Although this pedagogical approach is an expeditious way to deliver information to students, MBA level students are expected to be engaged in more independent and critical thinking approaches to learning. Furthermore, there is no sufficient evidence provided to the Panel for MBA level courses of a strategic approach to embed research-teaching linkages to PILOs and graduate attributes. Therefore, the Panel recommends that the Department should revise the course specifications to ensure that there is more emphasis on case studies and problem- and research-based learning, which is more appropriate to the MBA level. The Panel concludes that the actions taken are having a positive, yet limited impact on the ability of the programme to address the recommendation.

***Recommendation 1.8: develop an assessment policy for the MBA programme that adopts a system of moderation and external examination for the coursework and examination components of all MBA degree courses.***

***Judgement: Partially Addressed***

UCB has an institution-wide Assessment Policy, which has been implemented since the second semester of the academic year 2013-2014. In 2016, UCB developed a dedicated Master's Programme Assessment Policy. The Panel examined the MBA Assessment Policy and noted that it briefly defines several types of assessment and refers to UCB Moderation Policy and Procedures that were also recently developed in 2016. The provided Internal and External Moderation Procedures document includes

a brief description of pre-assessment and post-assessment moderation, and more details about double marking. The post-assessment moderation is simply described as sending a designated sample of marked students' work, to ensure accuracy and consistency of assessment decisions. The Panel also notes that these procedures as well as the Examination Procedures of the MBA programme do not clearly distinguish between internal and external moderation and do not include the criteria and the procedure used in selecting external moderators. Furthermore, although the Examination Procedures address such important issues as the integral part of how to deal with the variations of marks when a second marker evaluates an examination paper or when moderation highlights inconsistencies in marking, a more detailed version of these procedures would facilitate decision making in case of conflict. During interviews with senior management, the Panel was informed that all MBA level examinations have been internally moderated every semester since the second semester of the academic year 2015-2016, as noted in the progress report. Interviews held during the follow-up visit also confirmed that course work and students' assignments are not included in either the internal or the external moderation process and that the moderation is restricted mainly to final examinations. The Panel was presented with evidence of both external and internal moderation of final examinations and concludes that some positive actions have been taken on the part of the Department to respond to the review panel's recommendation. However, these actions do not fully address the recommendation. The Panel urges UCB to further revise the policies and procedures related to internal and external moderation to address the above-mentioned shortcomings.

## 2. Indicator 2: Efficiency of the Programme

*This section evaluates the extent to which the MBA programme of UCB, has addressed the recommendations outlined in the programme review report of January 2014, 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.*

**Recommendation 2.1:** *develop an admission policy with a revised admission criteria for the MBA.*

**Judgement:** *Not Addressed*

UCB has an admission policy for the MBA that has been implemented since the commencement of the programme in 2004-2005. The admission policy and the criteria for the MBA programme were revised in February 2016. However, the examination of the revised and the previous policies shows that there are no changes in the admission criteria, with the exception of the addition of a couple of sentences, which do not change the requirements. Furthermore, the admission policy does not indicate the number of years' experience needed and the minimum level of management experience, which was one of the concerns raised in the review report. The policy is not also clear with regard to the conditional acceptance for candidates whose Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA) is below 2.5, English proficiency requirement (no cut off score is set for IELTS or TOEFL examination), Business prerequisites, transfer from other institutions and interviews related to admission. Senior management informed the Panel during the follow-up visit that all admitted students including those with conditional acceptance need to pass the first two modules with a minimum CGPA of 2.7, and the cut off score for the IELTS and the TOEFL tests are the same as those of the Bachelor of Business Administration (BBA) programme. The Panel concludes that weaknesses persist in relation to this recommendation and urges UCB to revise the admission policy and benchmark it with similar programmes offered by robust universities.

**Recommendation 2.2:** *define formal lines of accountability and responsibility for the co-ordination and quality enhancement of the MBA programme.*

**Judgement:** *Not Addressed*

There are clear formal lines of accountability and responsibilities that are implemented as depicted in UCB organizational charts. According to the progress report, UCB has reviewed and revised, where necessary, the roles and responsibilities of the management positions including the MBA Director. UCB also reviewed the terms of reference, rules and the regulations of all the committees. The progress report also

indicates that new committees were created such as the Lifelong Learning Committee and all the revised terms of references, rules and regulations were approved by UCB College Council (UCC) and implemented. Evidence provided included detailed job descriptions of the Vice President (VP), the HoD, the MBA Director and faculty members. However, the current MBA Director is also the HoD and the coordinator of the BBA programme. There is a concern that the HoD is overloaded and may not adequately fulfil all the responsibilities of the different positions.

During the interview with senior management, the Panel was informed that following the revision of the role of the HoD, some of his responsibilities were assigned to faculty members. The Panel was also informed that due to the lack of staff at the administrative level (student affairs), surveys were not conducted for two consecutive years. Furthermore, faculty members are not provided with enough guidance and training to enable them to fulfil the task related to quality enhancement and the role of the Quality Assurance and Accreditation Committee (QAAC) is mainly to ensure the fulfilment of the assigned tasks without looking enough at the substance. Therefore, the Panel is of the view that the actions taken may have little or no impact on the quality of the programme delivery and the academic standards. The Panel urges UCB to enhance the role of the QAAC and ensure that there are enough qualified administrative and academic staff to carry out the different assigned tasks efficiently and constantly.

**Recommendation 2.3:** *expedite the implementation of a recruitment plan to appoint qualified and experienced faculty members.*

**Judgement:** *Not Addressed*

According to the review report, only four of the MBA faculty members were in possession of PhD qualifications and they were teaching courses beyond their area of expertise. The progress report indicates that UCB has recruited two faculty members; one specialized in management (new PhD graduate) and another specialized in marketing. The Panel was informed during the follow-up visit that UCB has reduced the number of MBA concentrations, a number of faculty members have enhanced their research activities and all faculty members are currently teaching in their specialized field. Currently UCB has six PhD holders in the Department of Business Administration. The current number of students in the MBA programme is 24, and the number of faculty members involved in the delivery of the MBA programme is three, one of whom is a member of the UCB Board, according to the provided statistics and CVs. During the interviews with senior managers, the Panel was informed that the current number of academic staff is sufficient and comply with HEC regulations in terms of student to staff ratio and that the staff retention rate is relatively high. However, the Panel notes that two out of the four academic staff scheduled to teach

the MBA offered courses in the second semester of the academic year 2016-2017, are hired on a part-time basis. While this may further improve the student to staff ratio and partially address the concern raised in the review report with regard to the small number of senior faculty members teaching the MBA courses, such overreliance on part-time faculty members is not advisable as it does not provide the programme with stability and opportunity to develop. Part-time faculty members are usually inaccessible to students who need out-of-class assistance and are not involved in developing and monitoring academic programmes. Furthermore, the Panel notes that hiring is made if a vacancy is created or a need arises as indicated in UCB Workforce Plan. This is likely to further increase UCB reliance on part-time faculty members as a short-term solution to address vacancy. The Panel urges UCB to reduce its reliance on part-time faculty members in the MBA programme to ensure consistency in the delivery and students' experience. Hence, the Panel concludes that the recommendation is not addressed.

**Recommendation 2.4:** *expedite the implementation of the appraisal procedure to evaluate academic staff performance, and investigate staff turnover rate to ensure continuum in terms of student experience.*

**Judgement:** *Partially Addressed*

UCB has clear Performance Appraisal Policy and Procedures to identify development needs, staff eligible for promotion and future leaders as a part of UCB succession strategy. The QAAC has developed a mechanism for faculty appraisal. This includes a faculty appraisal template and a faculty self-performance report. During follow-up visit's interviews, the Panel was informed that faculty appraisal (including the HoD) is done on an annual basis by the VP of Academic Affairs and this is used to identify the training programmes and continuing development needed. Performance appraisal is mainly based on the faculty self-performance templates, in which each faculty member reports on the evaluated aspects, which include research, co-curricular activities, community engagement, self-development, and student evaluation. There are also clear criteria, weightage and guidelines for evaluation.

Senior managers and faculty members confirmed that this process is consistently implemented in a transparent manner. However, there is not enough evidence to support that faculty appraisal has been used in a systemic way to achieve the above-mentioned goals. Furthermore, staff attrition rate in the Department highly fluctuates from one year to another. It increased from 0% in 2011-2012 to 23% in 2012-1013 and 30% in 2013-2014. In 2014-2015, the staff attrition rate was 18% and decreased to 0% in 2015-2016. Although senior managers confirmed that staff usually leave due to the termination of their contracts or unforeseen circumstances, there are no applied

mechanisms (e.g. surveys, interviews, etc.) to explain the fluctuation in retention rates. The Panel urges UCB to address these issues.

**Recommendation 2.5:** *develop and implement a mechanism to support students at-risk.*

**Judgement:** *Not Addressed*

Two main concerns related to at-risk students are raised in the review report. First, there is no effective system in place to ensure appropriate intervention, especially concerning MBA students' special needs. The review report stated that UCB should 'implement an advising mechanism that differentiates the needs of undergraduate and postgraduate students, through the provision of some facilities geared specifically to the needs of the MBA programme'. Second, there was no evidence of interventions to assist the over 40 MBA students who were struggling to complete the thesis from 2011 to 2014. According to the progress report, there is a Student Counsellor to support at-risk students and UCB has developed an Advising Template to support the students at risk of academic failure. The evidence provided only shows a form for the advisor's use with a list of student advisees not only at-risk students. According to recent statistics, the percentage of graduating students was 65.22% in 2014-2015 and 67.79% in 2015-2016. Interviews with senior management, faculty members and MBA students indicate that students receive proper guidance from their academic advisors and the current completion rates are high. The updated list of at-risk students only includes one student. The Panel was also informed that in order to continue in the programme, students need to pass the first two modules with a minimum CGPA of 2.7, however, this is not clearly stated in the provided admission policy. Interviewed students praised the support provided from their advisors and instructors. They also find the MBA programme flexible and meets their needs. The Panel acknowledges that UCB has introduced a minor change in the advising process and the current completion rates are high. Nonetheless, there was no evidence of a mechanism being developed to proactively identify at-risk students and support them. Hence, the Panel concludes that UCB did not address the above recommendation.

**Recommendation 2.6:** *establish a mechanism to monitor and analyse usage of resources for strategic planning purposes.*

**Judgement:** *Partially Addressed*

UCB Improvement Plan indicates that the UCB Library Committee (ULC) has developed a mechanism to monitor and analyse the usage of resources to enhance the learning capabilities of the students. It also points out to several initiatives undertaken by UCB to improve the learning process. These initiatives include the introduction of the Brightspace Learning Management System (LMS) and the increase in the number

of books, e-journals subscriptions and online databases. Furthermore, faculty members advise the students to use the ProQuest database in preparing their assignments/term papers in order to enhance the independent learning experience. The web-based e-resources are currently monitored and the library has a record of students/staff borrowing the resources. Students also have online access to MBA theses. A monthly report on the library activities is submitted to the ULC, which 'acts as a channel of communication and dialogue between the Library and its users'. The provided Minutes of the UCB meetings include the update of the library with the latest editions books, purchase of suggested books by faculty and subscription renewal of journals.

In addition, UCB has a learning resource centre and an IT specialist to oversee and provide the services in the learning resource centre as well as in the computer laboratories. He is responsible for tracking the utilisation of the laboratories and the attendance registers of the laboratory classes are kept with the instructors. However, the Panel was informed during the follow-up visit tour and interviews with students that the Learning Resource Centre is not often visited by students and it is sometimes used to host workshops. The Panel was also informed that there is an Information and Communication Technology Committee (ICTC) in charge of planning, reviewing and enhancing the ICT capabilities (WiFi, MIS, LMS, etc.) of the institution. Although the terms of reference of the relevant committees are clear, the staff interviewed were not able to explain clearly their responsibilities and contribution in strategic planning. The Panel advises the institution to ensure that the library and laboratories staff are well informed about their roles in monitoring and reporting on the usage of resources in a more professional and systematic manner that support strategic planning purposes. Overall, the Panel acknowledges that the actions taken are having a positive, yet limited impact on addressing this recommendation.

***Recommendation 2.7: explore ways in which data analysis can assist in developing an accurate image of the efficiency of the UCB's teaching and learning system.***

***Judgement: Not Addressed***

The review report indicates that there is no sufficient evidence to demonstrate that the MIS system is effectively used to generate analytical data to enhance the decisions related to teaching and learning. It also refers to the lack of cohort analysis, which supports the view that the use of the MIS is not optimised in the decision-making process. The progress report only refers to the cohort analysis, pointing out that 'UCB will review cohort analysis for the MBA programme to enhance the image' by the end of 2016-2017. During follow-up visit and the interviews with senior management, the Panel was informed that UCB has signed an agreement with an external firm to transit its current Student Information System to a new platform, which has been running for



students and faculty since 2016-2017. The new platform is expected to give a greater variety of on-line facilities to the students and faculty, such as online registration and cloud-based solutions with higher levels of reliability. Senior management also confirmed that the MIS system is effectively used for registration, storage of student records and monitoring their progress. Notwithstanding the above, the evidence provided show very simple screenshots. The Semester Statistical Guide for the first semester of the academic year 2016-2017 was also provided as evidence. It includes extensive statistics related to admission, registration, course offerings, CGPA, and course pass and fail percentages. It also includes a brief report analysing some of the statistics provided in the Semester Guide. According to interviews with senior management, statistical reports are communicated to all the HoDs for review and use. Nevertheless, action plans based on the MIS reports were not provided, although the Panel requested these action plans as well as evidence related to the implementation and follow-up of these action plans. The Panel concludes that weaknesses still persist in relation to this recommendation and urges UCB to further optimize the usage of its MIS system in the decision-making process.

**Recommendation 2.8:** *ensure an appropriate learning environment for an MBA programme.*

**Judgement:** *Partially Addressed*

UCB provided the Panel with a list of extracurricular activities that were conducted in the current academic year 2016-2017. It includes guest lectures on Islamic accounting principles and entrepreneurship, as well as a research forum where UCB students were able to present their research papers. According to the progress report and based on the interviews conducted with senior management during the follow-up visit, the revision of teaching and learning methods is expected to be completed by the end of the current academic year (2016-2017) and to include more emphasis on extracurricular activities and independent learning. Furthermore, the Panel was informed during interviews that UCB encourages field visits and guest speakers. However, the Panel found that the ethos of this MBA programme is still more towards attending classes with no evidence of creating an environment of continuous debate and discussions amongst MBA students outside activities related to courses. Whilst the Panel acknowledges the progress achieved by the institution, it recommends that the institution should further enhance the learning environment of the MBA programme.

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

*This section evaluates the extent to which the MBA programme of UCB, has addressed the recommendations outlined in the programme review report of January 2014, 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.*

**Recommendation 3.1:** *reconsider the graduate attributes of MBA students to pursue a closer philosophical alignment to the wider curriculum (teaching, learning, research) of the programme.*

**Judgement:** *Not Addressed*

UCB has five GAs, which summarize the overarching knowledge, social responsibility, professionalism, life-long learning and collaboration skills that students are expected to develop upon their graduation from the MBA programme. However, these attributes are the same as those of the BBA programme and the definitions provided are too broad to reflect the philosophy of the MBA programme, which put more emphasis on practical skills and the enhancement of leadership qualities, as indicated in the review report. According to UCB's progress report and evidence provided, the Department revised the definitions of the MBA GAs in the second semester of the academic year 2015-2016 and edits were made in response to the recommendation stated in the review report. The Panel examined the revised definitions and concluded that only minor changes took place (the addition of few words and sentences), which do not reflect a better philosophical alignment to the curriculum. During interviews with senior management of the MBA programme, the Panel was informed that the teaching and learning methods as well as the assessment methods are currently being further revised and these tasks will be completed by the end of the current academic year (2016-2017). The Panel concludes that weaknesses still persist in relation to this recommendation and urges the Department to further revise and benchmark its GAs with robust MBA programmes in accordance with UCB's Benchmarking Policy.

**Recommendation 3.2:** *adopt and implement a more nuanced and sophisticated definition of benchmarking in order that it might become an important tool in the quality assurance and enhancement of the MBA programme.*

**Judgement:** *Not Addressed*

According to the progress report, during the academic year 2015-2016, UCB has revised its benchmarking policy to adopt and implement a more 'nuanced and sophisticated benchmarking practices'. The benchmarking practice is expected to be conducted as part of the periodic programme review, which is held once every four

years. The Panel noted that the procedure listed in the policy specifies benchmarking with two 'international' universities and does not consider any local/regional higher education institutions with similar programmes. During the follow-up visit, the senior management responded to the query from the Panel about benchmarking with local and regional institutions by describing this task as difficult and as not having received positive responses from local institutions. UCB has also signed on 18 November 2015, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Bogor Agricultural University in Indonesia, with cooperation and exchange of faculty, students, research, joint research, external examiners and benchmarking for academic affairs as dimensions of this liaison. Interviews with senior management confirmed that two visits from representatives of Bogor University took place; the first for signing the MoU and the second visit was dedicated to the examination of documents pertaining to courses offered within the MBA programme. However, there was no documentation of any changes suggested or implemented as an outcome of this evaluative visit. The Panel was also informed during interviews with the senior management and faculty that informal desktop benchmarking has been conducted with a number of international universities but no evidence of benchmarking after the BQA review conducted in 2014 was available to determine the data, type, or scope of this task. Furthermore, although the GAs, programme aims, PILOs, teaching and learning methods, student advising and admission requirements are listed in UCB's Benchmarking Policy, no evidence was provided on benchmarking activities related to such aspects. Hence, the Panel considers this recommendation as not being addressed.

**Recommendation 3.3:** *adopt and implement a programme of both internal and external moderation for both the formative coursework and summative test/examination components of MBA student evaluation.*

**Judgement:** *Partially Addressed*

The progress report submitted for this follow-up visit indicates that the Department has implemented internal and external moderation for mid-term and final examinations since 2015-2016 that will be extended by the end of 2016-2017 to include formative assessment. UCB has also developed a list of procedures to be followed by faculty for the internal and external moderation of examinations. The Panel examined the evidence and found that the provided Internal and External Moderation Procedures do not clearly distinguish between internal and external moderation (see Recommendation 1.8). The External Moderation Procedures of the final examination questions paper clearly list the steps for the pre-examination moderation process, which is conducted every semester. The procedure is initiated by the HoD in coordination of the chair of the Examination Committee requesting faculty to submit the final examination questions, course specifications and the answer keys. The

external moderators are expected to fill pre- and post-moderation forms, which are verified by the HoD.

Interviews with the senior management and faculty confirmed that the process of moderation has been implemented since the second semester of the academic year 2015-2016 and that pre-moderation of final examinations is conducted by internal moderators while the post-moderation is done with the assistance of external moderators. It was also revealed during the follow-up visit that this procedure includes the selection of all offered MBA courses from both concentrations in the programme. Currently, the institution utilizes the assistance of three external moderators and the Panel was able to interview one of them only. During the follow-up visit, the Panel was informed that the institution forwards a sample of the marked student papers for second marking and recommendations to the external moderator who provides the feedback to the HoD. Overall, the Panel concludes that the actions taken are having a positive, yet limited impact on the ability of the programme to meet the Indicator's requirements. Therefore, the Panel urges UCB to revise the policies and procedures related to internal moderation to clearly distinguish between internal and external moderation and to include all forms of assessment. The Panel also urges UCB to develop clear criteria and procedures for the selection of external moderators and to revise the role of external moderators in order to benefit from their feedback on the course structuring and the overall standard of the programme as mentioned earlier in this Report.

**Recommendation 3.4:** *engage in further training of faculty members on the alignment of learning outcomes as performative skills and the assessment tasks appropriate to showing the satisfactory achievement of those skills, be pursued.*

**Judgement:** *Not Addressed*

According to the review report, 'the level of alignment between assessment and outcomes is not clearly or uniformly understood and applied across all courses'. During the follow-up visit, senior management revealed to the Panel that the CILOs are continuously revised by the faculty teaching the courses and verified by the HoD at the beginning of every semester. Faculty members also confirmed that they often meet and examine the course specifications, related CILOs, and the alignment of the proposed assessment with the CILOs. Evidence provided only confirmed that one single workshop was held on mapping CILOs with the National Qualification Framework (NQF) Level Descriptors. The Panel was informed during the interviews with faculty members that two other workshops were held prior to 2014 BQA review by two external instructors from the U.S.A. and Canada. The progress report indicates that UCB is planning to conduct workshops for the faculty members on the alignment of assessment and learning outcomes by the end of the current academic year 2016-

2017. Although, this was confirmed by senior management during interviews, the Professional Development Plan provided to the Panel did not include any workshops or activities on assessment being planned to be held for faculty. Therefore, the Panel concludes that UCB did not take appropriate actions to address the recommendation.

**Recommendation 3.5:** *institute a strong differentiation in the work considered acceptable at undergraduate and postgraduate level.*

**Judgement:** *Not Addressed*

The review report highlighted a concern over the similarities between the undergraduate and MBA level course work. At the MBA programme level, the learning is expected to be more student led with them taking responsibility for their time and studies. During interviews with the MBA faculty team, the Panel was informed that differentiation in the course work between the undergraduate and postgraduate programmes occurs on several levels. Textbooks used for the postgraduate courses are of more advanced level and the assignments given to students at the MBA level are at a higher level than those given to the BBA students, as indicated in the progress report.

During the follow-up visit, the Panel examined the files of a number of MBA courses and noted that in some cases the achievement level in the provided samples of students' assessed course work were inappropriate for an MBA level. From the course specifications examined by the Panel, it was also noted that all courses in the MBA programme follow a rigid set of course assessment allocation of marks with summative assessment totalling up to 70% of the course grade and only 30% allocated to project/case study/assignment. For a postgraduate level course, instructors are expected to have some flexibility to tailor assessment methods to most effectively achieve the desired CILOs. In addition, examining the samples provided, the Panel was unable to identify courses where students were engaged in assessed coursework other than case studies, projects and presentations such debates and seminars.

The course specifications examination also revealed that although some courses had reference books listed as recommended readings, the dependence on one main textbook is evident in a number of courses offered at the MBA level such as MGT 501, MKT 501, MGT 504, MGT 505, and MGT 506. This major dependence on a single source of information for the course does not reflect positively on the level of the course and makes it closer to an undergraduate level course than a postgraduate one. The external reviewer commented on the course specifications reading lists noting that some courses failed to accommodate the research in the field and encouraged faculty to include updated journals as part of the requirements for the course sources of information. Hence, the Panel considers this recommendation as not being addressed.

**Recommendation 3.6:** *develop and implement a policy to ensure the performance of MBA students is benchmarked against other reputable business schools in all facets of the programme.*

**Judgement:** *Not Addressed*

According to the review report, there is 'a critical shortcoming particularly for the benchmarking of academic standards against other institutions'. The review report also raised reservations regarding the level of student performance in the management concentration. UCB progress report only refers to the general positive feedback of the external review that was conducted by one external reviewer from Bogor Agricultural University of Indonesia. However, the external reviewer report in his feedback about the programme review held in December 2015 also encouraged the institution to improve the documentation of the achievement of students and compare it with other institutions. Although the external reviewer provided a stepping-stone for actionable information that should enable the institution to gain insight into their students' performance comparability with other similar higher education institutions, no evidence was provided to the Panel to indicate any follow up on the recommendations raised in the external reviewer's report. Furthermore, although UCB has recently revised its Benchmarking Policy, student performance is not listed as one of the benchmarking activities in this policy. Therefore, the Panel concludes that the action taken did not address the recommendation.

**Recommendation 3.7:** *institute a regular system of cohort analysis for the MBA programme.*

**Judgement:** *Not Addressed*

According to the progress report, UCB is currently in the process of implementing a cohort analysis and the Panel was informed during the follow-up visit that the Registrar's office is following up students' progress over their postgraduate studies duration at the institution by producing necessary statistical data. The statistical data is forwarded to the HoD for analysis and the senior management confirmed during interviews that the statistics will be used for future planning. The Panel examined the type of statistical data presented in the evidence provided as part of the MIS Generated Report submitted by the Registrar's Office. The Panel concluded that these statistics include semester by semester admission to each programme; they are not sufficiently detailed to provide a holistic progression picture of the MBA students' status. Most of the data were general and did not provide an accurate tracking path to prepare a solid cohort analysis for decision-making in order to improve performance such as student retention, concentration selection, student characteristics. The Panel also examined the Plan/Timeline for the Proposed Cohort Analysis document and found that the plan

includes only a very brief summary of the steps to be taken to conduct a cohort analysis with no indication of the timeline for the implementation of this plan. The institution stated in its implementation plan that the cohort analysis will be completed by the end of the current academic year 2016-2017 but no progress status was available to evaluate the development process of this analysis. The evidence provided is not sufficient to verify that the actions taken have produced improvements and that these improvements are sustainable. Hence, the Panel considers this recommendation as not being addressed.

**Recommendation 3.8: *conduct regular surveys of alumni and businesses, analyse and use results for improvements and innovation.***

**Judgement: *Not Addressed***

UCB provided the Panel with a number of form templates for the conducting of alumni and employer surveys, which needed to be further edited and revised. Interviews with Student Affairs and senior management of the institution revealed that both the alumni and employer surveys were stopped from 2014-2015 due to operational difficulties, which led to the suspension of the MBA programme for a limited duration. The Panel examined evidence on site related to Student's Questionnaire and noted that the most recent survey was conducted for the first semester of the academic year 2016-2017. During the interview sessions, the Panel was informed that the Office of Student Affairs is responsible for the administration of these surveys and once data is collected, responses are forwarded to the Quality Assurance Department of the institution, which in turn will re-direct them to the concerned department. It was also disclosed during the interviews that the Quality Assurance Department is responsible for the development of the surveys and all surveys are being revised currently by the Quality Assurance and are in the final stages before being finalized. Hence, the Panel considers this recommendation as not being addressed.

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

*This section evaluates the extent to which the MBA programme of UCB, has addressed the recommendations outlined in the programme review report of January 2014, 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.*

**Recommendation 4.1: develop, approve and implement effective policies, procedures and regulations in the management of MBA programme.**

**Judgement: Partially Addressed**

UCB has several policies and procedures related to the management of the programme that were revised in 2016, such as the MBA Programme Bylaws and the MBA admission policy. Several policies and procedures were developed in 2013 such as the Teaching and Learning Policy, the Assessment Policy, the Programme Review Policy, and the Benchmarking Policy. These policies and procedures as well as the Research Policy and Strategy, and the Internal and external moderation procedures were also recently developed and revised. According to the progress report, all the revised policies and procedures were approved by the UCC. However, the Panel notes that the provided evidence such as the Programme Review Policy, the Assessment Policy and the Benchmarking Policy do not include the effective date, date of approval, date of revision and the signatures of the chairpersons of the committees involved such as the UCC and QAAC.

During the follow-up visit and interviews, senior management and faculty confirmed that the policies and procedures are implemented at the appropriate management level and are monitored by QAAC. They explained that relevant standing committees are responsible for developing and revising each policy and forwarding the revised policy to UCC after it has been thoroughly reviewed and revised. However, as noted earlier in this Report, the Panel has a concern about the consistent implementation and the monitoring of the policies and procedures related to quality enhancement. The role of the QAAC is very limited in enhancing the quality of the programme and relevant services provided. The Panel also notes a very limited number of qualified administrative staff to support faculty members to carry out the different assigned tasks efficiently and constantly. There is also an urgent need to establish and maintain a better documentation system. The Panel urges UCB to address these matters.



**Recommendation 4.2:** *review and revise its bylaws and regulations to clarify the duties and responsibilities of the administrative positions, councils and committees for an effective decision making and management of UCB.*

**Judgement:** *Not Addressed*

According to the progress report, UCB has reviewed and revised, where necessary, the roles and responsibilities of the management positions. UCB also reviewed the objectives, terms of reference and the regulations of all the committees and new committees were created such as the Lifelong Learning Committee. UCB progress report also indicates that all the revised terms of references, rules and regulations were approved by the UCC and are implemented. Evidence provided include job descriptions and clear organizational charts, showing relevant committees and reporting lines as well as how the departments fit in the Quality Assurance (QA) processes. During interviews with senior managers, the Panel was informed that the discussions of all the issues related to the MBA programme take place at the department meetings. It was also revealed to the Panel that all the committees are centralized at the institution level and one faculty member represents each department in all the relevant committees. The Panel acknowledges that there are clear lines of accountability. However, although the academic staff work well together as a team, there is still a concern that one person is holding several important positions; this is likely to have an adverse impact on leadership, the effectiveness of the decision-making process, and the time required in achieving some of the tasks listed in the UCB Improvement Plan. Furthermore, there is no sufficient evidence to demonstrate that the actions taken led to marked changes or improvements in the quality of the programme delivery or the academic standards. Therefore, the Panel concludes that weaknesses persist in relation to this recommendation.

**Recommendation 4.3:** *establish an effective and formal quality assurance management system in order to monitor and evaluate the programmes periodically.*

**Judgement:** *Not Addressed*

UCB has a documented Quality Management System (QMS) that includes its Academic Quality Manual and UCB Regulations Handbook, as well as the various quality system procedures and records related to the implementation of the QMS. One of the main responsibilities of the Director of Quality Assurance and Accreditation is to 'maintain quality and standards in both academic and administrative affairs' at the institution level. He/she also supervises the records and control of quality documents. The VP of Academic Affairs recently filled this post. At the department level, the Programme Director oversees all the matters pertaining to quality assurance, curriculum development, internal/external moderation and programme reviews. The HoD, who is also the Director of the MBA programme, currently fills this post.

The Panel studied the policy related to the reviews of programmes and notes that although the policy includes detailed procedures for the annual review of the programmes, it refers to conducting periodic review (once in four years) of the programmes, without providing any details on how this will be implemented. Moreover, the Panel was provided with the report of an external review of the MBA conducted in 2014 with no clear evidence of any stakeholders input used in the process or actions taken in response to the reviewer's comments. No evidence was provided of a holistic periodic review of the programme yet. The Panel urges UCB to revise this policy, develop a clear procedure for the periodic review of the programmes and conduct these reviews on a regular basis.

**Recommendation 4.4:** *develop, approve and implement formal policies and procedures for the development of new programmes to ensure that they are relevant and fit for the purpose.*

**Judgement:** *Fully Addressed*

UCB has formal policy and procedures for the development of new programmes. According to this policy, new programmes are initiated by staff members and they are required to fill the New Programme Feasibility Report Template before submitting their proposal to the HoD. The Course Development Committee (CDC) reviews the feasibility report. One of its main tasks is to ensure that the proposal is consistent with the mission and strategic objectives of UCB. It also confirms that the financial and human resource implications are feasible. Once approved, the Department develops and submits the Programme Outline Structure to the CDC. The VP of Academic Affairs reviews and endorses the documentation approved and submitted by the CDC, which includes the Feasibility Report and the Outline Structure, before submitting it to the UCC for approval. The Board of trustees must also endorse all new approved programmes. The Panel was also informed during the interviews that the policy for the development of new programmes was first implemented in November 2013, as indicated in the progress report. The Panel notes that this procedure is well understood, as evidenced by interview responses of faculty members and senior management.

**Recommendation 4.5:** *develop and implement formal mechanisms for annual internal programme evaluation and implementation of recommendations for improvement.*

**Judgement:** *Partially Addressed*

The progress report confirms that formal mechanisms have been developed for the annual internal programme evaluation to lay plans to improve the programme. These mechanisms include course specifications, teaching and assessment methods, programme and course learning outcomes and their mappings. The suggestions of the

external moderators and the feedback from the stakeholders are also taken into consideration in the annual programme review. The Panel noted that there is a clear procedure for the annual review of the programmes. According to this procedure, a senior staff member is assigned to conduct the review and fill the report template. Based on this report, the HoD in consultation with faculty members develop a yearly action plan. The annual review report and the action plan are submitted to the VP of Academic Affairs for review and approval. However, there is no clear process followed in monitoring the implementation of the action plans and assessing the progress achieved.

Evidence submitted includes the annual programme review reports and the action plans for 2014-2015 and 2015-2016, as well as the feedback of the VP of Academic Affairs on the first report. The Panel noted that the two reports are mostly descriptive and the several parts where the assigned senior staff is asked to comment on certain shortcomings (e.g. student completion rates and difficulties encountered in the management of the programme and the achievement of the programme objectives) are listed as not applicable. In addition, data were not collected from all the relevant stakeholders identified in UCB policy and procedures. The collected data are also not sufficiently analysed and did not refer to significant weaknesses. Furthermore, the Panel noted that several items are not sufficiently addressed in the programme review reports such as programme and course learning outcomes and their mappings. The Panel urges UCB to address these shortcomings and develop clear mechanisms to monitor the implementation of the action plans.

**Recommendation 4.6:** *develop and implement formal processes that incorporates the internal and external stakeholders' views in the annual programme review.*

**Judgement:** *Not Addressed*

According to UCB's Improvement Plan of 2014-2015, the institution has collected data from various stakeholders, which will be analysed and used as an input in the annual programme review report. UCB Programme Review Policy and Procedures indicates that 'the information for the annual review shall be sourced from student feedback, new text books, Journal articles for new developments in the subject, internal moderation and external moderation reports, Advisory Board meetings, exit and alumni survey, as well as Employer survey'. However, the annual review reports of 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 rely mainly on the results of the graduating students survey conducted in 2014-2015 and do not identify significant weaknesses. The 2014-2015 programme review report includes a list of strengths and weaknesses identified by one employer. The employer referred to several skills that require further attention such as the design of work related models, systems and processes but no responses to

the employer's comments were provided. Furthermore, the feedback of the MBA Advisory Board is not incorporated in the two reports.

In addition, the Panel was informed during the interviews with senior managers, that surveys were not conducted for two consecutive years due to the shortage of administrative staff and the suspension of the MBA programme for a limited duration, as mentioned earlier in this Report. The progress report states that UCB is currently revising the survey questionnaires to collect data from external and internal stakeholders. Evidence submitted includes some filled students and alumni surveys conducted in the academic years 2013-2014 and 2014-2015, and the analysis of MBA student feedback that was collected during the first semester of 2016-2017. The Panel is of the view that weaknesses persist in relation to this recommendation and urges the Department to implement UCB's policy and procedures, which dictate that the structured comments collected from the Advisory Board meetings, student and alumni surveys, as well as employers, are incorporated in the annual programme review. UCB should also ensure that comments are regularly collected from a representative number of respondents in order to positively make use of the harvested data.

***Recommendation 4.7: conduct student, alumni and employers surveys, analyse and develop formal mechanisms for feedbacks from internal and external stakeholders and ensure that their results are used for programme improvements.***

***Judgement: Not Addressed***

According to the progress report, student, alumni, and employers' surveys will be conducted and analysed in 2016-2017. It also indicates that the results of the surveys will be taken into consideration for programme improvements by 2016-2017. As indicated in this Report, UCB provided the Panel with a number of form templates for the conducting of Alumni and Employer surveys, which needed to be further edited and revised. Evidence provided does not include any analysis of the students and alumni surveys conducted in the academic years 2013-2014 and 2014-2015. Moreover, no evidence was submitted to indicate that employer surveys have been conducted in the last 3-5 years. As noted earlier in this report, only the feedback of MBA students was collected and analysed during the first semester of 2016-2017. Hence, the Panel concludes that UCB did not take sufficient actions to address this recommendation.

**Recommendation 4.8:** *establish a mechanism to identify the professional development needs of all staff and to design, implement, monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of a continuing professional development programme.*

**Judgement:** *Partially Addressed*

According to the Improvement Plan, the Academic Research Committee (ARC) regularly requires each faculty member to report his or her professional development activities and plan for the upcoming academic year. The evidence provided comprises a list of internal and external workshops attended by faculty members in the academic year 2015-2016, which includes LMS Brightspace training, NQF workshop, and the international certificate in teaching and learning in higher education organized by HEC. A list of planned workshops for the academic year 2016-2017 was also provided. The Panel was informed during the interviews with senior management and faculty members that UCB fully covers the cost of attending international conferences and has fully funded the PhD studies of several faculty members.

The progress report refers to the policy and procedures related to the faculty appraisal according to which, there is an annual overall performance evaluation for faculty members and this is used to identify development needs. The Panel acknowledges that the policy and procedures related to faculty performance appraisal are clear and consistently implemented. As indicated during the interviews, the VP of Academic Affairs fills the faculty appraisal template and there are clear criteria, weightage and guidelines for the performance appraisal. However, there is not enough evidence to show how faculty appraisal has been used to identify development needs, staff eligible for promotion and future leaders, in line with UCB policy and procedures. Furthermore, there are no evidence provided on mechanisms being implemented to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of faculty professional development related workshops/seminars. Therefore, the Panel is of the view that the actions taken are having a positive, yet limited impact on the ability of the programme to meet the Indicator's requirements.

## 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 Programmes-within-College Reviews Framework and Follow-up Visits of Academic Programme Reviews Procedure:

**The Master of Business Administration programme offered by University College of Bahrain has made 'Inadequate Progress' and as a result, the programme will be subject to a second 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,