



هيئة ضمان جودة التعليم و التدريب  
Quality Assurance Authority for Education & Training

# **Vocational Review Unit**

## **Review Report**

**Al Mawred Institute**  
**East Riffa**  
**Kingdom of Bahrain**

**Date Reviewed: 28 - 30 June 2010**

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## The Vocational Review Unit

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The Vocational Review Unit (VRU) is part of the Quality Assurance Authority for Education and Training (QAAET), an independent body set up under Royal Decree No.32 of 2008 amended by Royal Decree No. 6 of 2009. Established to raise standards in vocational education and training, the VRU 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 VRU'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 five-point scale:

<b>Grade description</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
1: Outstanding	This describes provision or outcomes that is/are at least good in all or nearly all aspects and is/are exemplary or exceptional in many.
2: Good	This describes provision or outcomes that is/are better than the basic level. Practice will be at least sound and there may be some particularly successful approaches or outcomes.
3: Satisfactory	This describes a basic level of adequacy. No major areas of weakness substantially affect what learners, or significant groups of learners, achieve. Some features may be good.
4: Below satisfactory	This describes situations where major weaknesses in some areas affect the outcomes for learners and outweigh any strengths in the provision.
5: Very weak	This describes situations where there are major weaknesses in all, or almost all, areas and where, as a result, learners are very poorly served.

## **Introduction**

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### **Description of the provision**

Al-Mawred Institute was established in October 2008 and licensed by the Ministry of Education to offer preparatory courses for subjects in the school curriculum, and general English language courses. Students are aged eight years and upwards. Most of them, especially those from university, attend one-to-one individual tutorials or revision sessions in a range of subjects. These account for around 85% of the annual enrolments. The rest, small groups of school students, attend short preparatory or general English courses, lasting up to a school semester. A total of 1296 students have enrolled since the institute opened for business.

The institute operates from one location in East Riffa. The staff team comprises the owner who works part-time in the capacity of manager, a part-time academic officer, a part-time administration and finance officer, a full time administration supervisor and a secretary. Al Mawred has a large pool of more than 40 part-time teachers to provide, as and when required, tuition for school and university subjects.

### **Scope of the review**

This review was conducted over three days by a team of four reviewers. During the review, reviewers observed classes, analysed data about students' achievements and the courses they complete and talked with staff, students, parents and other stakeholders.

This report summarises reviewers' findings and their recommendations about what the Al-Mawred Institute should do to improve.

## Overall judgement

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### Effectiveness of provision

#### Grade 4: Below satisfactory

Al Mawred's provision is below satisfactory overall. The quality of teaching, the range of courses, and the support and guidance provided to students are all satisfactory. The leadership and management, however, are below satisfactory. There was insufficient evidence to grade students' achievement.

The institute does not keep records of students' results or progress for either group courses or one-to-one tuition. Analysis of the few tutorial students' school results provided by the institute show mixed outcomes. Parents and students reported varying satisfactory improvements in school and university grades after attending courses at the institute. However, it is not clear to what extent this development can be entirely attributed to study at the institute. Attendance at group sessions is poor. Punctuality is not recorded.

Teachers at Al Mawred are suitably qualified and have a good theoretical command of their specialism. Teachers use satisfactory resources and materials. Few courses have lesson plans, but lesson objectives are generally shared with students. There is insufficient initial assessment to establish students' varying needs. Students' understanding is appropriately checked though and they receive occasional useful written feedback. However, progress and achievement are not systematically assessed.

Al Mawred offers an adequate range of non-accredited short courses and tutorial classes, which meet the needs of students and their parents. The institute uses its large pool of part-time teachers and close links with students from universities, to establish which subjects it should offer.

Students receive friendly support from teachers and administrative staff. Those who need to can repeat sessions or attend extra ones. When the need arises, senior staff at the institute provide personal counselling to students. Al Mawred's premises are poorly maintained and some health and safety measures are inadequate.

The institute's senior management have an appropriate vision, focused on raising achievement, but this is neither documented nor sufficiently shared with teachers. Strategic planning is ineffective. Data on students' performance are not collected, analysed or aggregated. Measures to assure the quality of the provision are insufficient; there is a checklist for lesson observations, but very few staff have been observed. Teachers receive little guidance on how to deliver lessons or improve their practice. There are no guidelines

to ensure consistency in teaching or assessment. Some feedback is gathered from students, but little from their parents.

## **Capacity to improve**

### **Grade 4: Below satisfactory**

Monthly enrolments have increased from less than 70 during 2008 to more than 100 in both 2009 and 2010. There is a reasonable rate of repeat business. Many students take more than one subject at Al Mawred, at various times of the year, and especially when the semester examinations are due. The institute's staff use their contacts and links with students from various universities to establish which subjects are most in demand at any particular time.

Recently, the institute has started working towards a number of improvements to its provision. It is seeking approval to run International Computer Driving License (ICDL) and Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) courses, and negotiating with a vendor to further expand its range of provision. An Oracle registration database is being developed to replace the existing faulty system; this system will hold records of students' attendance and progress. There are also plans to carry out maintenance work on the premises and to restructure the institute's management. None of these improvements are well advanced, however, and they have not had a demonstrable impact on the quality of the provision. Furthermore, they are not set in the context of a strategic plan with clear, measurable objectives.

The institute lacks an effective quality assurance system, and fails to collect information critical to improvement. Data on students' achievement are not gathered or analysed, and stakeholders' feedback is not sought. There are no systems to monitor the performance of the large pool of part-time teaching staff, and these staff are insufficiently involved in the wider activities of the institute.

Al Mawred's self-evaluation form (SEF) promotes little confidence in the institute's capacity to diagnose or address any shortcomings in provision. The SEF is incomplete and uninformative, and the grades given are too generous.

## Summary of grades awarded

Overall Judgement	Grade
<b>Effectiveness of provision</b>	<b>Grade 4: Below satisfactory</b>
Capacity to Improve	Grade 4: Below satisfactory
<b>Review Findings</b>	
How well do student achieve?	Insufficient evidence to grade
How effective is teaching?	Grade 3: Satisfactory
How well do courses meet the needs of students and stakeholders?	Grade 3: Satisfactory
How well are students guided and supported?	Grade 3: Satisfactory
How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all students?	Grade 4: Below satisfactory

## Main judgements and recommendations

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### Strengths

- None.

### Areas for improvement

- **Attendance on group courses.** Although attendance on one-to-one lessons is good, due mainly to the flexible and convenient timing of sessions, attendance on group courses is poor at only 66%.
- **Measurement of students' work and progress.** Al Mawred takes insufficient steps to monitor students' progress and achievement on their courses. The provider does not maintain or analyse records of students' results and progress during and after a course or tuition.
- **Health and safety and the maintenance of the premises.** The provider's premises are poorly maintained and some aspects of health and safety measures are inadequate. The fire extinguishers were found to be overdue for maintenance at the time of the review although this issue was attended to immediately. Although there are sufficient fire alarms, there are no smoke or heat detectors and students are not provided with appropriate health and safety guidance. Some potential hazards were observed during the review such as an unlocked balcony door, a poorly maintained roof door and a cramped storage area.
- **Strategic planning.** Although the institute's senior management share a vision which is appropriately focused on students' achievement, this is not documented nor clearly communicated to all teachers. Neither is this vision incorporated into clear strategic plans which detail accountabilities, timescales and success criteria.
- **Quality assurance.** Measures to quality assure provision are inadequate. There are no documented processes or guidance for teachers to ensure consistency of practice, particularly in their teaching or in how they monitor the progress of students or to set a standard to which they should aspire. The provider does not have an assessment policy, not least to periodically measure the achievements and progress of students or to verify the accuracy of their marking of students' work.

## **Recommendations**

In order to improve provision, Al Mawred should:

- tackle students' poor attendance on group courses
- systematically assess students' progress and measure their achievement; maintain, analyse and use students' performance data
- ensure that the institute's premises are well maintained and that effective health and safety measures are in place
- introduce a strategic planning process; ensure that all full- and part-time staff are involved in this and in self-evaluation
- introduce rigorous and comprehensive quality assurance measures.