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**National Authority for Qualifications &
Quality Assurance of Education & Training**

Directorate of Vocational Reviews

Review Report

Al Hayat Institute for Human Resources Development

Sehla

Kingdom of Bahrain

Date Reviewed: 29-31 December 2013

VO045-C2-R069

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The Directorate of Vocational Reviews

The Directorate of Vocational Reviews (DVR) is part of the National Authority for Qualifications and Quality Assurance of Education and Training (QQA) that was officially set up in 2008 as an independent body governed and supervised by the Council of Ministers. Established to raise standards in vocational education and training, the DVR is responsible for monitoring and reporting on the quality of vocational provision, identifying strengths and areas for improvement, establishing success measures, spreading best practice and offering policy advice to key stakeholders, including the Ministry of Labour and the Ministry of Education.

Reviews are based on the DVR's *Review Framework*, and carried out on providers' premises by teams of carefully selected and highly trained reviewers. All providers are invited to nominate a senior member of their staff to participate in the planning of the review, and to represent them during review team meetings. Reviewers examine a range of evidence before arriving at a series of judgements and awarding grades for the quality of the provision.

Review grades are awarded on a four-point scale:

Grade description	Interpretation
1: Outstanding	This describes provision or outcomes that is/are at least good in all aspects and outstanding in the majority.
2: Good	This describes provision or outcomes that is/are at least satisfactory in all aspects and good in the majority. There may be some particularly successful approaches or outcomes.
3: Satisfactory	This describes a basic level of adequacy. There are no major areas of weakness which substantially affect what learners, or significant groups of learners, achieve. There may be some features which are good.
4: Inadequate	This describes situations where major weaknesses in some areas affect the outcomes for learners and outweigh any strengths in the provision.

Introduction

Description of the provision

Al Hayat Institute for Human Resources Development (Al Hayat) was established in 1999 and licensed by the Ministry of Education to offer tutorial courses based on the Ministry of Education's school curriculum. General English language courses are offered also at three levels. The institute has a list of 10 modules for Information Technology (IT) on offer. However, only three modules are conducted currently, as the premises do not cater for the others.

Al Hayat operates from one centre located in Sehla. The institute enrolled 404 learners in 2011, 548 in 2012 and 685 in 2013. Almost two third of the enrolment during 2013 was in the tutorial courses. The institute is managed by a team comprising of an operational manager, three secretaries, seven teachers, a transport coordinator and seven drivers. Teachers and staff members, including the operational manager, work at the institute on a part-time basis.

Scope of the review

This review was conducted over a three-day period, by a team of four reviewers. During the review, reviewers observed lesson, analysed data about the courses, examined learners' written and other work, studied documents and materials provided by the institute and met with staff, learners, parents and teachers.

In the previous review, the overall effectiveness and all other aspects of the provision were judged as inadequate except for the learners' achievements, the quality of teaching and programmes, which were judged as satisfactory.

This report summarises reviewers' findings and their recommendations about what the provider should do to improve.

Table of review judgements awarded

Overall Effectiveness	
How effective is the provision in raising learners' achievement and meeting the full range of learners' and stakeholders' needs?	**Grade: 4 Inadequate**
Learners' Achievement	
How well do learners achieve?	Grade: 4 Inadequate
Quality of Provision	
How effective is teaching and/or training in promoting learning?	Grade: 4 Inadequate
How well do programmes meet the needs and interests of learners and stakeholders?	Grade: 4 Inadequate
How well are learners supported and guided to achieve better outcomes?	Grade: 4 Inadequate
Leadership and Management	
How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	Grade: 4 Inadequate

Review judgements

Overall effectiveness

How effective is the provision in raising learners' achievement and meeting the range of learners' and stakeholders' needs?

Grade: 4 Inadequate

Al Hayat's overall effectiveness is inadequate, as are all the aspects of the provision. Despite the majority of learners attending mathematic courses gaining adequate skills and making suitable progress from their starting point, a significant number of learners on the other tutorial and IT courses do not progress to a satisfactory level or develop suitable skills. The majority of learners enjoy their learning at the institute and a few are self-motivated. Conversely, a significant minority of learners remain passive and do not show a high level of enthusiasm during their lessons. Except in mathematics tutorial courses, teachers do not manage their sessions well and in the vast majority of these observed lessons, teachers were not able to motivate and engage learners. Additionally, the majority of teachers do not assess learners effectively during lessons and most feedback provided do not help learners to identify what they need to do to improve further.

The range of courses on offer mainly cover the public school's curriculum that meet learners' and parents' general needs. However, the majority of courses are neither well planned nor structured to meet the full range of the learners needs. Most courses are supported with a limited range of extra-curricular activities and resources in use are not sufficient to enrich the learning experience. Support and guidance provided are haphazard as it is left to the staff and teachers' own initiatives. At the start of a course, the institute does not ensure that learners and parents are kept informed about the institute's procedures and regulations. Communication with parents is limited to updating them on the attendance of their children. The institute does not inform learners about their performance, hence, learners do not know what they should do to improve further. The institute's management has made some effort to improve the provision since the last review. Nonetheless, issues related to health and safety aspects are not addressed sufficiently and the institute premises do not meet the minimum requirement of a safe study place. Moreover, the management still lacks a formal arrangement to monitor learners' achievements and to act on the views of learners and their parents.

Al Hayat's capacity to improve is inadequate. The management structure is not sufficient to meet the provision's requirements and the roles and responsibilities of staff members are not well defined. The institute is not well managed. It depends entirely on part-time secretaries who run the day-to-day operations with minimal guidance. The management does not

monitor the internal operation closely or act on identified improvement priorities, and staff members are not guided by clear and realistic targets. Moreover, the institute failed to address crucial the recommendations for improvements identified in the last review report. Whilst the range of courses on offer remains the same for the past three years, the actual courses offered in IT have reduced to a few modules only. Although learners' enrolment during 2013 has increased to 662 from 544 on 2012, the institute does not ensure that learners achieve and progress well on their courses. Whilst Al Hayat seeks the view of learners, these are not used to review and improve the institution's core business and, the institute's links with local community and parents are not established well. The self-evaluation form (SEF) developed by the institute for this review is superficial and provides little information about the provision. Some areas for improvements are identified however, these are not sufficiently critical.

Learners' achievement

How well do learners achieve?

Grade: 4 Inadequate

A significant number of learners on tutorial courses have difficulties in developing course objectives and gaining the required skills and knowledge. As noted from lesson observations and assessments of learners' work, learners do not make the expected progress on most courses. However, learners attending mathematics tutorial courses gain adequate skills and make appropriate progress by means of class activities and extended exercises. These represent around 35% of the total enrolment. Al Hayat does not effectively assess learners' prior attainment to decide on their starting point. Although teachers usually use in-class activities to assess learners' level of understanding, the used assessments are not always relevant to reflect on learners' academic level. Learners' feedback indicates that the majority of them develop limited skills and knowledge after attending their courses. This is particularly reported by learners attending the general English language courses. Additionally, learners attending the Information Technology (IT) courses are provided with completion certificate even if they did not reach to the required standard of achievements.

The majority of learners enjoy their learning at the institute and a few are self-motivated, but a significant minority learners remain passive and do not show high level of enthusiasm while attending sessions. From the observed class activities, the majority of learners attempt to work individually however, they remain highly reliant on their teachers, and most of them do not know how to reflect critically on their work and what they must do to improve further.

The majority of learners attend regularly; attendance is usually recorded manually however, punctuality is not recorded. The institute does not have a clear policy or procedure on attendance requirements or on how to address late comers.

The quality of provision

How effective is teaching and/or training in promoting learning?

Grade: 4 Inadequate

The teaching approach used in the vast majority of the observed lessons is generally teacher-centred. Teachers do not always use effective teaching strategies that encourage learners to participate and ensure their engagement and motivation throughout the lesson. Notwithstanding the above, mathematics teachers are suitably qualified with relevant experience in their respective specialisms and utilise relevant teaching approaches that engage and motivate most of the learners. The majority of lessons start and end on time with relatively useful recapitulation. Whilst mathematics' lessons are well planned, a significant minority of other subjects' lessons are poorly planned, and have issues with time and class managements and only a few teachers share the objectives of their lessons with the learners. Generally, learners participation is encouraged through a limited range of questions directed to individual learner and the utilisation of class work sheets and some extra activities. In a few occasions, teachers enabled learners to further their understanding and solve problems. However, the majority of teachers deliver their lessons at one level and are not attentive to the varying learning needs of different individuals.

Whilst mathematics' teachers provide useful written and verbal feedback on learners' work, this is not consistent among all the other courses. Additionally, assessment of learners' work for the general English language courses lacks rigor, and the marking scheme used is generally too lenient, and is not sufficiently detailed. In a few cases, the marking of learners' work was not a proper reflection of the learner's level. Moreover, the institute does not maintain records of learners' progress for all courses. Teachers utilise a limited learning resources in the classrooms such as textbooks and whiteboard to facilitate their teaching.

How well do programmes meet the needs and interests of learners and stakeholders?

Grade: 4 Inadequate

Al Hayat offers a range of tutorial courses covering the Ministry of Education's school curriculum such as mathematics, science, and English language. It also offers general English language courses at three levels and some IT courses that lack progression routes. Generally, courses on offer respond to some local community and learners' requests. However, these are neither planned nor structured well to ensure that they meet the full range of learners needs, as the content of most of these courses is not suitable for learners' actual needs and abilities. Additionally, the assessments methods used are not reliable and do not test the different skills expected to be acquired by the learner as a result of attending these courses. Notwithstanding the above, mathematics courses are of a better standard. These are suitably structured, planned and updated when required by the teachers to meet the varying needs of learners and their parents, and are enriched with useful activities such as extended worksheets.

Courses on offer are not sufficiently resourced to meet the needs of learners; teachers occasionally use whiteboard and worksheet during lessons. Planned extra-curricular activities that would enrich and enhance learning experience are limited. Al Hayat does not consider the needs of learners and stakeholders through proper formal analyses of labour market to plan for the provision and its offerings. Instead, it relies entirely on causal contacts with some parents during course registration.

How well are learners supported and guided to achieve better outcomes?

Grade: 4 Inadequate

Although trainers are generally supportive to learners during the lessons and the administration staff are approachable during their working hours, the support and guidance provided by the institute to learners is not sufficiently structured, as it is left to individual staff members and teachers' own initiatives. At the beginning of a course, Al Hayat does not ensure that learners and their parents are kept informed of the institute's procedures, regulations and health and safety aspects. It only posts a few basic instructions related to learners expected behaviour on the notice board. Communication with parents is limited to updating them on their children's attendance and the need for renewal of registrations. The institute has no proper arrangements in place to inform parents about their children's performance. Additionally, learners are not kept well informed about their progress or what

they need to do to improve. While instant verbal feedback is provided to learners during some of the lessons, this is done occasionally and insufficiently.

A few teachers provide summaries to learners as an additional support document, but these are not well designed or structured to help learners with their studies. The institute provides free transportation services when requested. However, no dedicated adult accompanies the young learners while being on the bus.

Currently the institute's website is not functional. Learners and parents have access to information about courses on offer and any updates on course schedules through the social media. Learners attending IT and general English courses are provided with leaflets containing basic information only. The institute is insufficiently flexible in delivering their courses to suit the needs of learners and stakeholders; learners are not allowed to register for a single tutorial course, they have to register for two tutorials courses together, even if they do not need the second. Learners who miss classes are not provided with replacement hours, even if they have valid reasons.

The institute's learning environment is not suitable for young children as the premises are neither healthy nor safe. The institute has four classrooms and one computer laboratory. The classrooms are not inspiring and crowded and have issues with lighting, ventilation and lack relevant educational and motivational posters.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?

Grade: 4 Inadequate

Al Hayat's vision and mission statements are generic and do not focus sufficiently on learners' achievements. Likewise, the institute's strategic plan lacks clear focus on raising learners' achievements and quality of teaching. The management has made little improvement on the quality of the provision since the last review. However, most management responsibilities are operated in a causal manner and important elements of effective internal quality assurance processes are missing. The current management structure is not suitable for meeting the institute's defined remit and for ensuring the well-being of the learners. Generally, staff members are not guided by clear job descriptions or specific pre-defined targets. Although the institute conducts some meetings with teachers and other staff members, issues raised during those meetings are not followed up or acted upon sufficiently.

Teachers, some of whom are qualified, are recruited on part-time basis. The currently practiced hiring process is not rigorous enough to ensure that qualified and experienced teachers are selected. Al Hayat has started recently to conduct monitoring visits used to assess teachers' performance. However, these visits do not critically identify how teachers can improve the quality of their teaching. The institute's self-evaluation form (SEF) submitted for this review is not critical and provides very basic information about the provision. It does not identify critical areas that the institute needs to act upon to ensure further improvement. Moreover, all grades provided overestimate the institute's status.

Al Hayat does not seek purposely the views of parents and does not provide them with updates about their children's progress or achievements. Recently, the institute has installed a suggestion box at the reception area. Nonetheless, the comments posted by a few parents and learners have not been analysed or considered. Learners' feedback sought at the end of most courses. However, the outcomes of these views are not used to inform decision-making or initiate improvement actions.

Inadequate arrangements are in place to assess learners' prior skills and knowledge. The diagnostic tests used for the general English language courses are not reliable to decide on learner's level as these are not verified and do not test all skills, which results in some learners being assigned to a level that is not suitable for their abilities. The institute does not measure the impact of what it does, as it does not monitor learners' achievements and progress systematically. Basic information about learners are kept, such as parents' contact numbers and home address, are kept and used by the administration staff for billing purposes only.

Whilst, the premises are fitted with an automatic fire detection system and have suitable fire extinguishers, it do not meet the requirement of a safe study place for young children. The premises lack adequate health and safety measures such as the exit pathway being blocked with haphasered stored materials. Moreover, the institute's front entrance does not have an adequate pull-off area to drop off learners, making it very risky for children attending their lessons. This is in addition to the chairs and desks in use that are not ergonomic to provide comfortable learning environment.

The provider's key strengths

- None of significance.

Recommendations

In order to improve its provision, Al Hayat should:

- improve the essential health and safety aspects immediately and ensure that all learners are provided with healthy and safe learning environment

- ensure that learners gain the required skills and progress well by enhancing the teaching and learning experience through:

  - ensuring that adequate assessment of learners' prior skills, knowledge and standard is undertaken to properly support learners and place them on a suitable level on all courses

  - improving sessions' plans and ensuring that these plans are informed by prior assessments for better accommodation of learners' varying needs

  - enhancing effective teaching techniques to fully engage and motivate all learners

- ensure that learners are provided with suitable support and guidance that help them to reach their potential and receive constructive feedback on their progress.

- strengthen the management structure and effectively monitor the quality of provision through:

  - ensuring that achievement data are collected, aggregated and trends are monitored over time

  - ensuring that internal lesson observations are conducted regularly and are sufficiently critical.