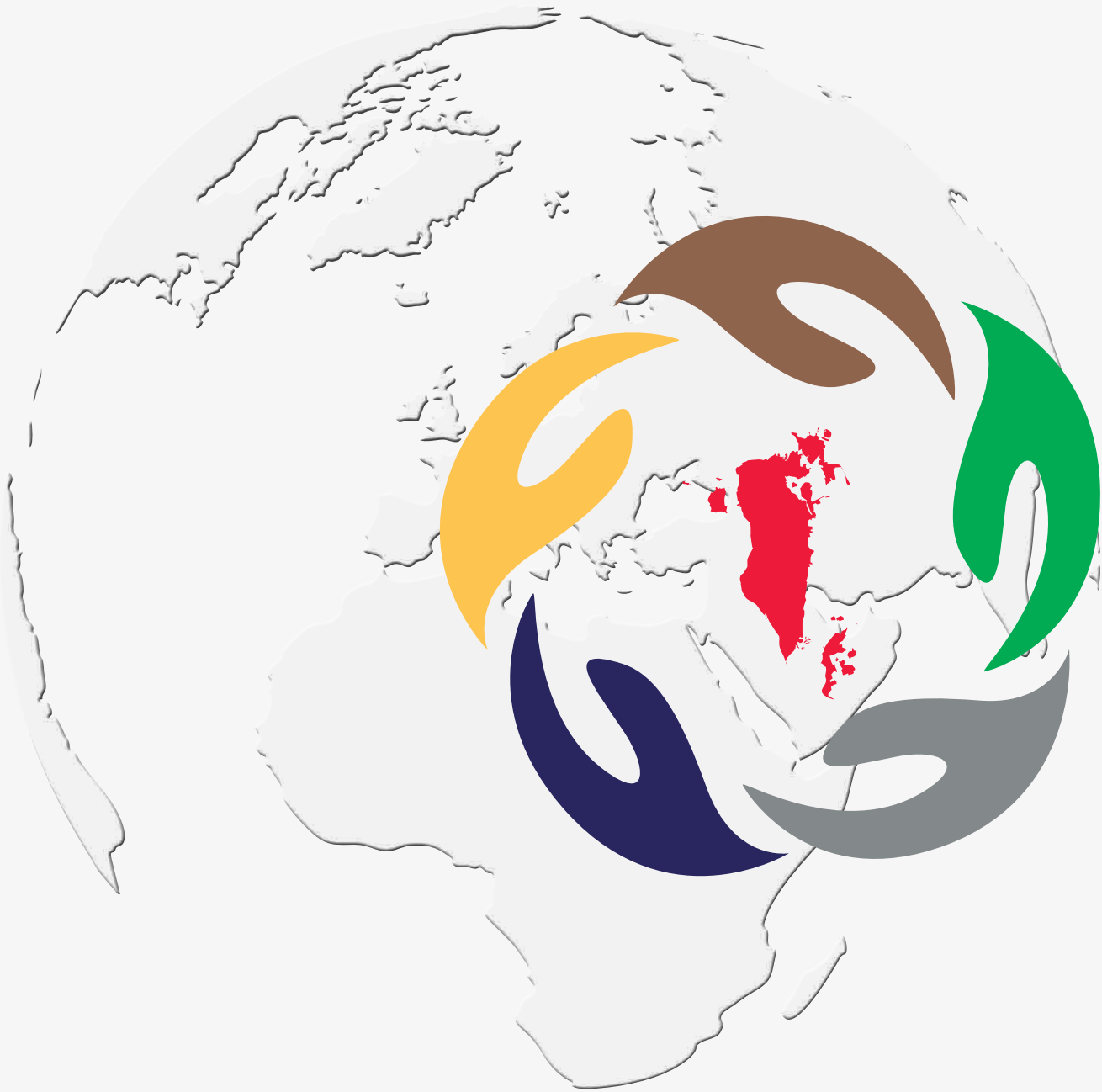


National Authority for Qualifications & Quality
Assurance of Education & Training

Annual Report 2013



Towards a Better Vision for Education



الهيئة الوطنية
للمؤهلات وضمان جودة التعليم والتدريب
National Authority for Qualifications &
Quality Assurance of Education & Training



**HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS PRINCE
KHALIFA BIN SALMAN AL KHALIFA**
THE PRIME MINISTER



**HIS MAJESTY KING
HAMAD BIN ISA AL KHALIFA**
THE KING OF THE KINGDOM OF BAHRAIN



**HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS PRINCE
SALMAN BIN HAMAD AL KHALIFA**
THE CROWN PRINCE, DEPUTY SUPREME
COMMANDER AND FIRST DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

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The National Authority for Qualifications and Quality Assurance of Education and Training (QQA) was founded in 2008 and was reorganised in accordance with the Royal Decree No. (83) of 2012. In terms of Article (4) of the Decree, its mandate is to review the quality of the performance of education and training institutions, manage the National Qualifications Framework, and conduct the national examinations in light of the guiding indicators developed by the Authority. The Authority is also required to publish review reports as well as to report annually on the status of education within the Kingdom; this includes findings as well as improvements that have occurred as a result of the work of the Authority.

VISION:

To be leaders in fostering sustainable quality enhancement for a world-class education and training sectors in Bahrain.

MISSION:

We foster sustainable quality enhancement in the education and training sectors in Bahrain through:

- Setting standards and guidelines to measure the quality of the performance of education and training institutions, and mapping the National qualifications.
- Conducting quality reviews of education and training institutions to ensure accountability and continuous improvement.
- Developing and implementing a National Examination System that provides a credible assessment of learners' achievement in the pre-university stages.
- Managing the National Qualifications Framework that recognizes all forms of learning and accommodates outcome-based, fit for purpose National qualifications.
- Publishing quality reviews, qualifications and national examination reports that are accurate and transparent for quality enhancement and decision making.
- Instigating national capacity building activities to support quality enhancement and sustainability in education and training institutions.
- Enhancing partnership and communication with our stakeholders.

VALUES:

- Professionalism: We adhere to professional standards in all our activities consistent with international best practice
- Integrity: We are honest, objective and ethical in our work.
- Fairness: We are impartial and conduct our work in an equitable manner
- Transparency: We operate with openness and publish full details of our methodologies and reports of our services
- Consistency: We maintain conformity and steadfast adherence to our guidelines in all our activities
- Credibility: We provide reliable and trustworthy services that are trusted by all our stakeholders
- Sustainability: We aim to invest in Bahrain's future through the capacity building of the national human capital



The National Authority for Qualifications and Quality Assurance of Education and Training has been spreading a culture of quality assurance across educational and training institutions for the past five years, to the extent that the concept has become the norm in educational and training practices.

Today, five years since the establishment of the Authority, we witness more achievements and positive transformation in spreading and rooting the culture of quality assurance in the education and training sectors on the national, regional and international levels.

We are proud of the much appreciated support and attention provided by the Kingdom's prudent leadership to the education and training sectors in general, and to the concept of 'quality assurance' in particular. This support reflects a deep awareness of the crucial role of the education and training sectors in achieving comprehensive development.

His Majesty's support emphasises the importance of improving the performance of educational and training institutions nationwide, as education and training must be at the forefront of progress. Similarly, we have to assure the quality of educational and training outputs which constitute the pillar of modern national renaissance in order to achieve sustainable development.

The Authority accomplished several achievements in the past academic year (2012-2013), adding to the long list of achievements since its establishment in 2009. In this annual report, we go over the major achievements accomplished in the past academic year and examine their broad prospects and impact on the quality assurance of education and training, both in the present and the future.

Laying the cornerstone of the Authority, in accordance with His Majesty's instructions and guidance towards a prosperous, reformative era, was a key indicator of the need for an independent scientific authority to review the performance of the education and training sectors on a continuous basis.

The initial results showed that the experience was in line with its purposes and that improvement and development efforts can be sustainable as well as rewarding. Moreover, the initial results paved the way for expanding the Authority's role and tasks in order to reinforce the accomplishments achieved in our endeavour to develop the education and training sectors.

The past year witnessed many expansion initiatives, most notably the issuance of a Royal Decree providing for the reorganisation of the Authority and renaming it the National Authority for Qualifications and Quality Assurance of Education and Training. Last year's initiatives paved the way for implementing the principle of quality assurance as the norm in teaching and training plans. In line with Bahrain Economic Vision 2030, the principle of quality assurance aims to achieve a qualitative and cultural shift that serves the public interest and the future of all Bahrainis.

Improvement and development objectives can only be achieved through strategic partnerships that guide integrated efforts, leaving no room for deviating from the approach created to fulfil improvement and development requirements and objectives.

The Authority operated within a context of cooperation and consultation with the relevant parties concerned, namely the Ministry of Education, the Higher Education Council, the Ministry of Labour, educational and training institutions and other relevant parties. Such a constructive context allowed the Authority to carry out its role within a framework of highly appreciated coordinated efforts and notable cooperation on the part of the aforesaid parties towards the optimisation of available opportunities.

His Royal Highness the revered Prime Minister's decision to form the NQF Advisory Council affirms the importance of strategic partnerships among the different institutions. Such partnership allows reviewing the educational status, implementing the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) with regards to assessing and comparing academic and vocational qualifications as well as improving the

quality of educational and training outputs, and engaging specialists and stakeholders in piloting the NQF.

Therefore, the Council's tasks were assigned to a select group of stakeholders who can link between academic and vocational requirements, under the supervision of the Authority, represented in its chief executive, Dr. Jawaher Al Mudhahki. The Council will also study the qualitative gap between educational and training outputs and labour market needs and work in accordance with procedural rules that fulfil the Framework's strategy and goals.

What really makes us proud is to witness the outcomes of the prudent leadership's lofty aspirations, proving that such aspirations were opportune as they showed an improvement in the overall performance of the education and training sectors in the Kingdom. Moreover, the Authority's experience stood out as it was comprehensive in applying the concept of 'quality assurance', achieved integrated results and worked side-by-side with stakeholders in the education and training sectors.

While the Authority performs additional tasks and roles, which are at the heart of its job and power, it continued to build up a database of cumulative results from educational and vocational institutions' reviews. Furthermore, the Authority came a long way in the second cycle of government schools, higher education institutions and vocational training institutions' reviews, as well as the first cycle of private schools' reviews. This provides the different educational and training institutions with a roadmap that will help them achieve their self-development objectives, which can be drawn from the results presented in this report.

This annual report also includes the results of the first national examinations for Grade 12 (third secondary level), in which around 10,000 students participated from government schools as well as six private schools that expressed their willingness to participate in the examinations. The examinations aimed to assess the cognitive and applied skills acquired in the primary and secondary stages of education, in vocational training and in higher education; and accordingly, develop such skills to

meet labour market needs. Additionally, the examinations' results will be among the admission requirements of universities in the Kingdom, as well as an indicator of the student's competence in the different academic disciplines, in accordance with the memorandum of agreement signed between the Authority and the Higher Education Council upon its establishment in 2009.

The past year witnessed several major achievements that will allow the Authority to continue achieving its objectives in accordance with the principles of sustainability. Perhaps holding the 2nd QQA Conference in February 2013 is another important achievement and a national congregation. The conference witnessed remarkable attendance and received great attention from experts and specialists from all over the world, who discussed national, regional and international trends and challenges in the field of quality assurance of education and training.

The Authority's continuous, sincere efforts, as well as all other reform and development efforts, were guided and supported by His Majesty King Hamad Bin Isa Al Khalifa, King of the Kingdom of Bahrain, may God protect him. The Authority's efforts also received wholehearted support, attention and follow-up from His Royal Highness Prince Khalifa Bin Salman Al Khalifa, the revered Prime Minister, which improved and enriched the Bahraini experience in quality assurance. Moreover, the Authority received special care and attention from His Royal Highness Prince Salman Bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Crown Prince, Deputy Supreme Commander and First Deputy Prime Minister, who firmly believes in the role played by the Authority to achieve one of the main pillars of Bahrain Economic Vision 2030.

I would also like to express my thanks and gratitude to His Highness Shaikh Mohammed bin Mubarak Al Khalifa, Deputy Prime Minister and Chairman of the Education and Training Reform Committee, for supporting reform and development efforts in the education and training sectors in the Kingdom, following up on the latest developments in the Authority's endeavour, and promoting integrated

efforts in order to successfully achieve education and training initiatives in the Kingdom.

I would also like to extend my sincerest gratitude to the members of the QQA Board of Directors for their remarkable efforts to optimise the Authority's performance. I would also like to thank the Authority's Chief Executive, Dr Jawaher Al Mudhahki and all staff members who have proved their competence and dedication in reviewing the performance and output of educational and training institutions.

I am glad to present to our prudent leadership the 2013 Annual Report; a national record rich with improvement and development aspirations, in line with national development goals. We ask God the Almighty to guide you to the righteous path and help you build and serve this beloved country.

May God's peace, mercy and blessings be upon you.



Abdul Aziz bin Mohammed Al Fadhel

Chairman of the Board of Directors



While we are on the verge of submitting the 2013 annual report, when we reflect upon that academic year (2012-2013), we will definitely review the key milestones achieved by the Authority since its establishment in 2008 and official launch in 2009. Such initiatives have mainly contributed to strengthening the role of the Authority and giving significant momentum to the endeavours to develop education and training in line with its well-articulated strategy and outcomes on the Kingdom's development future.

The last year demonstrated a very significant and productive period capping its five year of ever-growing endeavours, professionalism and experience at the national, regional and global level. The Authority's scope of work, best represented by what the Authority has accomplished with regard to the development of education and training and the progress made by all education and training institutions as well as the students' results in the national examinations since the five years of the launch of quality assurance initiatives in the Kingdom.

On the other hand, the last year was full of visions and strategies that praised the roles and efforts made by all the concerned parties such as the education and training institutions, stakeholders and beneficiaries of their outcomes. This, in turn, provides a leading model for partnership and integration of efforts as well as complementary roles and synergy, to set the approach and mechanism of the endeavours to develop the education and training sectors and reap their fruits.

The Royal Decree No. 83 of 2012 with respect to the reorganisation and renaming of the National Authority for Qualifications and Quality Assurance of Education and Training (QQA), was a turning point in the Authority's endeavours and independent role as an accurate quality assurance entity directing the improvement plans of education and training institutions, and confirming the sustainability choice of these institutions in order to produce quality education and training outputs that enhance the Bahrainis' abilities to work and integrate into the development initiatives and meet the modern benchmarks.

The Royal Decree was a mandate confirming the Kingdom's visionary leadership trust in the importance of education and the quality academic and vocational qualifications to support the quality assurance of education and training, which is emphasized by the transfer of the National Qualifications Framework under the Authority's scope of work.

We should not overlook the pivotal role of the Education and Training Development Committee under the chairmanship of His Highness Shaikh Mohammed bin Mubarak Al Khalifa, Deputy Prime Minister, who provides his wise instructions and guidance to the development initiatives of education and training, including the approval to merge the NQF under the umbrella of the Authority upon the completion of set-up stage under the supervision of the Labour Fund (Tamkeen). This mandate entails the Authority to implement and apply the NQF as one of the pillars enhancing the quality assurance endeavours in the Kingdom, and be part of the QQA's scope of work and a tangible indicator of the quality education and training outputs.

Since then, the QQA started the implementation of the NQF application stages, and during 2012-2013 the QQA commenced the NQF pilot stage. Currently, there are 17 pilot institutions covering all education and training sectors participating in the Set-up Stage, and they nominated 79 qualifications to be piloted in this Set-up Stage. The selection of participating institutions was based on the QQA's review reports results confirming the integration of the QQA's work on one hand, and diversity and comprehensiveness of disciplines at all levels of education and training, on the other hand.

While the Authority was assigned to carry out new mandates that are closely related to the field of quality assurance of education and training, the Authority continued its second cycle of reviews of all education and training institutions, and the reviews of all government schools and vocational training institutions in particular. In addition, the Authority conducted 13 academic programme reviews offered by the higher education

institutions using the newly-developed framework entitled 'Programmes-within-College Reviews' till September 2013.

What also distinguished this year was the conduct of the first private school reviews, which make it a unique experience in terms of the application of various and well-articulated methods to ensure that such reviews are conducted based on the internationally-accepted quality assurance and performance assessment practices.

One of the key milestones accomplished this year was the implementation of the first live Grade 12 examinations in 2013. The national examinations at Grade 12 are not directly based on the Bahraini curriculum, but test the key skills, competencies and knowledge that students should have acquired after completing their 12 years of schooling in Bahrain, and hence they complete the four cycles of education targeted by the national examinations; namely: Grades 3, 6, 9 and 12.

Reviewing the learning inputs, practices and outputs is an integral part of the quality assurance principles. In this context, the national examinations are diagnostic tools that support the QQA's reviews of public and private schools to determine the effectiveness of teaching and learning processes on one hand, and the learning outputs of these two processes on the other hand.

The implementation of the first live Grade 12 examinations in 2013 was a significant indicator of the development of education and training and reflected that the secondary school education outputs meet the specialized, scientific and developmental requirements of the labour market and vocational training and higher education sectors.

The Authority's key milestones over the last academic year will undoubtedly have a positive impact on carrying out its mandates and functions, as well as the development of education and training sectors in the coming years. Accordingly, we draw our will and determination from the great support provided by our wise political leadership, and the impact of the consultation efforts and contributions of experts and specialists in harmony with its strategies, scope of work, methodologies and opportunities.

During the last academic year, and in line with its mission to strengthen the leading role of quality assurance sector, the Authority proactively took part in a number of national, regional and international events in order to present the QQA model as a regional leading model. In this context, the Authority organized its second conference under the theme of: "Quality Education and Training: Opportunities and Challenges", on 20-21 February 2013, and put together the national, regional and international models in order to keep fully abreast of all current developments, challenges and practices in the area of quality assurance in education and training.

The ever-growing roles and functions of the QQA reflects the high interest in education and training sectors in the Kingdom of Bahrain and impact on the future of our children, which entails us to have determination and will to fully achieve the objectives of development and improvement of these sectors. The approval of the Authority's new organisational structure upon the issuance of the Royal Decree with respect to the reorganisation of the QQA and expansion of its scope of work are forms of the QQA's building capacity to continue its mission in the years to come.

I would like to present the Authority's accomplishments to date to His Majesty King Hamad Bin Isa Al Khalifa, King of the Kingdom of Bahrain, may Allah protect him, for the fruits of his vision and aspirations towards a promising reform era under his royal directions. I also express my deep gratitude and thanks to His Royal Highness Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa, the revered Prime Minister, may Allah protect him, for his most valued support and directions to all the government institutions to cooperate together for the prosperity and growth of our beloved Kingdom. I also sincerely express my thanks and gratitude to His Royal Highness Prince Salman Bin Hamad Al Khalifa, Crown Prince, Deputy Supreme Commander and First Deputy Prime Minister, may Allah protect him, who adopted, supported and encouraged the comprehensive reform initiatives to provide a better life opportunities for Bahrainis.

Our thanks are also extended to His Highness Shaikh Mohammed bin Mubarak Al Khalifa, Deputy Prime Minister and Chairman of the Education and Training Development Committee, who paid great attention to everything related to the Authority's operational results as well as the stakeholders' endeavours to develop the education and training sectors with his wisdom and experience.

We also extend our thanks to His Excellency Mr. Abdulaziz Bin Mohammed Al-Fadhel, Minister of Shura Council and Parliament Affairs and Chairman of the Authority's Board of Directors, who along with other respected board members, show their dedication, devotion, commitment and great attention to reaffirm the Authority's direction and aspirations for the improvement of the education and training sectors in the Kingdom.

Finally, all these efforts and achievements that we have accomplished and aspire to realise, would not have been attained, if it had not been for the devotion, dedication, understanding and desire to serve our Kingdom that the employees and members of staff of the Authority have exhibited in every stage.

May Allah's peace, mercy and blessings be upon you, and may Allah preserve our Kingdom and its people from all evil and mishaps.



Jawaher Shaheen Al Mudhahki

Chief Executive

BOARD OF DIRECTORS



His Excellency Mr. Abdul Aziz bin Mohammed Al Fadhel
Minister of Shura and Representatives Councils Affairs
Chairman



HE Dr Mohammed Ali Hassan
General director, Central Municipal Council



HE Ms Aisha Mohammed Abdulghani



HE Dr Aysha Salem Mubarak
Member, Shura Council



HE Dr Rasheed Jassim Ashour

BOARD OF DIRECTORS



HE Mr Kamal Ahmed Mohammed
Minister of Transportation and Acting CEO
of the Bahrain Economic Development Board
Vice Chairman



HE Dr Anwar Yousif Al Abdullah



HE Dr Bahia Jawad Al Jishi
Member, Shura Council



HE Dr Shakir Abdul Hussain Khamdan
Head of Environmental Monitoring,
Public Commission for protection of Marine Resources,
Environment and wildlife

EXECUTIVE TEAM



Dr. Haya Al Mannai
General Director, Education
and Training Institutes Reviews

Dr. Jawaher Al Mudhahki
Chief Executive

Prof. Dolina Dowling

Dr. Ahmed Khudhair

Mr. Khalid Al Mannai

EXECUTIVE TEAM



Dr. Tariq Al Sindi
General Director, National
Qualifications Framework

Dr. Khaled Al Baker

Dr. Hasan Al Hammadi

Dr. Wafa Al Mansoori

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY





The QQA is pleased to report on its work during the 2012-2013 academic year which is in accordance with its mandate to assure the quality of education and training in Bahrain and through this contribute to the achievement of 'a first-rate education system [that] enables all Bahrainis to fulfil their ambitions'.* During this academic year two review directorates – Directorate of Government Schools Reviews and Directorate of Vocational Reviews – resumed their second cycle of reviews. Directorate of Private Schools & Kindergartens Reviews continued its first cycle of reviews. The fourth directorate which conducts higher education reviews continued with the cycle of Programmes-within-College Reviews by reviewing programmes offered within Colleges of Health Sciences and commenced with programmes offered by Colleges of Computer Science and Information Technology. It also completed the institutional follow-up reviews. The fifth year of national examinations for all government schools took place under the auspices of the Directorate of National Examinations. Five examination sessions for Grades 3 and 6 have been completed, four examination sessions for Grade 9 and the first examination for Grade 12 was also carried out following the pilot during the last academic year. In keeping with the QQA's expanded mandate to develop and implement the national qualifications framework, the General Directorate of Qualifications began a pilot of the framework as well as continued with its partnership approach through engaging the relevant stakeholders.

During 2012-2013, the **Directorate of Government Schools Reviews (DGS)** conducted reviews and identified strengths and areas for improvement in 62 government schools, which brings the number of schools reviewed so far in this second national cycle (Cycle 2) into 113 out of the 206 government schools in total. The schedule is on target, for all the government schools in Cycle 2, to receive their second review by the end of 2014.

Of the 113 schools reviewed in Cycle 2, a significant three-fold improvement can be observed in the number of the schools that are judged 'outstanding' compared to those

reviewed in Cycle 1, when they were judged 'good'. Such a scale of improvement demonstrates the capacity of good schools that responded to their review reports' recommendations and made the changes necessary to achieve aspirations of the highest order. Generally, improvement has been most significantly observed in the girls' schools.

The correlation between the quality of teaching and the impact on the standards achieved by students is evident. Where students make the best progress and achieve well, the role of the school's leadership and management mainly focuses on ensuring that teaching is at least consistently good. The leadership in schools judged 'satisfactory' does not do enough to raise the quality of teaching in classrooms to secure the levels of achievement of which many of the students are capable.

There is a slight improvement of the lower performing schools that were previously judged to be in the inadequate category, 17% at the end of the Cycle 1 reviews. However, 14% of schools remain 'Inadequate' and this is still many. Students in these schools are falling far short of their potential. It is more difficult for schools that are failing to find the resources, expertise and capabilities, that the better schools possess, to bring about the changes that are necessary. Many schools' inability to undertake critical self-evaluation and provide a good basis for planning and subsequent effective implementation of improved practices in classrooms is still an issue. In a few schools, frequent changes of principals and in the membership of the senior leadership teams do little to support sustained improvement. The DGS has conducted monitoring visits in 22 schools during 2012-2013 that were judged 'inadequate'. Of these, 15 are considered to have made sufficient improvement and seven have shown progress.

During 2012-2013, the **Directorate of Private Schools & Kindergartens Reviews (DPS)** conducted reviews and identified strengths and areas for improvement in 21 out of 62 private schools to be reviewed by the end of 2014. Private schools are in the first cycle of reviews so this

*Economic Vision 2030, p.21

brings the total number of private schools reviewed since the commencement of Cycle 1 in September 2011 to 35, just over half of the private schools in Bahrain.

Of the 35 private schools reviewed, the proportion of 'Good' and 'Outstanding' schools (17%) is less than half the proportion judged 'Inadequate' (37%). This high proportion of inadequate schools represents a serious challenge to the improvement of national education in Bahrain. Overall effectiveness which is judged to be 'Good' or better often appears to be closely linked to those schools with better levels of resourcing. This differential is most evidently characterised in the best schools by the range of well-qualified teachers they employ. This quality extends to the leadership teams where efforts are focused on the core purposes of teaching and learning, the effective teaching and learning strategies that are secured in raising outcomes, particularly in terms of students' routine academic achievement and personal development.

Out of the 13 private schools that received 'Inadequate', the one school that has received its monitoring visit, has adopted an active leadership and management approach. It is judged to have made 'sufficient progress' since its leadership implemented the recommendations of the review report.

The **Directorate of National Examinations (DNE)** has now, in 2013, completed five examination sessions for Grades 3 and 6, and four examination sessions for Grade 9. The DNE also completed the first examinations for Grade 12 in March 2013. As before, all government schools took part in the examinations, and this year they were also joined by six private schools on a voluntary basis for Grade 12, and one private school for Grades 3, 6 and 9. The student cohort number was approximately 33,300 students taking part in Grades 3, 6 and 9 National Examinations. Grade 3 examinations took place in the subjects of Arabic and Mathematics; and Grade 6 and 9 examinations were in the subjects of Arabic, Mathematics, English and Science. All Grade 3, 6 and 9 examinations were based on the whole

relevant curriculum for Bahrain government schools. As in previous years, the Grade 3, 6 and 9 examinations were marked in Bahrain by teachers working in Bahraini schools. Results were analysed and prepared in cooperation with the DNE's international partner, CIE (Cambridge International Examinations).

The results of the examinations varied across subjects and across Grades. Students again found the examinations challenging and the raw marks were again low as a proportion of the total available marks. Overall for Grade 3, 6 and 9 the 2013 results, with the exception of Grade 9 English, continued to decrease even further across all Grades and all subjects from 2012 and from previous years. As in 2012 Grade 3 students performed better in Arabic than in Mathematics. However, in Grade 6 performance in Science was better than in all other subjects, whereas in Grade 9 performance in English continued to be better than in all other subjects as in the previous year. In Grade 6 Mathematics was the weakest subject and in Grade 9, as in 2012, Science was still the weakest.

As seen in the 2012 results, girls outperform boys in all subjects. The difference was smaller in the technical subjects than in the languages at all Grades, and the greatest difference at all Grades was in Arabic. Differences between boys and girls grow greater with age in the languages but not in the technical subjects.

In 2013 the DNE also completed the first examinations for Grade 12 in the subjects of Arabic, English and Problem-Solving. These were undertaken together with the DNE's international partner, CIE. As with the basic education examinations, Grade 12 examinations were marked and graded by teachers working in Bahraini schools, and results were published to schools and students. Grade 12 examination results were best in Arabic and worst in Problem-Solving.

During the academic year 2012-2013, the **Directorate of Vocational Reviews (DVR)** reviewed a total of 34 providers of vocational education and training, 25 of which are licensed by the Ministry of Labour (MoL), eight licensed by the Ministry of Education (MoE), and one is a self-regulated institute. These reviews bring the number of vocational education and training providers reviewed from the start of Cycle 2 reviews to the end of June 2013 to a total of 57 providers.

Of the total MoL licensed providers reviewed during the period from January 2012 to June 2013 inclusive (Cycle 2), 42 institutes were graded 'satisfactory' or better, with 21 being graded 'good' and three 'outstanding'. The remaining six institutes were graded 'inadequate'. Eight MoE licensed providers were reviewed during the same period, six of these received a 'satisfactory' grade; and one was graded 'outstanding'. Additionally, one self-regulated institute was reviewed and its overall effectiveness was judged to be 'outstanding'. Those providers who were judged to be 'inadequate' were subject to a maximum of two monitoring visits by the DVR to assess their progress towards addressing the recommendations of the review reports. A total of six institutions underwent a monitoring visit during the academic year 2012-2013. Half of these institutes have shown notable progress.

Out of all the providers reviewed in Cycle 2, 45 institutes were subjected to reviews in Cycle 1 and Cycle 2. Comparing the results of these reviews reveal that 42% of the institutes have improved their grade by at least one point. It is worth mentioning that two out of three institutes graded below satisfactory in Cycle 1 reviews, have improved their provision and were awarded a 'satisfactory' grade in Cycle 2 reviews. The vast majority of institutes have managed at the very least to maintain their previous status. The grades of a few institutes, however, dropped by one grade. It is evident from outcomes of Cycle 2 reviews that most institutes' leadership have taken solid steps in improving the provision and their respective procedures and practices in relation to evaluating learners' achievement and progress, the quality of training and

teaching provided to learners, and the effectiveness of the support provided to enhance learners' achievement and attainment. Some good practices were used such as pre- and post-course assessment to measure groups' progress as well as individual achievement trends, and well-formed course planning and decision making. However, a number of providers still lack a systematic mechanism for incorporating all available information on learners' attainment and achievement into their decision-making processes.

During the 2012-2013 academic year, the **Directorate of Higher Education Reviews (DHR)** continued with its Programmes-within-College reviews in which programmes at Bachelor and Master's levels are simultaneously reviewed. Seven programmes offered by four colleges in the domain of Health Science were reviewed. Six received a 'confidence judgement' in which all four indicators, which are used to evaluate the programme, were satisfied. The other programme received a 'no confidence' judgement in which all four indicators were not satisfied. The DHR began reviewing programmes in Computer Science and Information Technology colleges. Of three colleges offering four programmes between them, one received a 'confidence' judgement, one 'limited confidence' and two, 'no confidence'.

When aggregating the outcomes of all Programmes-within-College reviews whose reports were published to date; eight received a 'confidence' judgement, one 'limited', and four, 'no confidence'. Programmes receiving 'limited' or 'no confidence' will be subject to follow-up visits.

The DHR undertook two institutional follow-up reviews of two public higher education institutions, both had made adequate progress overall in addressing the recommendations contained in their original review reports. As all 12 institutions eligible to have a follow-up review have taken place, Cycle 1 of Institutional Reviews is formally concluded.

During the 2012-2013 academic year, the **General Directorate of Qualifications (GDQ)** embarked on piloting the National Qualifications Framework (NQF). The GDQ continued reinforcing the partnership approach via establishing working groups and continuously engaging with institutions participating in the Set-up Stage.

In the Set-up Stage, the partnership approach was applied in several forms, namely through the Technical Committee, the working groups and the Advisory Committee. The Technical Committee included representatives from the QQA, Higher Education and Training sectors, and oversaw the NQF activities and the provisional approval for the NQF. Six consultative working groups that included representatives from education and training institution as well as industry and government stakeholders were established to assist in the development of NQF standards and related activities. Those working groups met 24 times during the academic year 2012-2013. Finally, the Council of Ministers' Decree No. 52 of 2013 established the Advisory Committee to replace the Technical Committee and included representatives from key stakeholders of education and training in Bahrain.

There are currently 17 institutions participating in the Set-up Stage representing six higher education institutions, 10 vocational and training institutions, and one general education institution. Currently, there are 79 qualifications, covering all sectors and the ten levels of the NQF, participating in the Set-up Stage. The institutions participated in capacity building workshops and consultation activities to assist them in their efforts in mapping their qualifications and listing their institutions into the NQF register. Approximately 300 teaching members and 179 quality assurance staff members from institutions participating in the pilot stages received training in qualification design and mapping and institutional listing, respectively.

Finally, the GDQ is increasing the NQF global recognition via establishing international links with qualifications frameworks from other countries. The NQF of Bahrain is

being referenced with two qualifications frameworks from Europe, namely: The Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) and The National Framework of Qualification NFQ (Ireland).

The **Second Conference of the National Authority for Qualifications & Quality Assurance of Education & Training (QQA)** was held in the Kingdom of Bahrain on 20 and 21 February 2013. Its theme was 'Quality Education and Training: Challenges & Opportunities', under the patronage of His Highness Shaikh Mohammed bin Mubarak Al-Khalifa, Deputy Prime Minister and Chairman of The Education and Training Development Committee. The conference aimed to promote the application of international quality standards across the national education and training sectors, as well as provide education and training institutions operating in the Kingdom with the opportunity to explore the challenges and opportunities facing quality assurance agencies locally, regionally and globally.

The conference contributed to raising the status of education in the Kingdom. Education has become the main focus of key development projects as part of the coordination of efforts to strengthen the role of national human capital and qualify Bahrainis to drive the prosperity of Bahrain.

Over 380 participants, interested in improving the quality of education and from a number of developed countries with successful experiences, took part in the conference. The delegates were attracted from schools, vocational providers, higher education institutions, and national examinations centres. A group of regional and international experts from education and training institutions and quality assurance agencies contributed also. The mixing of people from different sectors gave opportunities to explore the challenges facing quality assurance agencies both locally and globally. The conference was preceded by five conference-related workshops.





INTRODUCTION

During the academic year 2012-2013 the Directorate of Government Schools Reviews (DGS) conducted reviews and identified strengths and areas for improvement in 62 schools. This brings the number of schools reviewed so far in this second national cycle (Cycle 2) of reviews of government schools to 113 of the 206 government schools in total. One of these schools opened in 2012, and so was not subject to a previous review. This report therefore compares directly the performance of the schools reviewed in Cycle 2 with their performance when they were reviewed in the first cycle (Cycle 1) between 2008 and 2011. It explains the progress being made by 22 government schools that were considered to be 'inadequate' when reviewed during Cycle 1 and Cycle 2 and received monitoring visits during 2012-2013.

Reviews are carried out in line with the practice established in the previous years of school reviews, using the *Review Framework and Guidance*. All reviews focus on answering the main question, '**How effective is the school and why?**' by evaluating the standards and quality of students' learning outcomes and the schools' educational provision.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- students' academic standards and their progress (students' academic achievement).
- students' personal development.

EDUCATIONAL PROVISION

- the quality of teaching and learning
- curriculum delivery and enrichment
- the quality of support and guidance

LEADERSHIP MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE

- the quality of the school leadership, management and governance.

TO ANSWER THE MAIN QUESTION, SCHOOLS ARE THEN ALSO GRADED ON:

- overall effectiveness
- capacity to improve.

REVIEW GRADES ARE AWARDED ON A FOUR POINT SCALE:

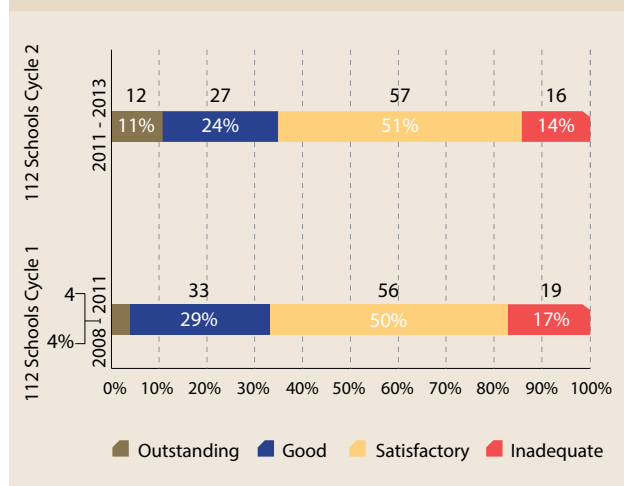
- 1: Outstanding
- 2: Good
- 3: Satisfactory
- 4: Inadequate

Schools, which have been judged to be 'outstanding', are encouraged through recommendations to enhance their high level of effectiveness and share their best practice within school and amongst other schools. Those schools which are 'good' or 'satisfactory' are given clear prioritised recommendations for further improvement. Schools which receive an overall grade of 'inadequate' are subject to an additional monitoring visit, where their progress towards meeting the recommendations given in their review report is assessed by a monitoring team, which visits the school within six months to a year after the review.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

The current position with regard to the overall effectiveness of government schools that have been reviewed in both Cycle 1 and Cycle 2 is illustrated in Figure 1.

FIGURE 1: OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS - COMPARING 112 SCHOOLS REVIEWED IN CYCLES 1 AND 2



Amongst the 112 schools reviewed in Cycle 2, a significant trend of improvement can be seen in the number that have been judged 'outstanding' compared to those judged

'good' in Cycle 1. Whereas only four of this group were 'outstanding' in Cycle 1, 12 schools are now 'outstanding', a threefold improvement. This improvement continues the positive trend reported in 2012, but at a slightly slower rate. Also, there is slight improvement of the lower performing schools in the 'inadequate' category, a drop of 3%. It can be seen from Figures 2 and 3, that the 54 girls' schools' performance has been significantly improved, whereas the 58 boys' schools have not.

FIGURE 2: OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS - COMPARING 54 GIRLS' SCHOOLS IN CYCLES 1 AND 2

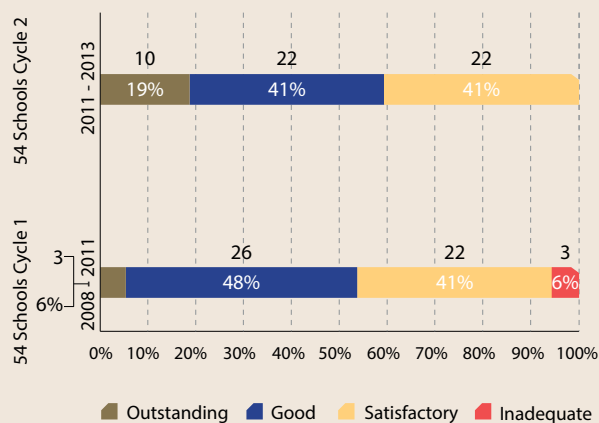
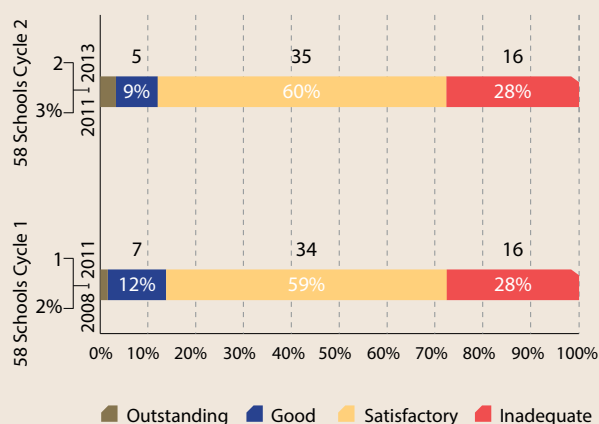


FIGURE 3: OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS - COMPARING 58 BOYS' SCHOOLS IN CYCLES 1 AND 2



Improvements are evident in the different school cycles, as Figure 4 (primary and primary-intermediate), Figure 5 (intermediate) and Figure 6 (secondary) indicate.

FIGURE 4: OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS - COMPARING 74 PRIMARY SCHOOLS (INCLUDING PRIMARY-INTERMEDIATE) IN CYCLES 1 AND 2

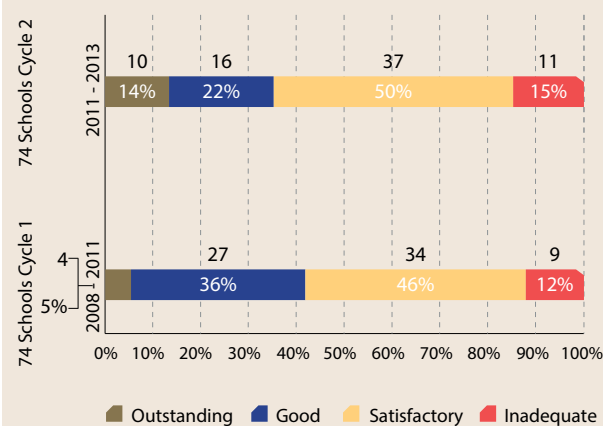


FIGURE 5: OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS - COMPARING 20 INTERMEDIATE SCHOOLS IN CYCLES 1 AND 2

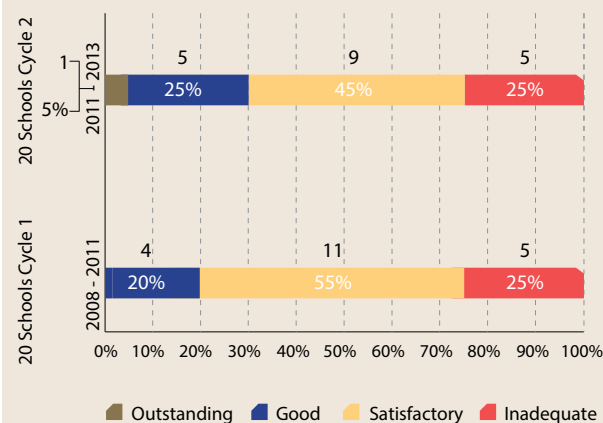
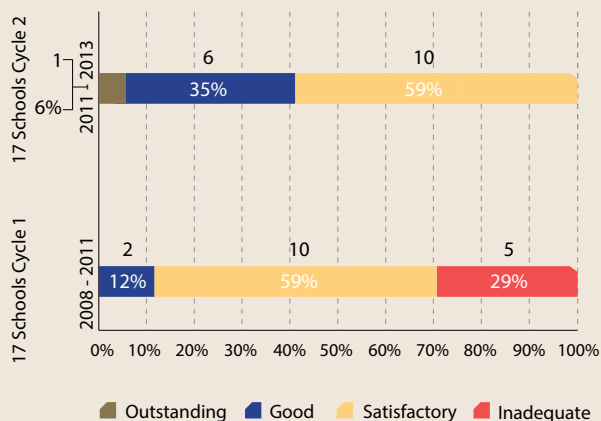


FIGURE 6: OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS - COMPARING 17 SECONDARY SCHOOLS (INCLUDING INTERMEDIATE-SECONDARY) IN CYCLES 1 AND 2



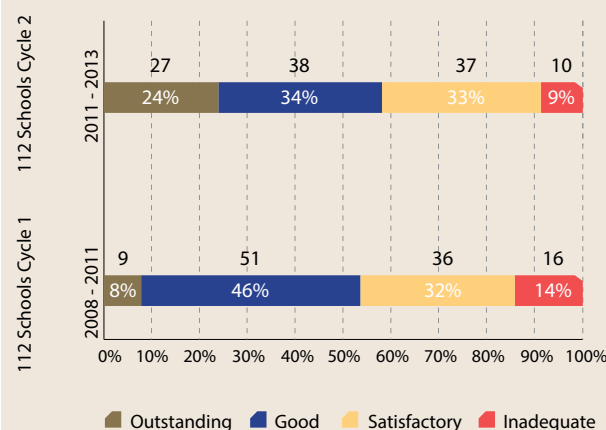
These phase improvements are mainly represented by girls' schools in all cycles, as indicated in Figure 2, although only one boys' secondary school, which is Al Naim Secondary, is judged 'good', the first boys' secondary school in Bahrain to be judged 'good'. Two boys' primary schools, Hut'teen and Al Kharwarizmi, gained 'outstanding' judgements in 2012-2013. There is improvement in the performance of the intermediate schools, as shown in Figure 5, as 30% are judged 'good' or 'outstanding' in Cycle 2, represented by six out of 20 schools. However, the percentage of 'inadequate' schools remains the same at 25%, represented by five schools. The following considers the reasons for these variations in the standards in the overall effectiveness of government schools in Bahrain

CAPACITY TO IMPROVE

Judgements about schools' capacity to improve are based on indicators of future improvement, which are reflected in current practice and circumstances, such as management direction, purposefulness of leadership and realistic strategic planning. Indicators also include the effectiveness of systems for implementing and monitoring the quality of provision and performance outcomes against targets. Figure 7 shows that during Cycle 1 just over half the

schools are judged to have 'good' or 'outstanding' capacity to improve, but during Cycle 2 a clear improvement can be identified with 24% showing 'outstanding' potential, compared to just 8% previously. However, this improvement is mainly within those schools that had at least 'good' capacity. There are still 9% who show 'inadequate' capacity to improve and require significant support from external sources. Nevertheless, 9% is an improvement on the 14% of government schools with 'inadequate' capacity to improve at the end of Cycle 1; six schools having moved out of the 'inadequate' category.

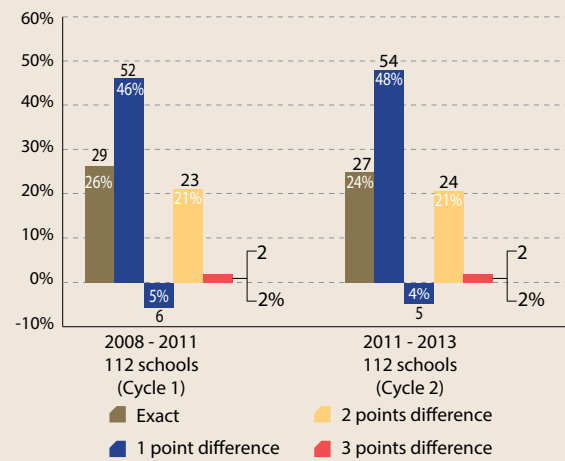
FIGURE 7: THE SCHOOLS' CAPACITY TO IMPROVE IN CYCLES 1 AND 2



Schools' beliefs about their capacity to improve remain too much at variance with the views of reviewers in the DGS. A pre-requisite for improvement is an accurate self-assessment of the schools' performance baseline. Prior to review, schools are required to undertake this self-assessment in line with the *Review Framework and Guidance*.

Figure 8 indicates that the wide range of variance of judgements drawn by schools and reviewers has barely changed from Cycle 1 to Cycle 2. An exact match only occurs in about one quarter of schools, while about half of them judge at an acceptable single grade of variance.

FIGURE 8: COMPARISON BETWEEN JUDGEMENTS IN SEFs AND GRADES IN CYCLES 1 AND 2



For significant improvement to occur, considerable work is needed in this area of school self-evaluation, in the quarter of schools where performance is two or more Grades at variance from the judgements of reviewers. Where schools need to build greater capacity to improve, a better understanding of what constitutes 'good' and 'outstanding' schooling is required. 23% of schools clearly need to do more to grasp fully what the *Review Framework and Guidance* criteria actually means when translated into professional daily practice in schools.

STUDENTS' ACHIEVEMENT IN THEIR ACADEMIC WORK

Achievement includes the students' attainment in external examinations, such as the QQA national examinations and those set by the MoE, and performance in internal tests set by the school. Importantly, the achievement and progress students make in their lessons are closely observed by the review teams, and the students' work over time is scrutinised.

In over half of the schools reviewed in 2012-2013 (those with 'inadequate' and 'satisfactory' grades) there is still an inconsistent relationship between the results achieved in both the schools' internal tests and MoE examinations with the standards observed in classrooms. In many cases, when review teams check the quality of achievement and

the standards of students' work in classrooms, these are not as high as that indicated by those test and examination results. The match with the results of national examinations which are set by the Directorate of National Examinations is more in keeping with what might be expected.

There is a close correlation in grades between the schools' overall effectiveness, students' academic achievement and the quality of teaching and learning. This is because successful schools secure consistently 'good' or better teaching which has a positive impact on the students' academic progress and attainment.

Where teaching is less than 'good', students achieve less well. Too many able students are not challenged sufficiently, and too many of those who find learning difficult are not helped effectively enough to improve.

Students' achievement is better in mathematics, Arabic and science lessons than in English lessons. Figure 9 shows that almost half of the mathematics, Arabic and science lessons observed by the review teams are judged 'good' or 'outstanding', while one third of the English lessons obtain the same judgement.

FIGURE 9: ACHIEVEMENT IN SUBJECTS – PERCENTAGE OF LESSONS JUDGED OUTSTANDING OR GOOD DURING REVIEWS IN THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2012-2013

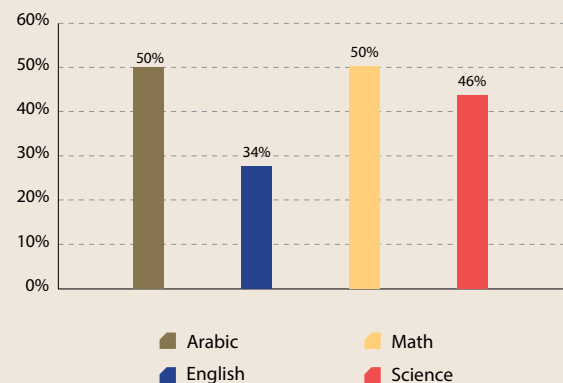
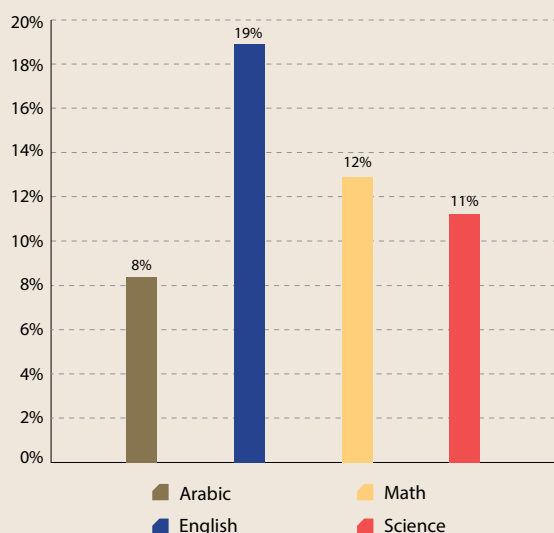


Figure 10 shows there are more than twice as many English lessons where achievement is 'inadequate' compared to lessons in Arabic. In English, students tend to be weak in writing, whereas these skills are stronger in Arabic, in comparison to speaking and listening and reading. In mathematics and science, students have better recall-knowledge and memorization skills, than they do of practical measuring, problem-solving, experimentation and analysis.

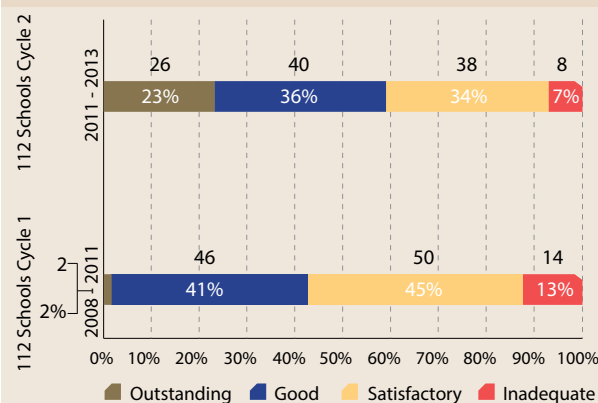
**FIGURE 10 : ACHIEVEMENT IN SUBJECTS –
PERCENTAGE OF LESSONS JUDGED INADEQUATE
DURING REVIEWS IN THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2012-2013**



STUDENTS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

This continues to be the most improved aspect with almost two thirds of schools in Cycle 2 being judged 'good' or better and with a distinct increase in the proportion being 'outstanding', 23% in 2012-2013 compared to only 2% in Cycle 1. Figure 11 illustrates the trend of improvement. More students are growing in their abilities to work well together, show independence and gain self-confidence and maturity. Despite this improvement, in 7% of the reviewed schools, students' personal development remains 'inadequate'.

**FIGURE 11: STUDENTS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT IN
CYCLES 1 AND 2**



For reasons reported in previous annual reports, schools where students' personal development is 'inadequate', struggle to create the basic conditions for learning to take place. Serious issues need to be addressed about the way relationships are formed between students, and the rapport between the students and staff in these schools, and more widely with their communities. Current attitudes, the applied teaching strategies and styles used, and the way the curriculum is implemented clearly contribute to these problems.

EFFECTIVENESS OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

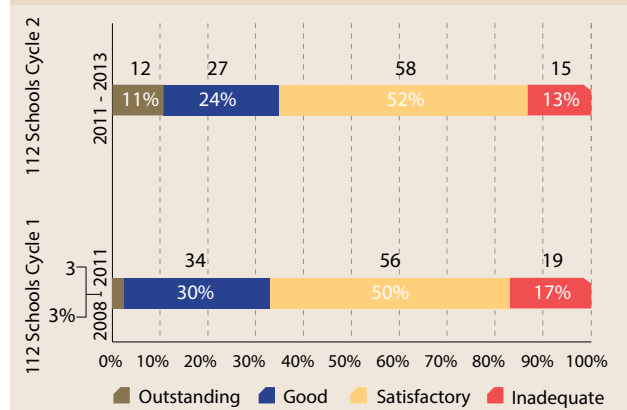
About two thirds of teaching remains less than 'good', as Figure 12 shows. The most significant shortcoming in these 'satisfactory' and 'inadequate' lessons is that teachers do not match their lessons to the differing needs of students. Although teachers sometimes plan for the different needs of students, too often they merely implement a single set of expectations with only the average learner in mind. They do not provide sufficient challenge for the higher attaining students, or enough close support for those students who require more assistance with their learning. Students sit passively listening to teachers who are inclined to talk too much. Questions do not probe students' understanding and require only short answers,

while activities are frequently based around mechanical and repetitive exercises from a textbook. Independent learning skills are not promoted enough, and students are seldom required to solve problems that require them to apply their knowledge and so demonstrate and develop their understanding.

In 'good' and 'outstanding' lessons, teaching engages students of different abilities actively, but these represent only about one third of the lessons that students receive. Teachers assess learning to provide constructive feedback to students on their strengths and their areas for development. Appropriate next steps for learning are identified, with teachers and students setting challenging assignments based on the students' levels of skill and understanding. More lessons are becoming outstanding than previously.

Typically, teaching is at its best in the first three years of primary schools where specific subject content is often integrated into cross-curricular themes and topics. This approach appears to facilitate better links between subjects, which in turn strengthens pedagogy. More sharing of best practices across different subject departments by teachers of older students is likely to improve much of the 'satisfactory' and 'inadequate' teaching in these upper grades.

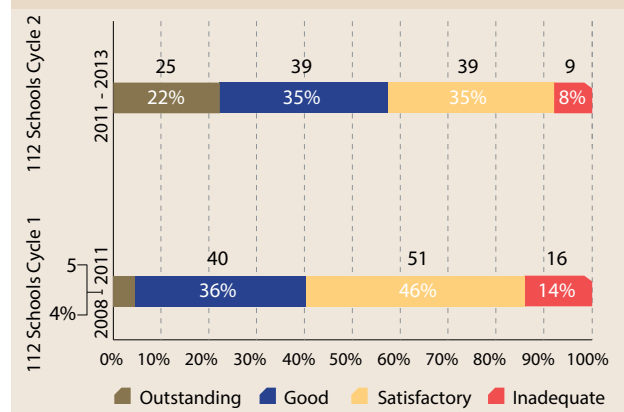
FIGURE 12: EFFECTIVENESS OF TEACHING AND LEARNING IN CYCLES 1 AND 2



CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION AND ENRICHMENT

Curriculum implementation is improving. It is judged by how effectively it enriches students' learning and personal development, and promotes their basic and higher order skills, such as numeracy, literacy and the use of information and communication technology (ICT). Amongst the schools that were reviewed in 2012-2013, curriculum implementation was found to be 'good' or 'outstanding' in 57% of schools, a significant improvement on the 40% in Cycle 1, as shown in Figure 13. The gap between this judgement at 57% for curriculum implementation and enrichment, and that at 35% for teaching and learning and overall effectiveness is explained partly by the 'good' quality of the extra-curricular activities outside lessons that schools provide to extend the core curriculum. In the case of girls' schools, the core curriculum is often implemented well because the female teachers tend to create more relevant approaches for students to follow than their male counterparts.

FIGURE 13: CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION AND ENRICHMENT IN CYCLES 1 AND 2

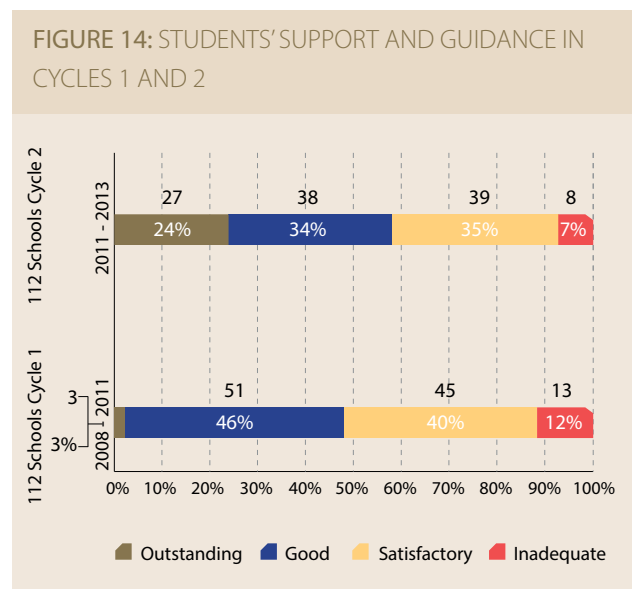


Quite often, extra-curricular activities enable students to build on what they have learned in lessons more effectively than the implementation and delivery of the core curriculum itself. By aligning studies with the world outside school, students in the best schools see the relevance of their learning and develop an improved understanding of their rights and responsibilities. In this way, effective curriculum implementation prepares

students for their next stage of education or for workforce. A school environment that is made conducive to such learning is a major contributory factor. However, a significant proportion of schools do not do this well enough. Common weaknesses include failing to make links between subjects, not embedding skills through meaningful, practical application and not choosing materials that appeal to students' interests or meet their needs.

STUDENT SUPPORT AND GUIDANCE

More than two thirds of schools reviewed provide 'good' or better support and guidance for students. Support and guidance for students' academic achievement is not as strong as it is for their personal development. This is because teachers sometimes separate the essential elements of care and support from the teaching process in the classroom. Overall, as shown in Figure 14, the situation has improved considerably since Cycle 1, although 7% of schools still do not provide 'satisfactory' support and guidance. These schools require urgent action to bring about improvement, especially in those cases where some students feel intimidated or unsafe.

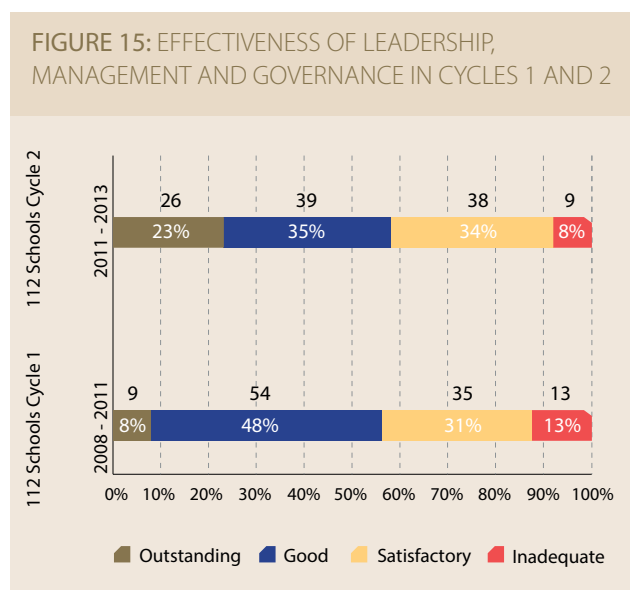


Nearly all the schools reviewed provide effective induction programmes to introduce new students to school life. A

common finding is that the strength of the support and the general awareness of students' needs are not as evident in lessons as elsewhere around the school. Students' records relating to their personal and social needs are not well-integrated with their academic progress records. Teachers are often insufficiently aware of students' wider social and developmental needs and how these may impact on their classroom behaviour and learning. In 'outstanding' schools, such support and challenge is provided both as a part of the teaching in classrooms and across school life.

EFFECTIVENESS OF LEADERSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE

Judgements are based on how effectively school leaders drive and secure learning and achievement for students, and inspire and motivate their staff. Effective implementation of development planning is central, with a commitment to continuous support and challenge throughout the school. Figure 15 shows that, when aggregated, almost three times more leadership is now 'outstanding' than in Cycle



1, but 42% is less than 'good' with a seriously worrying 8% 'inadequate'. In weak schools there is often a lack of systematic strategic planning and follow-up or analysis of the impact of professional development on the actual practice of teaching.

Review teams found out that many principals and vice principals had only been at the school for a relatively short period of time because of the frequent movement by previous preceding staff. Whilst staffing changes are inevitable, 'good' senior leaders need time to bring about sustainable improvement, especially in those schools which are struggling. Effective school leadership does not just rely upon the skills of the principal and vice principals; where leadership is 'good' or better, then a team effort set in a strategic planning framework for improvement is usually identified. Main strengths are in their capacity to inspire, motivate and support staff effectively. Other important strengths in successful school leadership teams are the clarity of their vision and purpose and their responsiveness to the views of stakeholders. 'Outstanding' schools ensure that investment in teachers' training has a consequent impact on routine classroom practices, because senior leaders make an explicit commitment to seeing that teaching and learning bring about 'good' progress for students.

MONITORING VISITS OF SCHOOLS PREVIOUSLY JUDGED 'INADEQUATE'

In the case of schools where overall effectiveness is 'inadequate', the DGS undertakes monitoring visits within six months to a year to assess the schools' progress towards addressing those areas which were identified as being in need of improvement. In 2012-2013, the DGS conducted 22 monitoring visits to those schools judged 'inadequate' from Cycle 1.

Figure 16 shows that 14 schools that were 'inadequate' in Cycle 1 received their second monitoring visit. Twelve (86%) of them had made sufficient improvement and two (14%) were making progress. After receiving two monitoring visits schools are included once more in the regular next cycle of school reviews.

Figure 17 shows that the other eight schools judged 'inadequate' in Cycle 2 received their first monitoring visits. Three of them (38%) had made sufficient progress at this first visit. The other five schools (62%) were making progress

and will receive a second monitoring visit in the academic year 2013-2014.

FIGURE 16: SCHOOLS JUDGED 'INADEQUATE' DURING CYCLE 1 - PROGRESS AT THEIR SECOND MONITORING VISIT 2012-2013

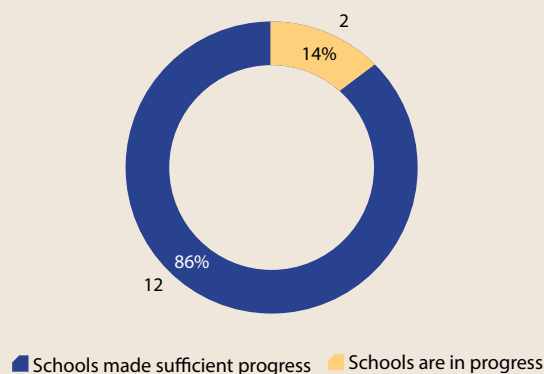
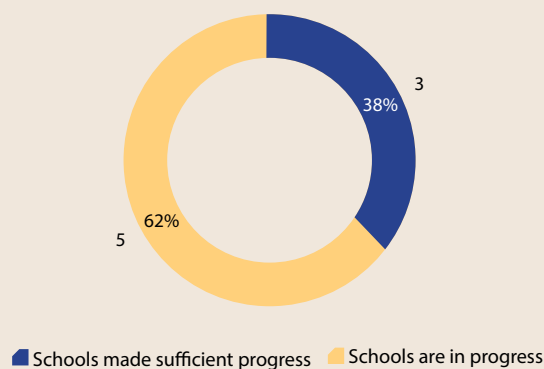


FIGURE 17: SCHOOLS JUDGED 'INADEQUATE' DURING CYCLE 2 - PROGRESS AT THEIR FIRST MONITORING VISIT 2012-2013



CAPACITY BUILDING

Capacity building activities across the DGS have continued to be undertaken through the secondment of teachers, principals and officers from the Ministry of Education (MoE), who undergo training to become review specialists and lead reviewers alongside members of the established review teams. Two workshops have been held with officers of the MoE and with school principals

on measuring students' achievement in order to match the measurement methods of students' achievement between the MoE and the QQA raise levels of capacity. Schools' principals have been shown how to undertake school self-evaluation and complete the summary self-evaluation form in workshops organised in the semester prior to their school review. Consultation meetings have been held with the schools' principals to seek their views on completed reviews, so helping to bridge any gaps in the perceptions between schools and review teams. This has assisted in ensuring adherence to the code of conduct and making necessary improvements and adjustments where appropriate. Workshops and meetings have been held with principals whose schools have been judged 'inadequate' to explain this judgement and help them prepare to lead improvements and monitoring visits. Monitoring has shown that the majority of those schools judged to be inadequate and which have received monitoring visits have made sufficient progress, so demonstrating their capacity to respond positively to the recommendations made.

Indicators of future improvements such as management direction, purposefulness of leadership and realistic strategic planning are evident in many schools. However, it is the effectiveness of systems for implementing and monitoring the quality of provision and performance outcomes against targets, which frequently limits improvement capacity. Clear improvements can be identified with more schools now showing outstanding potential than previously. However, this improvement is mainly within those schools that were judged to have at least good capacity already. Almost 10% of schools still show inadequate capacity to improve and require significant support from external sources.

While schools' beliefs about their capacity to improve tend to be too optimistic, more realistic judgements are required in their self-evaluation processes. Schools' own judgements about their performance remain too much at variance with the views of reviewers in DGS. A pre-requisite for improvement is an accurate assessment of

the schools' performance baseline, an important aspect within the schools' leadership and management function. The Third Annual Forum of the school directorates to be held in February 2014 will address schools' management abilities to introduce fundamental improvements through accurate self-evaluation, creativity and improved observation of classroom performance and leadership strategies.

As part of its capacity building plans and raising the skills of Bahrainis, the DGS started plans two main projects: the first project focusses on the benefit from the expertise of former reviewers who have been trained during their secondment period from the MoE to the QAA, through their retraining and participation in the school reviews. The second project aims to benefit from the expertise and skills of retirees through training and enabling them as qualified reviewers. Both projects have had a positive impact during the application period and are considered as a direct contribution towards the capacity building of the local community.

The DGS provides a number of professional development opportunities for its staff members, where all of the review specialists participated in several internal and external training workshops. Moreover, nine DGS staff members presented research papers to local and international conferences in several countries, including Japan, France, Malaysia, Lithuania and the United Arab Emirates. In addition, five DGS staff members are expected to complete the reviewers requirements to obtain a 'Certified Reviewer Certificate' in collaboration with CfBT Education Trust during 2014.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

While many schools have made progress in improving the standards achieved by students in terms of their academic achievement and personal development, the rate of progress overall has not been sufficient in closing the gap towards the international aspirations described in the Economic Vision 2030 for Bahrain. The extent of improvement has been too varied and in too many cases

insufficient. As different schools do not start from the same baseline and because they face widely differing social and environment contexts, for many the challenge is not only to provide effective education but also, importantly, to ensure that provision has direct impact on the outcomes for students.

Incremental improvements are often evident, but in the most serious cases of schools' underperformance 'step-change' is required. 'Step-change' is a systemic change designed to break the cycle of failure by bringing major intervention. A minimum threshold of 'satisfactory' quality is needed urgently across all schools in Bahrain. Improvements to 'good' and 'outstanding' can then be built incrementally. 'Step-change' is important because although 'inadequate' schools may have made some progress in addressing the recommendations in their review reports, without making 'sufficient progress' they still do not achieve a 'satisfactory' standard of education for their students.

Schools which are 'good' or 'outstanding' invariably have strong and effective leadership which is sharply focused on teaching having a direct and consequent impact on students' outcomes. Extensive bureaucracy often distracts from the core purposes of schools, and quite often the least successful schools have the largest collections of files and papers. Quality assurance arrangements in the best schools are slim, robust and transparent. Senior staff work closely with teachers and students to ensure that the students make clear gains. Tests and examinations are used to inform the next steps of teaching and learning as well as recording students' achievements and progress. Learning programmes in the 'inadequate' schools need radical overhaul so that the teaching and learning processes, and curriculum and assessment design are fit for purpose and successful in achieving the intended learning outcomes for students.





INTRODUCTION

The Directorate of Private Schools & Kindergartens Reviews (DPS) is responsible for reviewing, monitoring and reporting on the quality of the provision of education in Bahrain's private schools and kindergartens according to the same *Review Framework and Guidance* applied by the Directorate of Government Schools Reviews (DGS). The two directorates, the DGS and the DPS, apply the same criteria in making judgements according to best international practices, identifying schools' strengths and areas for improvement. (See the introduction to the DGS for details about the *Review Framework and Guidance* and the procedures used).

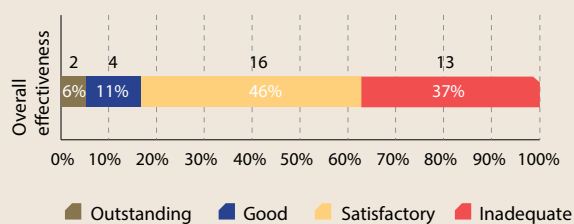
During 2012-2013, the DPS conducted reviews and identified strengths and areas for improvement in 21 schools. Private schools are in their first cycle of reviews, and the total number of private schools that have been reviewed since the commencement of Cycle 1 in September 2011 is 35 schools, just over half the private schools in Bahrain, excluding kindergartens. Nearly all the private schools reviewed are of mixed gender.

This report analyses the performance of these 35 private schools reviewed in Cycle 1 and explains the progress being made by one school that was 'inadequate' when reviewed, and has subsequently received its additional monitoring visit during 2012-2013.

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

Overall effectiveness of the 35 private schools reviewed till May 2013, is shown in Figure 18.

FIGURE 18: OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS - 35 PRIVATE SCHOOLS

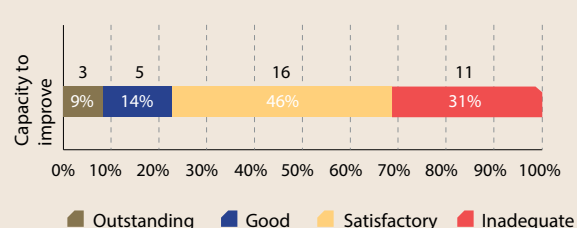


The proportion of 'good' and 'outstanding' schools (17%) is less than half the proportion judged 'inadequate' (37%). This high proportion of 'inadequate' schools represents a serious challenge to the improvement of national education in Bahrain within the scope of private education. 'Good' overall effectiveness or better often appears to be closely linked to those schools with higher levels of resourcing. This differential is most evidently characterised, in the best schools, by the range of well-qualified teachers they employ. This quality extends to the leadership teams where efforts are focused on the core purposes of teaching and learning, so that effective strategies are secured in raising outcomes, particularly in terms of students' academic achievement and their personal development.

CAPACITY TO IMPROVE

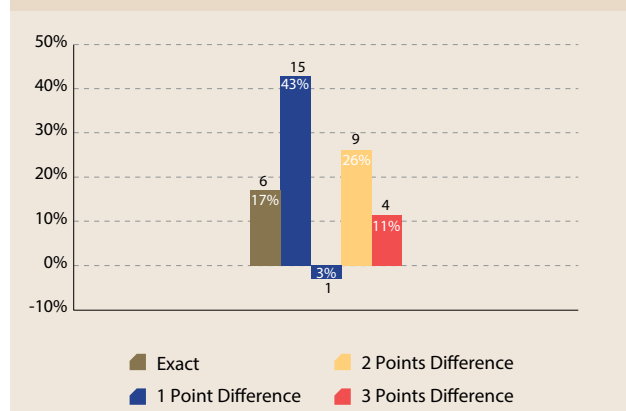
Figure 19 indicates that most private schools reviewed have the capacity to improve their performance from within their own resources, but almost a third of schools do not have the same capacity to improve. It is this group with inadequate capacity to improve that causes most concern, mainly because it is uncertain as to where these schools will draw their support and guidance to make the necessary improvements. Each school's review report points out clear recommendations, with specified priorities for improvement. These recommendations are highly significant in providing strategic capacity. For example, in the one school that received a monitoring visit since it was judged to have 'inadequate' capacity to improve, sufficient progress has been reported due to the clarity of these priorities, and the leadership's ability to re-orientate their implementation.

FIGURE 19: CAPACITY TO IMPROVE - 35 PRIVATE SCHOOLS



An important dimension of schools showing at least 'satisfactory' capacity to improve is their ability to self-evaluate accurately and record their judgements in their self-evaluation forms (SEFs). As with government schools, private schools' beliefs about their capacity to improve remain too much at variance with the DPS judgements. Figure 20 indicates the mismatch between the schools' own judgements and those of the DPS. Almost two thirds of schools self-evaluate accurately and within acceptable limits of one Grade difference from the judgements made by reviewers. However, over a third reflects too little understanding of the standards expected, and variances between their self-evaluation and DPS judgements are at two and even three Grade differences.

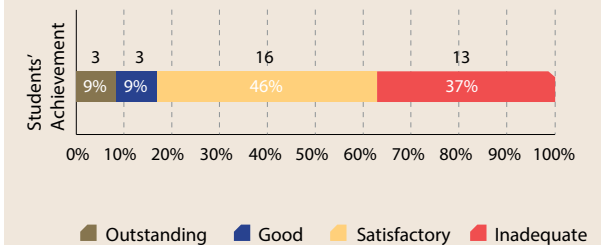
FIGURE 20: COMPARISON BETWEEN JUDGEMENTS IN SEFs AND DPS GRADES – 35 PRIVATE SCHOOLS



STUDENTS' ACHIEVEMENT IN THEIR ACADEMIC WORK

Achievement includes the students' attainment in a wide range of internal and external examinations set by different agencies in different countries and performance in internal tests set by schools. Importantly, as in government schools, the achievement and progress students make in their lessons is closely observed by the review teams, and the students' work over time is scrutinised. Figure 21 shows the proportions of students' achievement in the 35 schools reviewed.

FIGURE 21: STUDENTS' ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT - 35 PRIVATE SCHOOLS



In over 80% of the observed lessons where achievement is less than good, the quality of achievement and the standards of students' work in classrooms are often not as high as indicated by internal test and examination results. There is a close correlation in Grades between schools' overall effectiveness, students' academic achievement and the quality of teaching and learning. Approximately 18% of the reviewed private schools are very successful in securing consistently 'good' or better teaching, which has a consequent impact on a similar proportion of students' academic progress and achievement, with almost 50% securing 'satisfactory' achievement. However, approximately 37% of schools fail to ensure 'satisfactory' achievement for their students.

It is worth noting that judgements about achievement include many aspects of students' performance, such as their work samples and examination results. Figures 22 and 23 show the comparative achievement by students across the core subjects only in lessons observed. As can be seen in Figure 21, the best subject performance is in English, with almost 30% of outstanding and good achievement in lessons, while 20% of the other three core subjects have this level of performance.

FIGURE 22: ACHIEVEMENT IN SUBJECTS – PERCENTAGE OF LESSONS JUDGED OUTSTANDING AND GOOD DURING REVIEWS IN THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2012-2013

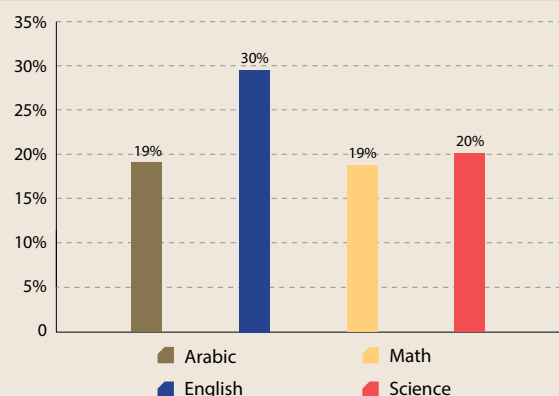
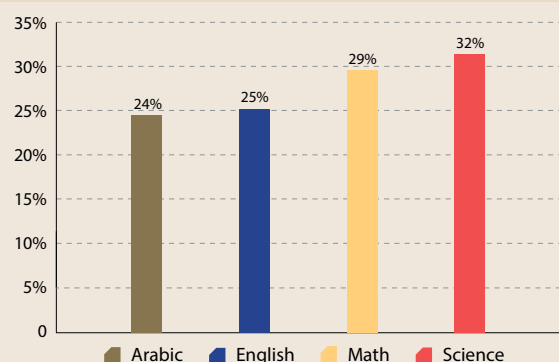


Figure 23 indicates that when analysing lessons where academic performance is judged 'inadequate', the weakest subject area is science, with over 30% of the science lessons observed being inadequate, closely followed by mathematics. In the 'outstanding' and 'good' schools, students' achievement across the core subjects is consistently high, mainly because teaching and resourcing are well matched to the demands of the subjects and the students' learning needs. However, in the 'satisfactory' and 'inadequate' schools, students perform most consistently in English and Arabic, mainly because teachers have better expertise in this area, but often lack the appropriate facilities to undertake the practical work and applications necessary in science and mathematics.

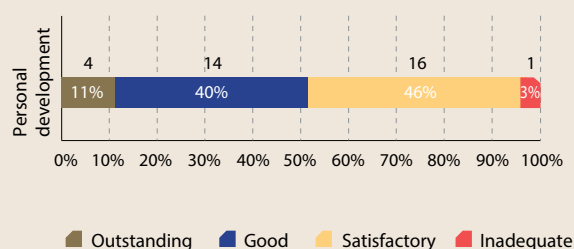
FIGURE 23: ACHIEVEMENT IN SUBJECTS – PERCENTAGE OF LESSONS JUDGED INADEQUATE DURING REVIEWS IN THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2012-2013



STUDENTS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

Figure 24 shows that over half the private schools secure at least 'good' levels of personal development for their students. Apart from one school, all provide at least 'satisfactory' outcomes. These successful outcomes exceed the levels of guidance and support provided by the schools, which indicates the contributions the students themselves make to ensuring appropriate standards in their personal skills and levels of maturity. Students quickly show their abilities to work well together when offered appropriate opportunities by teachers, but too often the learning situations provided are too limited. In such circumstances, many students become used to performing at a personal level lower than that of which they are capable. They fail to use their initiative enough because the teacher does not simply motivate them to do this.

FIGURE 24: STUDENTS' PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT - 35 PRIVATE SCHOOLS

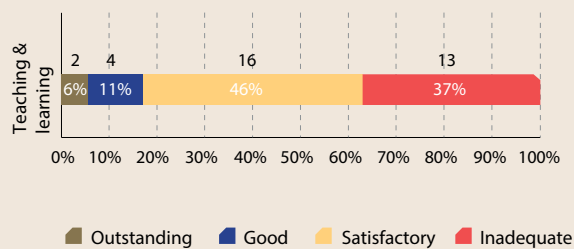


EFFECTIVENESS OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

Almost 17% of teaching is 'good' or better, while 37% is 'inadequate', as Figure 25 shows. Few teachers match their lessons plans to the differing needs of students, too many merely plan a single set of expectations with only the average learner in mind. In 'inadequate' lessons, the needs of the majority of learners are not met. There is insufficient challenge for the higher attaining students and not enough support for those who require more assistance. Where teaching is 'satisfactory', progress is made, but students' skills in independent learning are not promoted enough, and students are seldom asked to solve problems that require them to apply their knowledge in practical situations.

In 'good' and 'outstanding' lessons, teaching engages students of different abilities actively. Teachers use their assessment of students to provide new opportunities based on students' prior learning and achievement. Effective marking and feedback maintain progress along the right lines. The combination of differentiated planning for different groups of students, and effective teaching followed by assessment, which is clearly fed back to students about what they should do next to improve, hence, raises students' academic achievement most successfully.

FIGURE 25: TEACHING AND LEARNING - 35 PRIVATE SCHOOLS



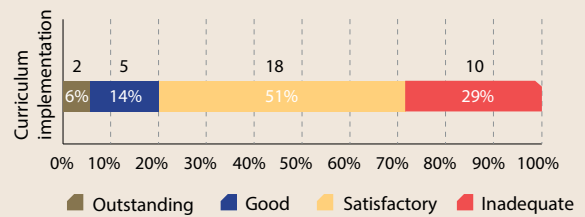
CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION AND ENRICHMENT

Curriculum implementation is varied across the private school sector because of the expectations within the different implemented curricula and examinations adopted. Whatever curriculum and examinations are used, it is the schools' Review Framework and Guidance for Bahrain that provides the criteria upon which the effectiveness of their implementation is judged.

The quality of curriculum implementation broadly reflects the judgements in the other aspects of teaching and learning and schools' overall effectiveness – where these are 'good' or better, so is the way the curriculum is implemented. However, in terms of curriculum implementation the situation is slightly better. This is because of the requirements that accredited curricula and examinations demand, which resulted to less than 30% of schools being 'inadequate' in this aspect, as shown in Figure 26. Although this aspect is better, the situation still causes

serious concern, as does the quality of the accommodation in the weakest schools. Extra-curricular activities generally enhance the curriculum and its implementation effectively in all except the lower performing schools.

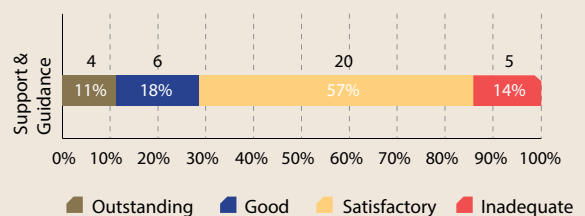
FIGURE 26: CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION - AND ENRICHMENT - 35 PRIVATE SCHOOLS



Student support and guidance

Support and guidance for students are not as strong as the outcomes students achieve in their personal development. Teachers tend to separate the essential elements of care and support from their teaching in classrooms and so students are not guided well enough in securing independence in the offered learning experience as a life skill. General support and guidance around the school are often given with more depth of thought and perception than within the classroom teaching situations. Nevertheless, students are cared for and guided to at least a 'satisfactory' standard in at least 86% of schools, as shown in Figure 27. Nevertheless, support and guidance is unacceptable and urgent action to bring about improvement is necessary in the 14% of schools where this is judged to be the case.

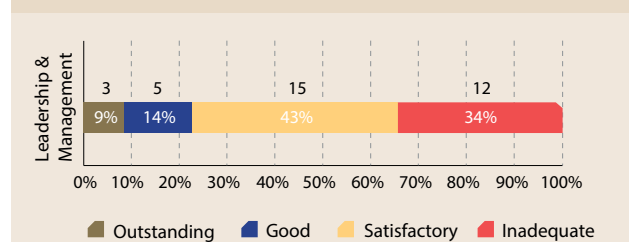
FIGURE 27: SUPPORT AND GUIDANCE - FOR STUDENTS - 35 PRIVATE SCHOOLS



EFFECTIVENESS OF LEADERSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE

Figure 28 shows that just under a quarter of private schools are well led, managed and governed. This low number is a concern because this aspect is crucial in driving the improvement process. Where leadership, management and governance are 'satisfactory', in almost half the schools, there are usually efficient routines that are effective in ensuring that students receive at least an acceptable standard of education, but the systems and procedures are generally insufficient to drive higher expectations and good achievement. In contrast to the 'good' and 'outstanding' school leaders, those leaders at different levels of seniority in the 'satisfactory' schools are generally not doing enough to check with teachers whether students are on track to achieve as well as they should, in addition to the aspects that need improvement. Where leadership, management and governance are 'inadequate', in over a third of schools, those in charge are not attending to the core functions that are required for satisfactory learning outcomes to be secured, either in terms of students' academic achievement or in their personal development. By contrast, in the best schools, governors hold the leaders to account for the rates of progress students make. The professional staff, at all levels, accept distributed responsibility for leading different aspects of provision to ensure that these have a significant impact on students' attainment and progress.

FIGURE 28: LEADERSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE - 35 PRIVATE SCHOOLS



Evident in successful schools and across the best leadership teams is the clarity of vision based on specific objectives and beliefs regarding teaching that brings about clear gains to students in their daily lives at

schools. Principals in these schools are keen enough that investment in teachers' training has a consequent and immediate impact on the routine classroom practices and required outcomes. They ensure that their senior leaders make an explicit commitment to seeing that teaching and learning bring about 'good' progress for students across the different subjects and departments of the school. Importantly, they constructively challenge those leaders and heads of department where performance is not as good as it should be to take remedial action.

The one school that has received its monitoring visit, following being judged 'inadequate', has adopted an active leadership and management approach. 'Sufficient progress' was judged to have been made in the first monitoring visit because of the schools focused leadership on a 'bias for effective actions and procedures'.

CAPACITY BUILDING

Most private schools reviewed have the capacity to improve their performance from within their own resources, but almost a third are judged not to be so placed. It is this group with inadequate capacity to improve that causes most concern, mainly because it is uncertain as to from where these schools will draw their support and guidance to make necessary improvements. The recommendations made in each school's review report point a clear direction, with specified priorities for improvement. These recommendations, in themselves, are highly salient in providing strategic capacity.

An important dimension of schools showing at least satisfactory capacity to improve is their ability to self-evaluate accurately and record their judgements in their summary self-evaluation forms (SEFs). As with government schools, private schools' beliefs about their capacity to improve remain too much at variance with the views of reviewers. The judgements made by the private schools and the reviewers coincide in almost one third of the self-evaluation forms and are within the reasonable one degree difference. However, over a third show too

little understanding of the standards expected where the variances are at two and even three grade differences, in all cases above the judgements made by reviewers.

Therefore, principals of private schools have been shown how to undertake school self-evaluation and complete the summary self-evaluation form in workshops similar to those by the DGS for government school principals. These were organised in the semester prior to their school review. Consultation meetings have been held with the schools' principals to seek their views on completed reviews, so helping to bridge any gaps in the perceptions between schools and review teams. This has assisted in ensuring adherence to the code of conduct and making necessary improvements and adjustments where appropriate. Workshops and meetings have been held with principals whose schools have been judged 'inadequate' to explain this judgement and help them prepare to lead improvements.

The DPS provides a number of professional development opportunities for its staff members, where all of the review specialists participated in several internal and external training workshops. Moreover, five DPS staff members took part in local and international conferences in several countries, including the USA and the United Arab Emirates. In addition, three DPS staff members are expected to complete the reviewers requirements to obtain a 'Certified Reviewer Certificate' in collaboration with CFBT Education Trust during 2014.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Not enough private schools are performing well enough to aspire to the international standards described in the Economic Vision 2030 for Bahrain. Although different schools are operating from vastly different baselines and levels of resourcing, serious improvements are needed if those judged 'inadequate' are to reach at least 'satisfactory' standards expected in Bahrain. The improvements required in the 'inadequate' schools centre around the need for more informed professional leadership, better

qualified staff who are skilled in using a range of teaching strategies which have a direct impact on securing students' progress, and modern educational resources and accommodation that meet the students' needs. 'Satisfactory' schools should adopt more of the practices of the 'good' and 'outstanding' schools. An adjustment in the distribution of resources to bring about changes in teaching and learning that in turn improves students' achievement outcomes is likely to be necessary.





INTRODUCTION

In May 2013 Grade 3 and 6 students in all public schools took the National Examinations for the fifth time, whereas Grade 9 students in all public schools took them for the fourth time. Two private schools also took the national examinations on a voluntary basis. Overall, a total of approximately 33,300 students sat for the examinations: Grade 3 in Arabic and Mathematics, and Grade 6 and 9 in Arabic, Mathematics, English and Science. Ministry of Education teachers and teachers from private schools fully co-operated with the Directorate of National Examinations (DNE) administration arrangements.

The examination papers were marked in the Kingdom of Bahrain in June 2013, and for the majority of students' marks were captured at the level of question paper totals. However, for each Grade and subject, marks were also captured at the item level for a common sample of 10% of the students. This was done to gather the data for the detailed analysis of student performance by topics and skills. The following outlines the results of the analyses of the May 2013 examinations, and any relevant comparisons with the 2009 to 2012 results.

As will be clear from the results, some of the following conclusions are based on the analyses of the performance of the total cohort of students, while some conclusions are based on the analyses of the performance of the 10% sample of students described above.

With regard to Grade 12 examinations, after the pilot examinations in 2012, the DNE implemented the first live Grade 12 examinations in 2013. These were held in March and were compulsory for all students at the 34 secondary government schools. Students from six private schools, who joined voluntarily, also completed these examinations. A total of 9,413 students sat the examinations, 9,264 of those were from government schools, whereas the remaining 149 were from private schools.

The following outlines the students' performance in the National Examinations for Grades 3, 6, 9 and 12.

GRADES 3, 6 AND 9 EXAMINATIONS

PERFORMANCE SCORES AND BASELINES

Performance of students is measured and reported by a performance score on a scale from 0.0 to 8.0. The performance score is an absolute measure that is based on an absolute ability scale derived from a Rasch model within item response theory. It is a measure of student's ability against the skills and topics in the test specifications. The national average performance score was defined as 4.0 in the first year of assessment (2009 for Grades 3 and 6 and 2010 for Grade 9) as the baseline against which to measure future years' performance. Test equating enables the comparison of the performance of the subsequent years against the baseline years' performance.

For security purposes, the QQA constructs a different test every year while ensuring that content and statistical specifications are similar to tests used in previous years. Despite such efforts to ensure similarity, assessments from year to year may differ somewhat in their difficulty. To account for this, the QQA uses a process called equating, which adjusts for differences in difficulty among the tests from year to year. Equating ensures that students in one year are not given an unfair advantage over students in another year and that reported changes in achievement levels are due to differences in student performance, and not to differences in test difficulty.

The DNE uses common-item non-equivalent group design to equate QQA tests over different years, so the performance scores reported here for 2013 are statistically comparable to all previous years' results.

STUDENT PERFORMANCE

Students' performance scores from 2009 to 2013 are presented in Table 1 below.

TABLE 1: GRADE 3, 6 AND 9 MEAN PERFORMANCE SCORES 2009 – 2013

Grade	Subject	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
3	Arabic	4.0	4.05	3.70	2.69	1.99
	Mathematics	4.0	4.35	3.40	2.05	1.52
6	Arabic	4.0	3.90	2.50	1.74	0.96
	Mathematics	4.0	4.05	2.50	1.83	0.70
	English	4.0	4.05	3.30	2.47	1.29
	Science	4.0	4.05	2.85	1.94	1.47
9	Arabic	-	4.0	2.75	1.51	1.07
	Mathematics	-	4.0	3.85	1.77	1.69
	English	-	4.0	4.05	3.31	3.59
	Science	-	4.0	2.80	1.27	0.67

Apart from English Grade 9, the mean performance scores show that students' performance decreased in all Grades and in all subjects. The biggest decreases from 2012 to 2013 are in Mathematics and English in Grade 6 and the smallest decrease is in Mathematics in Grade 9. This overall decrease follows on from the decrease observed in 2012, which at the time was thought to be an exception caused by the situation in the Kingdom of Bahrain during the second term of the 2010/2011 school year.

The QQA has no evidence to explain this continued decrease in results. However, two questions might be worth exploring:

- Is the continued civil disturbance of schools in the Kingdom during 2012 and 2013, affecting the lives of students, and their motivation, in more severe ways than originally expected?
- Are students' and teachers' initial enthusiasm and excitement with the national examinations waning, particularly since the national examinations do not count towards students' Grades and promotion to the next year?

Tables 2 to 4 show the cumulative percentages of performance scores, and Figures 29 to 38 illustrate these. The cumulative percentages of students achieving different Performance Scores in 2013 are mostly lower than the figures for 2012, continuing the pattern of substantial decline which began with the 2011 examinations. The only subject which has seen an increase in the cumulative percentages at almost all Performance Scores is Grade 9 English.

The colour yellow in the Tables 2 to 4 below highlights the performance at 4.0, which is the baseline from which measurement of performance started. The falling cumulative percentages at a Performance Score of 4.0 indicate that fewer and fewer students are producing work of this standard.

TABLE 2: GRADE 3 CUMULATIVE PERCENTAGE OF PERFORMANCE SCORES 2009 – 2013

Performance Score	Arabic					Mathematics				
	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
0.0	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
1.0	92.3	95.4	88.4	79.3	66.9	93.3	94.5	89.0	74.8	64.8
2.0	84.5	85.3	79.7	64.9	53.3	85.1	90.2	78.2	50.9	38.6
3.0	69.4	69.4	64.9	46.1	38.8	72.9	79.2	58.6	25.6	15.9
4.0	49.1	50.1	46.8	21.2	23.4	48.7	60.4	35.0	8.4	4.4
5.0	29.2	30.7	28.5	6.9	14.7	24.8	39.4	15.6	1.8	1.4
6.0	13.5	13.4	13.9	1.6	7.0	9.9	21.0	5.3	0.3	0.3
7.0	4.6	4.0	3.7	0.5	2.0	2.2	7.5	1.5	0.0	0.0
8.0	1.0	1.1	1.5	0.1	1.0	0.5	2.5	0.3	0.0	0.0

TABLE 3: GRADE 6 CUMULATIVE PERCENTAGES OF PERFORMANCE SCORES 2009 – 2013

Performance Score	Arabic					Mathematics					English					Science				
	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
0.0	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
1.0	90.9	94.3	75.8	63.5	51.3	85.8	88.6	77.4	63.4	38.8	97.3	97.8	94.6	77.1	43.9	95.8	97.6	88.8	82.5	69.5
2.0	83.0	85.2	61.4	48.7	32.9	76.9	81.6	55.0	42.6	19.0	94.5	95.8	81.6	53.8	30.2	92.4	94.9	75.4	44.6	29.5
3.0	70.6	72.0	40.0	28.6	14.8	64.5	66.2	32.7	21.9	7.2	76.8	82.3	49.6	31.5	18.5	78.7	83.9	50.0	15.0	6.9
4.0	52.4	50.5	20.5	10.2	3.8	43.4	46.9	14.2	8.9	2.0	36.7	49.6	21.6	16.9	11.1	49.8	57.3	20.6	2.6	0.7
5.0	28.2	26.2	6.6	2.0	0.5	21.3	23.3	4.4	2.7	0.5	15.1	20.4	10.0	6.7	4.6	19.8	22.0	4.3	0.2	0.0
6.0	8.7	8.0	1.3	0.1	0.0	7.7	8.9	1.3	0.8	0.1	5.5	7.7	4.1	2.8	2.1	2.8	3.6	0.4	0.0	0.0
7.0	1.7	1.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.0	3.1	0.2	0.1	0.0	1.8	2.7	1.7	0.9	0.5	0.2	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.0
8.0	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.3	0.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.6	0.8	0.5	0.3	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

TABLE 4: GRADE 9 CUMULATIVE PERCENTAGES OF PERFORMANCE SCORES 2010 – 2013

Performance Score	Arabic				Mathematics				English				Science			
	2010	2011	2012	2013	2010	2011	2012	2013	2010	2011	2012	2013	2010	2011	2012	2013
0.0	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
1.0	93.0	74.8	56.5	55.2	85.7	77.3	53.8	54.8	93.1	91.4	79.1	84.2	94.2	90.9	59.0	37.4
2.0	87.0	62.3	42.7	39.3	79.3	71.8	37.5	33.1	84.5	85.4	61.1	69.2	92.1	71.4	25.3	10.4
3.0	72.6	47.9	31.5	25.0	69.3	57.1	22.8	15.7	66.5	71.1	41.4	55.0	80.5	42.6	6.0	1.4
4.0	49.9	28.7	15.2	13.5	44.7	38.8	10.3	5.9	40.2	41.0	24.7	30.2	51.5	17.1	0.7	0.1
5.0	27.2	13.8	4.0	5.6	22.6	20.4	4.0	1.8	22.7	19.8	9.5	13.3	20.1	3.2	0.0	0.0
6.0	9.8	4.5	0.6	1.8	7.7	6.9	0.8	0.6	9.7	9.3	5.1	7.1	4.6	0.2	0.0	0.0
7.0	2.1	1.1	0.1	0.5	2.3	1.3	0.0	0.2	3.4	3.4	2.1	2.7	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.0
8.0	0.4	0.2	0.0	0.1	0.5	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.9	0.7	0.7	0.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

FIGURE 29: PERFORMANCE SCORES IN GRADE 3 ARABIC

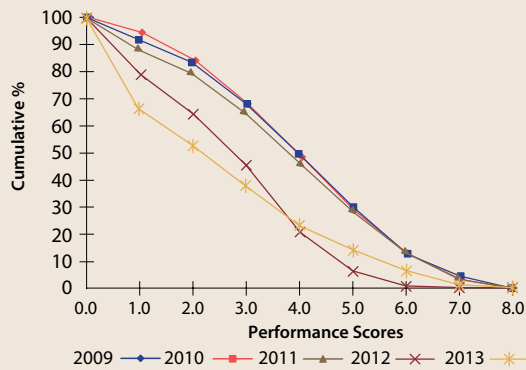


FIGURE 32: PERFORMANCE SCORES IN GRADE 6 MATHEMATICS

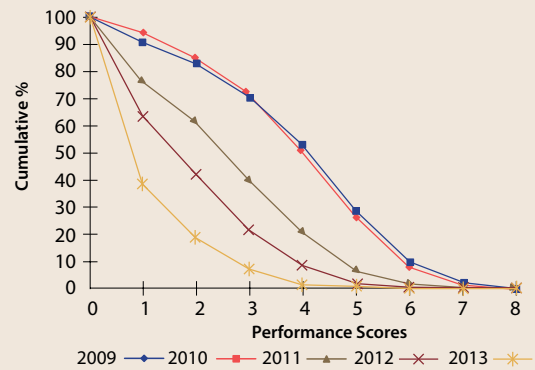


FIGURE 30: PERFORMANCE SCORES IN GRADE 3 MATHEMATICS

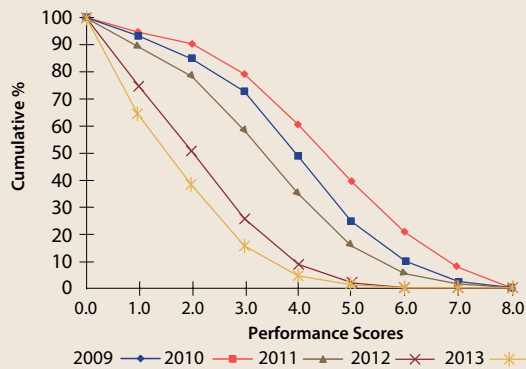


FIGURE 33: PERFORMANCE SCORES IN GRADE 6 ENGLISH

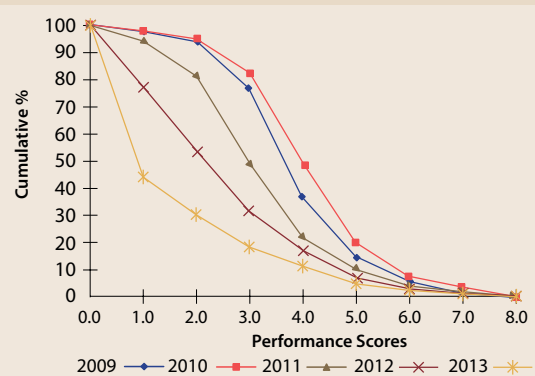


FIGURE 31: PERFORMANCE SCORES IN GRADE 6 ARABIC

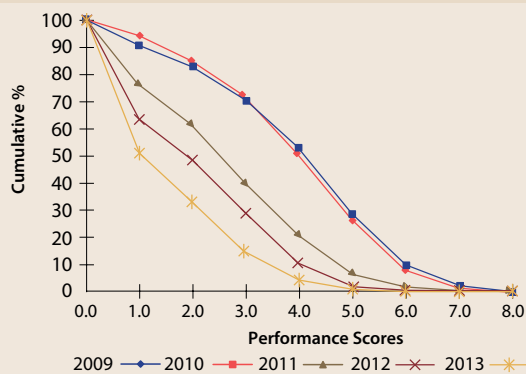


FIGURE 34: PERFORMANCE SCORES IN GRADE 6 SCIENCE

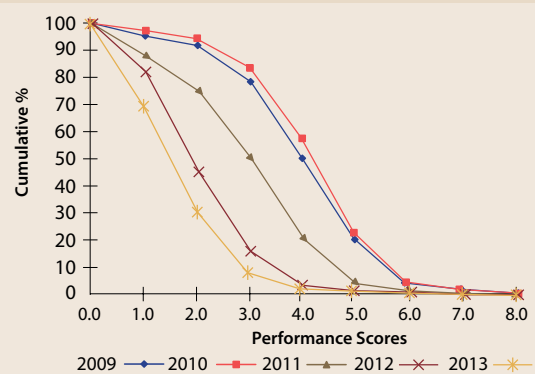


FIGURE 35: PERFORMANCE SCORES IN GRADE 9 ARABIC

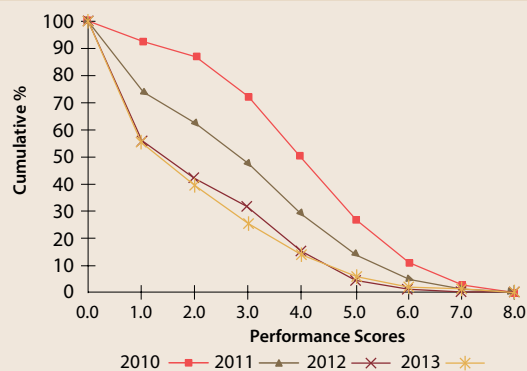


FIGURE 38: PERFORMANCE SCORES IN GRADE 9 SCIENCE

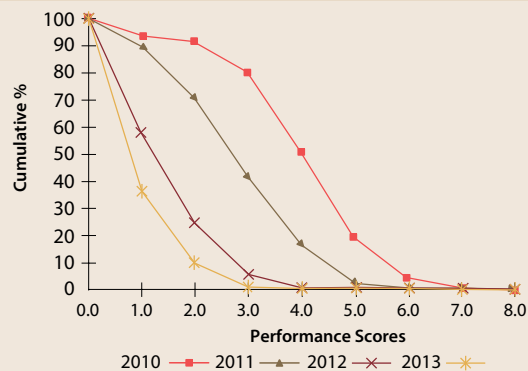


FIGURE 36: PERFORMANCE SCORES IN GRADE 9 MATHEMATICS

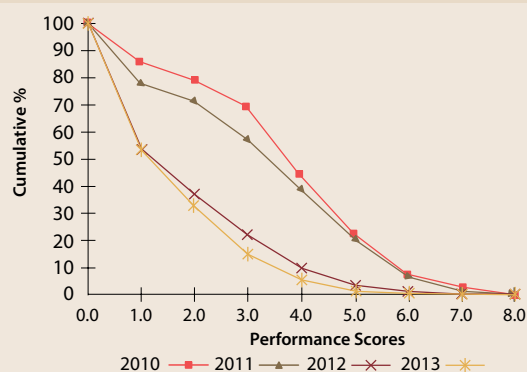
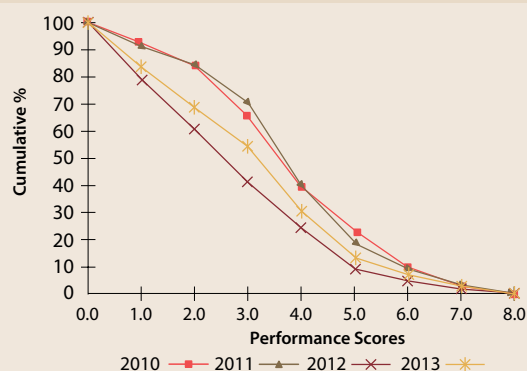


FIGURE 37: PERFORMANCE SCORES IN GRADE 9 ENGLISH



GENERAL COMMENTS ON THE PERFORMANCE SCORES IN RELATION TO TOPICS AND SKILLS BASED ON DATA TAKEN FROM 10% RANDOM SAMPLE OF ALL STUDENTS

The data in Tables 5-14 below are for subjects examined at Grades 3, 6 and 9, and refer specifically to the 'Topics' within subjects (for example, Listening, Reading, and Writing in the case of languages), and to the 'Skills' within 'Topics' (for example, 'Understanding explicit meaning', 'Structure and grammar', 'Main points of argument').

The performance score, reported on a scale of 0.0 to 8.0, is given for each 'Topic' and 'Skill' in each of the subject tables below. It should be noted that the whole subject performance score is not an average of the Topics or Skills performance scores. The whole subject performance score is the national average performance score of the subject and is calculated from whole cohort data, while the Topic and Skills performance scores are calculated from the 10% sample of students in the cohort. The general comments below are also based solely on data taken from the 10% random sample of all students in the cohort. Some skills in the languages, which include many individual skill areas, are based on one or two marks only, which means that student performance can fluctuate widely year on year.

ARABIC PERFORMANCE SCORES FOR GRADES 3, 6 & 9 (TABLES 5, 6 & 7)

The most important remarks on the Arabic results are as follows:

- In 2013, performance scores of all students in Arabic was lower than the previous years in Grades: 3, 6 and 9.
- It should be noted that some skills are based on a low number of marks so student performance can fluctuate considerably from year to year, for example detail of the conversation in Grade 3, main points of the argument in Grade 6, and Identify the main points in Grade 9, which is based on one mark.
- In 2013, students' performance in "Writing and Listening" was slightly stronger than in "Reading" in Grade 3, while it was considerably stronger in "Writing" than in "Reading and Listening" in Grade 6. Students' performance was strongest in "Writing" in Grade 9.
- Students' performance in "Writing" seems to be improved when students move up into the next educational cycle.
- **Skills, in which students perform consistently well are as follows:**
 - o Grade 3: Main ideas of the conversation, Follow detail or instructions and Write a short story.
 - o Grade 6: Identify the general idea, Presentation and handwriting and basic elements of narrative.
 - o Grade 9: Identify the main points and Understand content exactly.
- **Skills, in which students show consistently low performance include:**
 - o Grade 3: Give meanings of words, Detect tone of voice and Understand implicit meanings.
 - o Grade 6: Comment on writer's words, Main points of argument and Identify characteristics.
 - o Grade 9: Comment on grammar, Comment on writer's words and Summarise main points.

TABLE 5: GRADE 3 ARABIC RESULTS BY TOPICS AND SKILLS 2009 – 2013

		2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Topic	Writing	3.8	3.9	4.0	3.3	1.8
	Reading	3.9	4.0	3.7	2.1	1.6
	Listening	4.2	4.2	4.0	2.4	1.8
Skill	Appreciate writer's language	4.4	3.8	3.0	2.6	2.2
	Detail of the conversation	1.3	3.2	4.5	6.0	5.3
	Detect tone of voice	4.7	3.7	4.1	2.5	2.1
	Follow detail or instructions	3.2	3.3	5.3	3.9	5.3
	Give meanings of words	1.2	3.1	2.9	2.3	1.7
	Main ideas of the conversation	5.5	4.9	4.7	4.2	5.6
	Order sentences coherently *	3.4	3.8	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Punctuation and vocalization	3.5	2.8	4.4	2.9	2.4
	Select/retrieve information	4.3	4.7	5.1	2.8	3.0
	Spell a range of words	3.9	3.9	4.0	2.5	3.6
	Suggest what happens next	2.5	1.6	2.2	2.6	2.5
	Understand explicit meaning	3.0	3.6	4.8	2.1	3.0
	Understand implicit meaning	3.7	2.6	3.3	1.9	2.0
	Use a range of vocabulary	3.7	3.9	4.0	N/A	4.7
	Write a short story	N/A	N/A	4.1	3.7	5.0
	Write a simple letter	N/A	N/A	3.8	2.9	4.2
	National Performance for the subject	4.0	4.1	3.7	2.7	2.0

* This skill was divided into two skills: 'Write a short story and 'Write a simple letter'.

TABLE 6: GRADE 6 ARABIC RESULTS BY TOPICS AND SKILLS 2009 – 2013

		2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Topic	Writing	3.7	3.8	3.6	3.2	3.5
	Reading	3.9	3.9	1.6	1.2	0.5
	Listening	4.9	4.3	2.9	1.8	0.8
Skill	Basic elements of narrative	3.9	3.9	4.2	3.8	4.4
	Comment on grammar	3.6	3.4	1.7	1.3	1.0
	Comment on writer's words	3.1	2.9	1.0	1.8	0.1
	Give meanings of words	3.1	3.4	0.9	2.4	1.2
	Identify characteristics	2.8	3.3	0.8	0.5	0.4
	Identify fact and opinion	4.7	4.5	3.0	2.3	1.4
	Identify Sequence	5.3	5.9	3.7	4.5	2.6
	Identify the general idea	5.9	3.8	6.9	6.5	6.2
	Identify the main points	5.6	5.0	4.0	4.4	1.4
	Logical sequence of argument	3.6	3.6	3.7	3.8	4.1
	Main points of argument	4.6	4.0	1.3	1.0	0.1
	Pass judgment on the argument	3.4	3.4	2.0	1.4	0.8
	Presentation and handwriting	4.0	4.8	4.6	N/A	5.8
	Punctuation and vocalization	3.1	3.1	3.0	N/A	1.8
	Spelling	4.0	4.8	4.0	1.8	3.3
	Structure and grammar	3.8	3.7	3.9	N/A	4.2
	Summarise	6.2	3.4	3.6	2.1	3.0
	Understand implicit meaning	3.2	3.6	2.3	2.3	1.5
	Use expressive language	3.9	3.8	4.0	N/A	4.3
	Write for a specified audience	3.8	3.6	3.7	N/A	4.1
	Writer's purpose and viewpoint	3.2	2.5	2.0	1.6	0.7
	National Performance for the subject	4.0	3.9	2.5	1.7	1.0

TABLE 7: GRADE 9 ARABIC RESULTS BY TOPICS AND SKILLS 2010 – 2013

		2010	2011	2012	2013
Topic	Writing	3.8	4.3	3.6	4.3
	Reading	3.8	1.9	1.1	0.7
	Listening	4.8	2.8	1.7	2.0
Skill	Comment on grammar	3.2	2.4	1.3	0.9
	Comment on writer's words	3.7	2.0	1.2	1.0
	Create a simple plan	3.5	4	3.6	4.1
	Express relevant ideas	3.9	4.4	N/A	4.3
	Give opinion objectively	4	3.8	2.1	2.8
	Identify detail	2.7	1.8	1.3	1.1
	Identify the main points	6.3	3.7	2.9	5.4
	Identify writer's attitude	3.6	2.0	2.2	1.9
	Meanings of words in context	3.7	2.3	1.3	1.1
	Summarise main points	3.6	2.0	1.4	1.0
	Understand content exactly	4.3	2.6	3.3	4.5
	Use a creative style	3.7	4.3	N/A	4.3
	Write accurately	3.7	4.3	N/A	4.4
	National Performance for the subject	4.0	2.8	1.5	1.1

MATHEMATICS PERFORMANCE SCORES FOR GRADES 3, 6 & 9 (TABLES 8, 9 & 10)

The most important remarks on the Mathematics results are as follows:

- In 2013, performance scores of all students in Mathematics was lower than the previous years in Grades: 3, 6 and 9.
- In 2013 and like previous years, students' performance was almost identical in topics and skills in all Grades: 3, 6 and 9.

Please note that there were changes to the national curriculum in 2012 for Grades 6 and 9, which were reflected in the test specifications and the question papers. As a result, not all topics can be compared directly to the years preceding 2012.

TABLE 8: GRADE 3 MATHEMATICS RESULTS BY TOPICS AND SKILLS 2009 -2013

		2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Topic	Geometry and measure	4.0	4.5	3.4	2.0	1.8
	Number and algebra	3.9	4.5	3.3	2.0	1.7
	Statistics and probability	3.8	4.7	3.3	2.1	1.9
Skill	Mathematical knowledge	4.0	4.5	3.3	2.0	1.7
	Using and applying mathematics	3.9	4.4	3.3	1.9	1.7
	National Performance for the subject	4.0	4.4	3.4	2.1	1.5

TABLE 9: GRADE 6 MATHEMATICS RESULTS BY TOPICS AND SKILLS 2009 – 2013

		2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Topic	Geometry & Measure	4.1	3.9	2.5	1.8	1.1
	Statistics & Probability	3.8	4.3	2.4	1.9	1.1
	Number and Operations	3.4	3.3	2.3	1.8	1.0
	Algebra	2.3	2.7	1.7	2.0	1.1
Skill	Mathematical knowledge	3.7	3.9	2.4	1.8	1.0
	Using and applying mathematics	3.4	3.4	2.1	1.9	1.0
	National Performance for the subject	4.0	4.1	2.5	1.8	0.7

TABLE 10: GRADE 9 MATHEMATICS RESULTS BY TOPICS AND SKILLS 2010 – 2013

		2010	2011	2012	2013
Topic	Data Analysis and Statistics	4.6	2.3	1.8	1.6
	Geometry & Measure	4.0	3.1	1.8	1.6
	Number and Operations	3.5	3.3	1.8	1.6
	Algebra	3.4	2.8	1.7	1.5
Skill	Mathematical Knowledge	4.2	3.2	1.8	1.5
	Using and Applying Mathematics	3.1	3.1	1.8	1.6
	National Performance for the subject	4.0	3.9	1.8	1.7

ENGLISH PERFORMANCE SCORES FOR GRADES 3, 6 & 9 (TABLES 11 & 12)

The most important remarks on the English results are as follows:

- In 2013, performance scores of students in English was lower than the previous years in Grade 6, while students' performance in Grade 9 increased in this year, compared to 2012.
- As for skills, students' performance scores in 2013 was strongest in "Writing" in Grade 6, while it was strongest in "Reading and Listening" in Grade 9. Students' performance in "Writing" seems to decline when students move up into the next educational cycle (from Grade 6 to Grade 9), whilst it seems to improve in "Reading and Listening".
- Skills, in which students perform well are as follows:
 - Grade 6: Story writing from pictures and Brief guided writing.
 - Grade 9: Listening for detail and Skimming and scanning.
- Skills, in which students show low performance include:
 - Grade 6: Understanding signs or notices and Using grammar in context.
 - Grade 6: Write transaction letter/email and Write continuous prose.

SCIENCE PERFORMANCE SCORES FOR GRADES 6 & 9 (TABLES 13 & 14)

The most important remarks on the science results are as follows:

- In 2013, performance scores of students in Science was lower than the previous years in Grades: 6 and 9.
- In 2013, students' performance was almost identical in all topics and skills in Grades: 6 and 9.

The test specifications was revised for 2012 to reduce the number of questions in the Science examinations. A proportionate reduction in examination time was also implemented.

TABLE 11: GRADE 6 ENGLISH RESULTS BY TOPICS AND SKILLS 2009 – 2013

		2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Topic	Writing	2.0	2.8	2.3	2.7	3.1
	Reading	4.1	4.2	3.2	2.1	0.8
	Listening	4.2	4.3	3.1	2.3	1.1
Skill	Brief guided writing	1.5	2.4	1.9	2.1	2.8
	Identifying detail (dialogue)	3.7	4.8	3.3	2.4	1.2
	Matching multiple short texts	3.2	3.8	2.9	2.0	1.3
	Retrieving detail (monologue)	2.9	1.0	1.1	1.0	1.3
	Skimming and scanning	4.1	4.0	3.1	2.3	1.2
	Story writing from pictures	2.0	2.7	2.2	2.6	3.0
	Understanding detail and gist	4.1	4.0	3.0	2.7	1.8
	Understanding short dialogues	5.2	4.8	3.5	3.6	1.6
	Understanding signs or notices	4.2	4.7	3.2	2.2	1.1
	Use of language in context	4.0	3.9	3.0	2.2	1.3
	Using grammar in context	3.9	3.8	3.2	2.3	1.1
	National Performance for the subject	4.0	4.1	3.3	2.5	1.3

TABLE 12: GRADE 9 ENGLISH RESULTS BY TOPICS AND SKILLS 2010 – 2013

		2010	2011	2012	2013
Topic	Writing	2.9	1.9	2.6	2.6
	Reading	4.1	4.7	2.8	3.3
	Listening	4.2	4.9	2.8	3.4
Skill	General comprehension	4.4	4.6	3	3.4
	Listening for detail	5	5.8	3.3	4.2
	Listening/writing information	2.6	2.3	1.5	2.9
	Skimming and scanning	4.1	3.8	2.9	3.6
	Transfer key information	2.7	2.6	2.2	2.9
	Understand longer texts	4.3	4.7	2.7	3.3
	Use lexis/grammar in context	4.3	4.8	2.9	3.3
	Write continuous prose	2.6	1.4	2.1	2.4
	Write transaction letter/email	3	2.1	2.5	2.1
	National Performance for the subject	4	4.1	3.3	3.6

TABLE 13: GRADE 6 SCIENCE RESULTS BY TOPICS AND SKILLS 2009 – 2013

		2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Topic	Natural science	4.1	4.1	2.9	1.9	1.5
	Life science and environment	3.9	4.1	2.8	1.9	1.6
	Earth and space science	3.9	4.1	2.8	1.9	1.5
Skill	Recall and understanding	4.0	4.1	2.9	1.9	1.5
	Applications and implications	4.0	4.1	2.9	1.9	1.7
	Enquiry skills and analysis	3.8	3.9	2.8	1.9	1.4
	National Performance for the subject	4.0	4.1	2.9	1.9	1.5

TABLE 14: GRADE 9 SCIENCE RESULTS BY TOPICS AND SKILLS 2010 – 2013

		2010	2011	2012	2013
Topic	Biology & Environmental Science	4.1	2.7	1.4	1.0
	Natural Science	4.1	2.8	1.4	0.9
	Earth, Space and Astronomy	4	2.7	1.4	0.9
Skill	Recall and Understanding	4.1	2.8	1.4	1.0
	Applications and Implications	4.1	2.7	1.4	0.9
	Enquiry Skills and Analysis	3.9	2.7	1.4	1.0
	National Performance for the subject	4	2.8	1.3	0.7

PERFORMANCE SCORES BY GENDER (GRADES 3, 6 AND 9)

Table (15) and Figure (39) show the mean Performance Scores for girls and boys, and the differences between them, in 2013. These figures are calculated from entire national cohort of students (including absentees) and the average is calculated by finding the Performance Score and then finding the mean. The figures are not directly comparable with those calculated in past years because past calculations have been based on the 10% sample only, and have therefore excluded absentees.

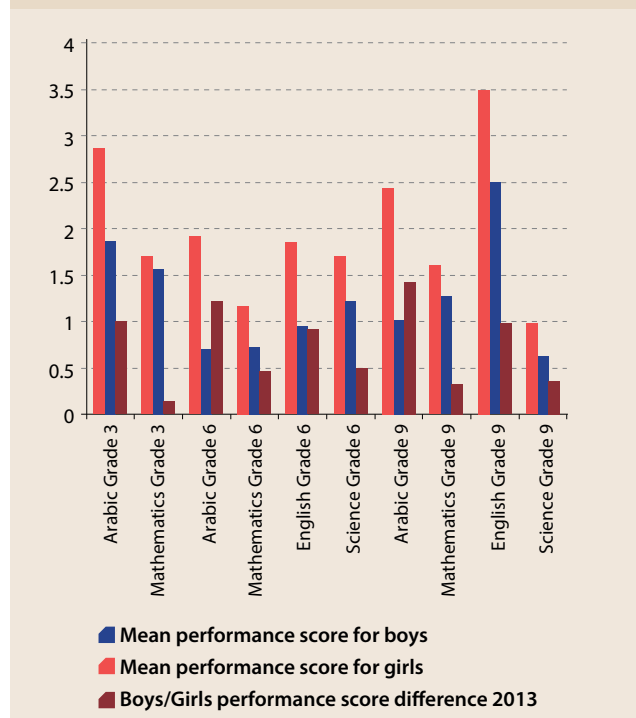
As was the case in 2012, girls outperformed boys in all subjects. The difference is smaller in the technical subjects than in the languages at all Grades, and the greatest difference at all Grades is in Arabic. The difference between girls and boys is almost the same in Mathematics and Science at both Grades 6 and 9. Differences between boys and girls grow greater with age in the languages but not in the technical subjects.

The reasons for these large differences in performance cannot be determined from the examinations data. The fact that these differences confirm the Directorate of Government Schools Reviews reports.

TABLE 15: GENDER DIFFERENCES IN MEAN PERFORMANCE SCORES IN 2013

Grade	Subject	Mean Performance scores for girls	Mean Performance scores for boys	Difference between boys and girls
3	Arabic	2.87	1.87	1.00
	Mathematics	1.70	1.57	0.13
6	Arabic	1.92	0.71	1.21
	Mathematics	1.17	0.72	0.45
	English	1.86	0.95	0.91
	Science	1.70	1.22	0.48
9	Arabic	2.44	1.02	1.42
	Mathematics	1.60	1.27	0.33
	English	3.49	2.51	0.98
	Science	0.98	0.63	0.35

FIGURE 39: GENDER DIFFERENCES IN MEAN PERFORMANCE SCORES BY SUBJECT IN 2013

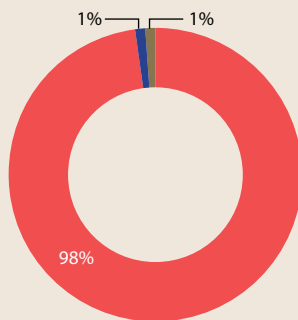


STUDENTS' PROGRESS FROM GRADE 3 TO GRADE 6 AND FROM GRADE 6 TO GRADE 9

Students who sat the Grade 6 examinations in 2013 had already done the Grade 3 examinations in 2010; and students who sat the Grade 9 examinations in 2013 had already done the Grade 6 examinations in 2010. This allows the DNE to report on individual students' progress from Grade 3 to Grade 6, and from Grade 6 to Grade 9 on a subject-by-subject basis. This is done by comparing student's individual subject performance scores from one cycle to the next, for example a student may have a higher performance score in Arabic in Grade 6 than s/he had in Grade 3. From this it can be concluded that the student improved in Arabic between Grades 3 and 6. Vice versa, if the performance score in Grade 6 is lower than in Grade 3 or remained the same, the student did not improve.

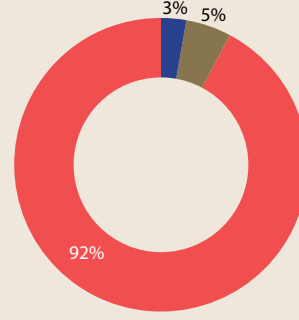
Figures 40 to 45 show the percentages of students who received either higher or lower performance scores from one cycle to the next, or whose performance scores remained the same.

FIGURE 40: STUDENT PROGRESS FROM GRADE 3 TO GRADE 6 IN ARABIC



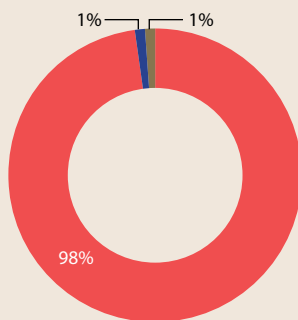
Higher PS than in G3 Same PS as in G3 Lower PS than in G3

FIGURE 43: STUDENT PROGRESS FROM GRADE 6 TO GRADE 9 IN MATHEMATICS



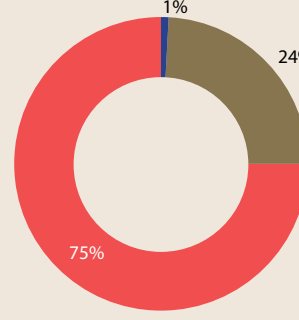
Higher PS than in G3 Same PS as in G3 Lower PS than in G3

FIGURE 41: STUDENT PROGRESS FROM GRADE 3 TO GRADE 6 IN MATHEMATICS



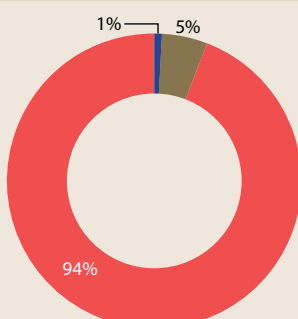
Higher PS than in G3 Same PS as in G3 Lower PS than in G3

FIGURE 44: STUDENT PROGRESS FROM GRADE 6 TO GRADE 9 IN ENGLISH



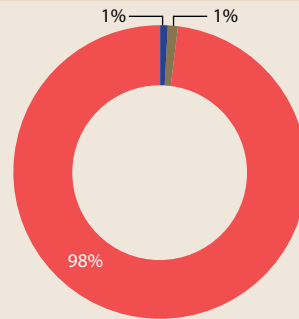
Higher PS than in G3 Same PS as in G3 Lower PS than in G3

FIGURE 42: STUDENT PROGRESS FROM GRADE 6 TO GRADE 9 IN ARABIC



Higher PS than in G3 Same PS as in G3 Lower PS than in G3

FIGURE 45: STUDENT PROGRESS FROM GRADE 6 TO GRADE 9 IN SCIENCE



Higher PS than in G3 Same PS as in G3 Lower PS than in G3

In almost all subjects at both Grades 6 and 9 students' performance scores are lower from one cycle to the next, indicating that their performance is not improving as they move through school. The exception to this is English, where almost a quarter of students in Grade 9 achieved a performance score higher than their Grade 6 score.

PERFORMANCE OF THE EXAMINATIONS

The most common internationally established measure of the reliability of an examination is Cronbach's Alpha (α). It is a measure of the internal consistency of the examination, i.e. how well the scores of the individual items correlate with the overall score, on average. As a commonly held international standard, the value of (α) should not be lower than 0.7. Values above 0.8 indicate strong internal reliability.

The value of (α) is related both to the number of items in the examination and to the standard deviation of the marks – it will tend to be lower in examinations with only a few items and with a narrow concentration of marks than in examinations with many items and a wide spread of marks. The values of (α) for the 2009 to 2013 core examinations are given in Table 16 below, together with the means and standard deviations of the raw marks achieved by all students (expressed as percentages of the maximum mark available). Also included are the maximum raw marks.

The data show that the reliabilities of all ten examinations were good, and examination results can be treated with confidence. On average, the standard deviations remained stable. Overall, the means for Grade 9 are particularly low, with none at or around the mean mark of 50%. As in 2012, low performance was most pronounced in Grade 9 Mathematics. This is lower than can be attributed simply to an unfamiliar style of examining, and might indicate a more deep-seated mismatch between the demand of the examinations and the abilities of the students being examined. In principle, this could be because:

- The demands inherent in the National Curriculum are not realistic for the education system to achieve.
- The National Curriculum is not being taught or not being taught well enough.
- There are high absentee rates, particularly in Grade 9.
- Students are not motivated to give their best, as national examinations do not count towards the students' final school Grades nor in deciding their promotion to the next Grade.

TABLE 16: MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS
2009 – 2013; CRONBACH'S ALPHA 2013

Grade	Subject	Max. raw marks		Mean raw mark					Standard deviation					Cronbach's alpha
		2009 - 2011	2012 - 2013	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	
3	Arabic	45	45	43%	38%	49%	45%	51%	22%	22%	24%	22%	24%	0.92
	Mathematics	60	60	40%	51%	38%	42%	47%	19%	22%	21%	20%	21%	0.92
6	Arabic	78	78	46%	42%	37%	39%	38%	20%	19%	20%	21%	19%	0.92
	Mathematics	90	90	20%	21%	21%	24%	28%	14%	15%	15%	16%	17%	0.94
	English	65	65	33%	34%	29%	31%	33%	16%	16%	18%	18%	18%	0.82
	Science	90	85	47%	41%	42%	31%	35%	17%	12%	18%	14%	15%	0.89
9	Arabic	76	76	-	39%	37%	35%	41%	-	19%	24%	24%	21%	0.91
	Mathematics	90	90*	-	17%	11%	13%	13%	-	13%	12%	12%	11%	0.90
	English	85	85	-	25%	20%	22%	29%	-	19%	17%	19%	21%	0.85
	Science	135	105	-	33%	30%	27%	32%	-	14%	16%	15%	16%	0.91

*In 2013 one mark was discounted and the maximum mark was therefore 89

GRADE 12 EXAMINATIONS

STUDENT PERFORMANCE AND BASELINES

The national examinations at Grade 12 are in Arabic, English and Problem-Solving. They are not directly based on the Bahraini curriculum, but test the general competencies in those subjects that students should have acquired after completing their 12 years of schooling in Bahrain. The expected performance and grading standards are benchmarked against international qualifications – Arabic and Problem-Solving against the UK and international AS Level, and English against Level B2 of the Common Europeans Framework of reference for Languages (CFER), as these are the standards also expected in the Bahraini curriculum in this instance. The Problem-Solving examination is offered in Arabic and English languages to private school students.

Grade 12 examinations follow a different assessment model from Grades 3, 6 and 9 examinations. They are not pre-tested; instead they are 'awarded' after the examinations. This means that Grade boundaries are set by a committee of senior examiners based on statistical evidence and professional judgement. The committee comes to its judgements by comparing real answers from students' answer papers with the Grade descriptors from the test specifications. Again, this follows the tried and tested model of 'awarding' in UK and international qualifications.

Results are reported by a Grade and a uniform mark for each subject. For Arabic and English only, they also receive a Grade and uniform mark for each paper, as each paper tests a skill, e.g. Reading, Writing, Listening.

The grades and uniform marks available are shown in Table 17.

TABLE 17 : AVAILABLE GRADES AND UNIFORM MARKS FOR GRADE 12 EXAMINATIONS

Grades	Uniform marks
A	90% (90 - 100)
B	80% (80 - 90)
C	70% (70 - 79)
D	60% (60 - 69)
E	50% (50 - 59)
U (= Ungraded = Fail)	below 50% (0 - 49)

STUDENT PERFORMANCE

The answer papers for Grade 12 were marked and Graded in the Kingdom of Bahrain by teachers from Bahraini schools. Overall, student performance in the Grade 12 examinations was best in Arabic, and worst in Problem-Solving.

The Figures 46 – 59 below show performance of government and private school students by subject and then by gender. However, government and private school performances cannot be compared directly because the number of students from private schools who took the examinations is too small. The students from the private schools are also not necessarily a representative sample of Bahrain's private student cohort.

PERFORMANCE OF GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS STUDENTS

In Arabic, as can be seen in Figure 46, the majority of government students achieved a pass Grade, while 43% of them did not pass. Only 4% of government school students achieved a Grade A. As can be seen in Figure 47, in English only 17% of government school students achieved a pass Grade, and a few government school students achieved a Grade A.

FIGURE 46 : GRADE 12 ARABIC RESULTS BY GRADE GOVERNMENT SCHOOL STUDENTS

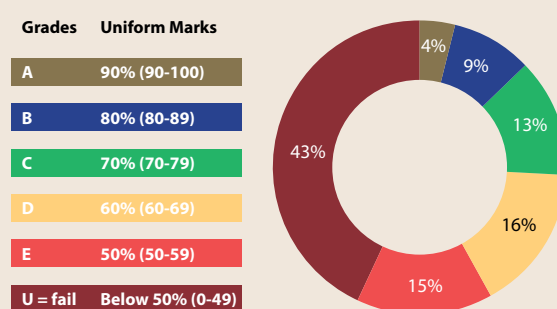
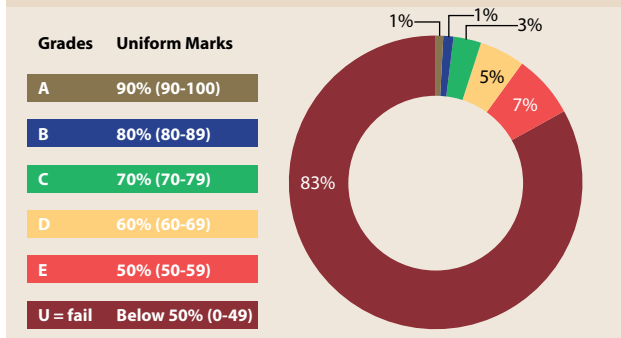
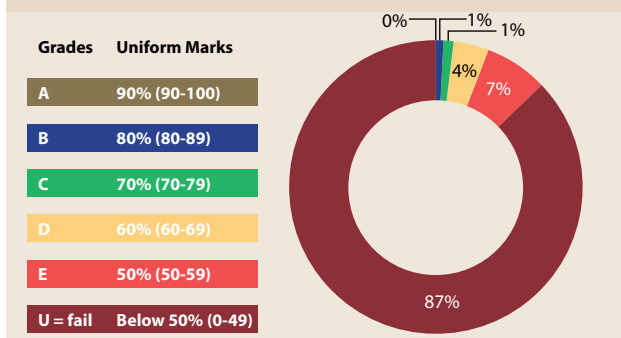


FIGURE 47 : GRADE 12 ENGLISH RESULTS BY GRADE GOVERNMENT SCHOOL STUDENTS



In Problem-Solving, as can be seen in Figure 48, only 13% of government school students attained a pass Grade. Overall, problem-Solving examination was a challenge for students in the Kingdom of Bahrain, only seven students achieved A Grades in government schools, which is less than 0.1%.

FIGURE 48 : GRADE 12 PROBLEM –SOLVING (ARABIC) RESULTS BY GRADE GOVERNMENT SCHOOL STUDENTS



PERFORMANCE OF PRIVATE SCHOOLS STUDENTS

As can be seen in Figure 49, none of private school students achieved grade A in Arabic, and only 2% of them achieved grade B, while 50% of them failed.

As for English (Figure 50), 45% of students in private schools achieved at least grade E and none of them achieved grade A.

In Problem-Solving, for private schools students, who sat the English version of this examination, 14% achieved pass

Grades, and 23% in the Arabic version. None of them achieved grade A nor B, as shown in Figures 51 and 52 respectively.

FIGURE 49 : GRADE 12 ARABIC RESULTS BY GRADE PRIVATE SCHOOL STUDENTS

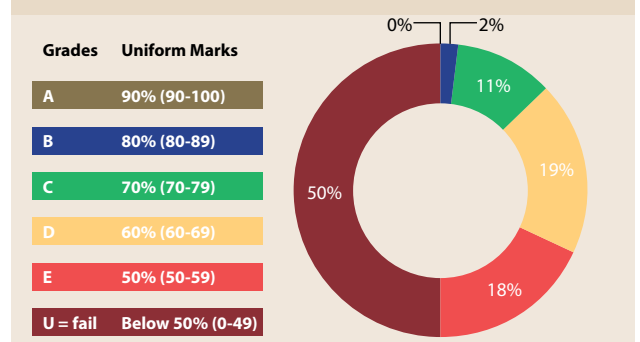


FIGURE 50 : GRADE 12 ENGLISH RESULTS BY GRADE PRIVATE SCHOOL STUDENTS

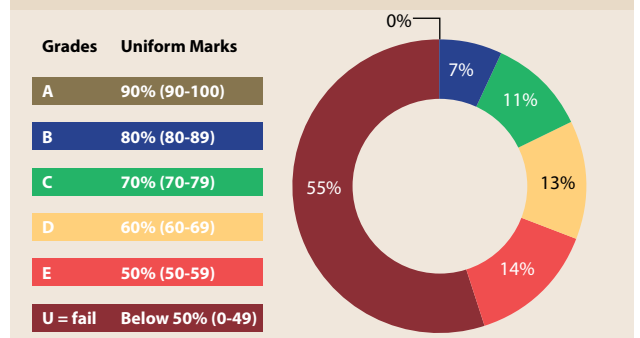


FIGURE 51 : GRADE 12 PROBLEM-SOLVING (ARABIC) RESULTS BY GRADE PRIVATE SCHOOL STUDENTS

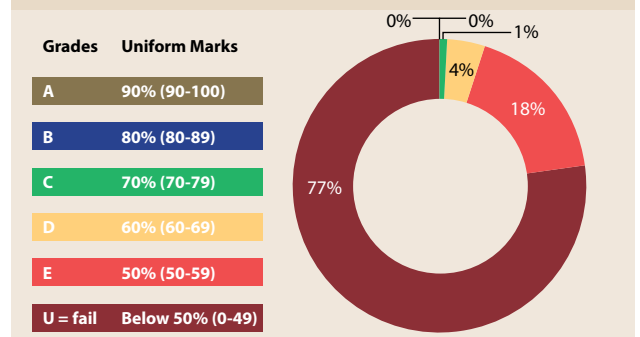
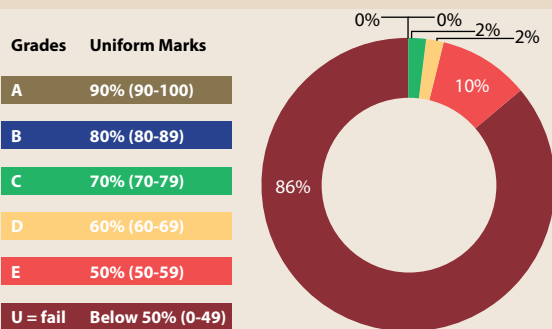


FIGURE 52 : GRADE 12 PROBLEM-SOLVING (ENGLISH) RESULTS BY GRADE PRIVATE SCHOOL STUDENTS



PERFORMANCE BY GENDER

Results on the performance by gender are reflected in the Figures 53-59 below. In Arabic both government and private school girls performed better than boys. The same pattern can be seen in English, where girls across both school types performed better than boys. However, in Problem-Solving (Arabic) in government schools, boys achieved overall better results than girls. Only 12% of girls attained a pass Grade, whereas 15% of boys attained a pass Grade. This pattern is the same in private schools, where in the Arabic version 21% of girls and 24% of boys attained a pass Grade, and in the English version only 6% of girls and 20% of boys attained a pass Grade. It should be remembered that the private school cohort is very small with 149 students in total.

FIGURE 53: GRADE 12 ARABIC RESULTS BY GENDER GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS

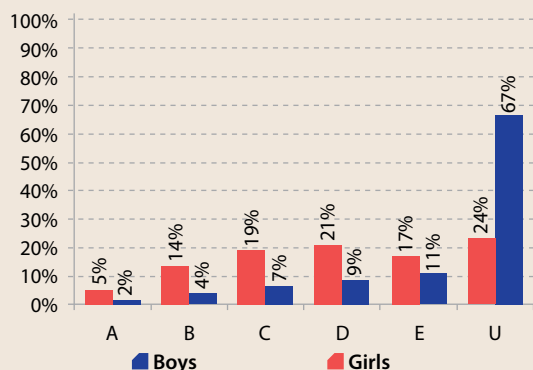


FIGURE 54 : GRADE 12 ENGLISH RESULTS BY GRADE GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS

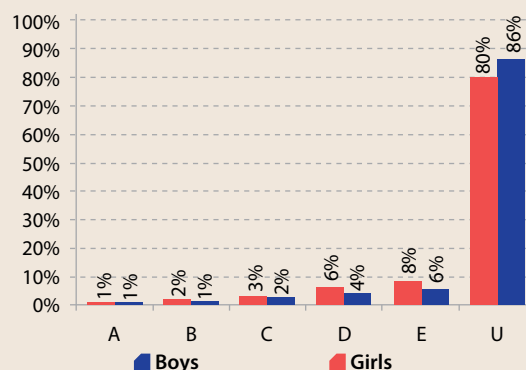


FIGURE 55 : GRADE 12 PROBLEM-SOLVING (ARABIC) RESULTS BY GENDER GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS

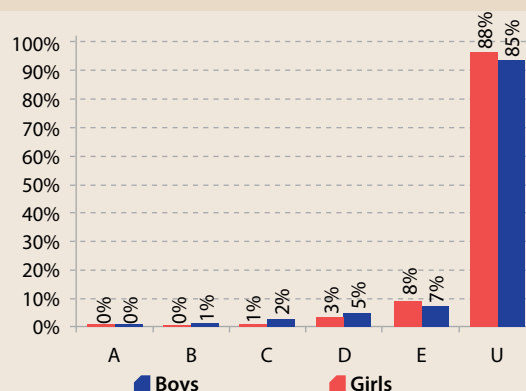


FIGURE 56 : GRADE 12 ARABIC RESULTS BY GENDER PRIVATE SCHOOLS

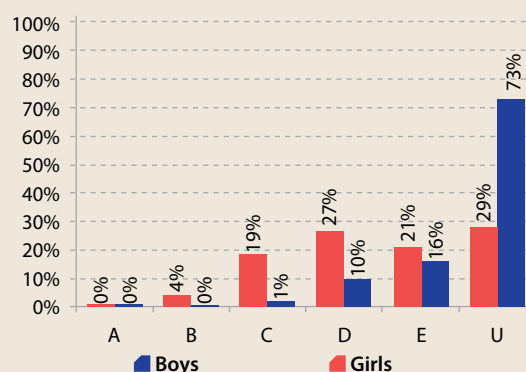
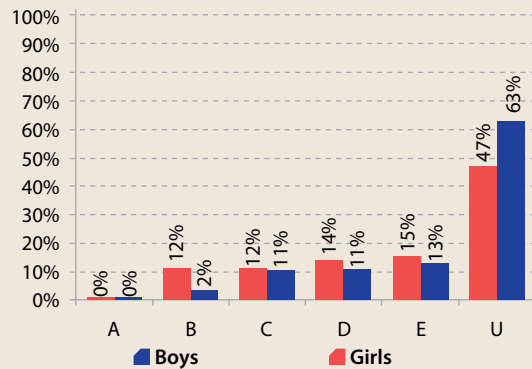


FIGURE 57 : GRADE 12 ENGLISH RESULTS BY GENDER PRIVATE SCHOOLS



CONCLUDING REMARKS

Students found the examinations in all Grades challenging, as was shown to be the case in previous years in Grades 3, 6 and 9. Their raw marks continue to be low as a proportion of the total available marks, particularly in Mathematics.

This trend continued in the first Grade 12 examinations, where students found examinations difficult. Overall, the performance of all students was low in Arabic, English and Problem-Solving. Comparing the students' results in all examinations in Grade 12, students performed best in Arabic, and worst in Problem-Solving.

In Grades 3, 6 and 9, girls outperformed boys in all subjects. Differences between boys and girls appear to grow greater with age in the languages but not in the technical subjects. Similarly, in Grade 12 Arabic and English subjects, girls outperformed boys. However, in Grade 12 boys performed better than girls in Problem-Solving.

FIGURE 58 : GRADE 12 PROBLEM-SOLVING (ARABIC) RESULTS BY GENDER PRIVATE SCHOOLS

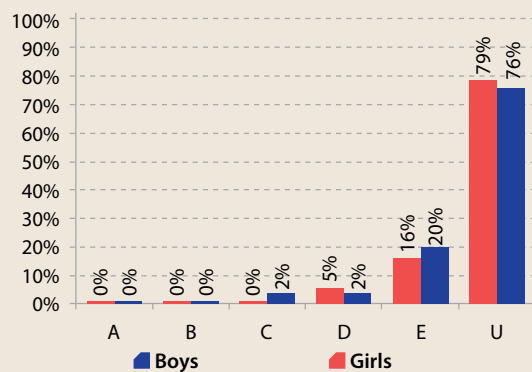
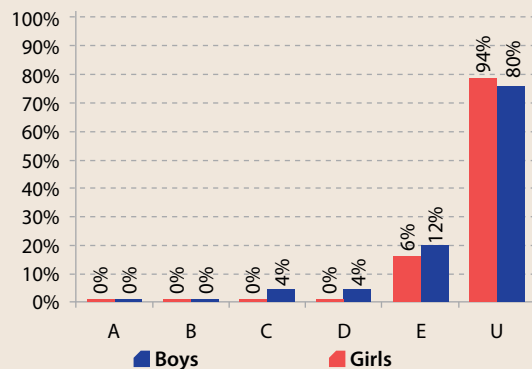


FIGURE 59 : GRADE 12 PROBLEM-SOLVING (ENGLISH) RESULTS BY GENDER – PRIVATE SCHOOLS







INTRODUCTION

The Directorate of Vocational Reviews (DVR) commenced its second cycle of reviews (Cycle 2) in January 2012 and this cycle is expected to be completed by the end of June 2014. During the first cycle from September 2008 to December 2011, a total of 83 vocational education and training (VET) providers were reviewed while the total number of providers eligible for review in the current Cycle 2 is 100.

During the 2012-2013 academic year, the DVR conducted a total of 34 reviews for vocational and training institutes, 25 of which are licensed by the Ministry of Labour (MoL), eight licensed by the Ministry of Education (MoE), and one is a self-regulated institute. These reviews bring the number of VET providers reviewed from the start of Cycle 2 reviews to the end of June 2013 to a total of 57 providers. The Directorate also conducted six monitoring visits for institutes that were judged 'below satisfactory' in their previous reviews during the academic year covered by this report. The results of the reviews and the monitoring visits conducted in the 2012-2013 academic year, together with summaries of accumulated outcomes of the reviews conducted in Cycle 2, covering the period from January 2012 to and including June 2013, are detailed in the following sections. A brief analysis of the outcomes of Cycle 2 reviews in comparison with the outcomes of Cycle 1 is also provided.

At the time of writing, the VET market in Bahrain had 100 providers, of which 67 were licensed by the MoL, 31 by the MoE, and two were self-regulated institutes. The size of the providers varies from those with just a handful of learners enrolled each year to those with several thousand enrolled annually; with the majority of the providers deemed to be 'small', i.e. with an average of 500 - 1000 learners enrolled in any given year. The vast majority of learners attending courses and training programmes offered by MoL licensed providers come from the private sector and have been sponsored by their employers, the MoL, or the Labour Fund (Tamkeen). Providers licensed by the MoE offer mainly tutorial and revision classes delivered to school students, on the basis of the MoE's curriculum, or to students in full- or part-time higher education. The majority of the MoE

licensed providers offer language classes, predominantly for the English language. The two self-regulated institutes are the largest in the Kingdom. One of them serves the banking and finance sector and the other is mainly targeted towards high school graduates seeking to further their education and receive tertiary certificates in different fields of VET.

Providers licensed by the MoL offer programmes and courses across a wide range of vocational areas. Most popular are management, commercially-based programmes, as well as those in IT and health and safety sectors. Other industry-specific courses offered are in banking and finance, insurance, retail, engineering, hospitality and catering, and hair and beauty. A few MoE licensed providers offer courses towards obtaining UK qualifications (GCSE, IGCSE and 'A' levels) but the majority offer English language courses, as preparation for IELTS or TOEFL assessment, specific business-related English, or as general English. Some offer courses in other languages including Arabic, Spanish, German and French. Some of the larger MoE licensed providers focus on tutorial courses, often as preparation for examinations. Other offerings include courses in management, business and Mathematics, and early years' teacher training as well as performing arts courses in dance, music and art.

Generally, courses offered by VET institutes tend to be internally designed, non-accredited, attendance-based with minimal formal assessment procedures in place to measure learners' achievement or progress. However, an increasing number of providers are targeting externally-accredited courses and programmes that lead to international certification. Except for a handful of vocational providers, the Bahrain VET market still lacks locally designed programmes with credits that would lead to a recognised vocational certificate rather than an attendance certificate.

CYCLE 2 REVIEW FRAMEWORK

Reviews are based on the published DVR's Review Framework and are carried out on providers' premises by teams of carefully selected and trained reviewers guided

by a lead reviewer. In judging the quality of an institute's provision, reviewers examine a wide range of information about provision and performance. This includes an analysis of the institute's self-evaluation documents and other relevant management information, data on learners' achievement, observations of lessons or training sessions and interviews with stakeholders, including staff, learners, employers and parents. Based on pre-defined main questions, the review team judges particular aspects of the provision in each of the following five areas:

- learners' achievement
- The effectiveness of teaching and/or training
- The range and quality of programmes offered
- The quality and effectiveness of support and guidance provided for learners
- The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the institute.

The review team also makes a summary judgement on the institute's overall effectiveness, which includes its capacity to improve. The outcomes of the five main questions and the summary judgement on the institute's overall effectiveness are given a Grade according to the following four point scale:

- 1: Outstanding
- 2: Good
- 3: Satisfactory
- 4: Inadequate

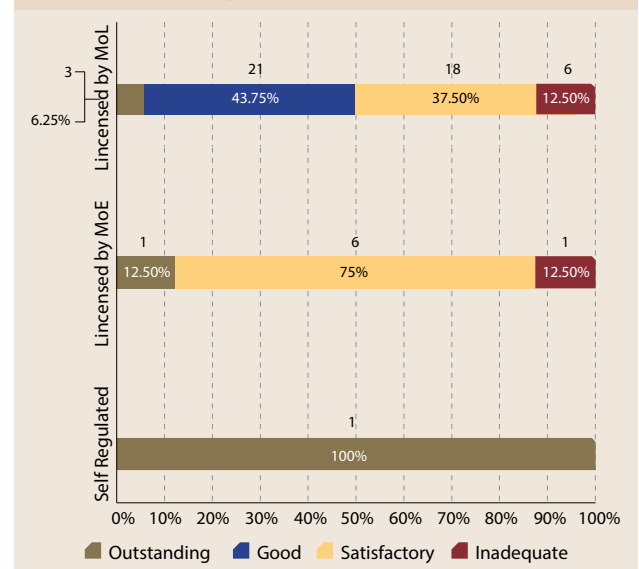
PROVIDERS' OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

The most important review judgement is that of the providers' overall effectiveness, which evaluates the overall quality of each institute's provision. Reviewers arrive at their judgement, with respect to the overall effectiveness, on the basis of the outcomes of the five main questions. In particular, reviewers focus on the learners' achievement and their progress from their starting points. They analyse how the findings under each main question impact upon the

overall performance of the institute and how the institute's management plans and procedures organise and evaluate the quality of its teaching and training programmes as well as the support the institute offers learners. The institute's capacity to improve is also considered when judging the overall effectiveness of the provider.

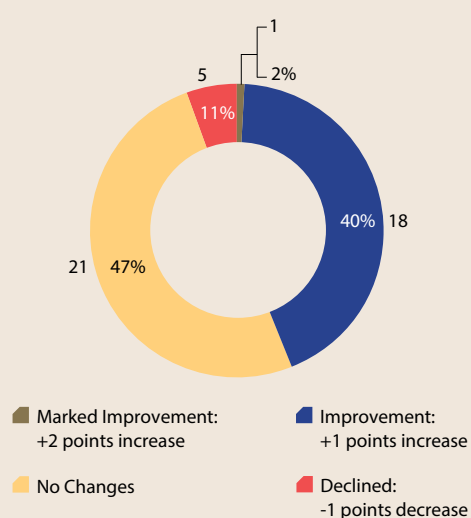
Out of the total providers reviewed during the 2012-2013 academic year, 30 were judged 'satisfactory' or better for their overall effectiveness. Of the total number of MoL licensed providers, reviewed during the period from January 2012 to June 2013 inclusive (Cycle 2), 42 institutes were Graded 'satisfactory' or better, with 21 being Graded 'good' and three 'outstanding'. The remaining six institutes were Graded 'inadequate' as shown in Figure 60. Eight MoE licensed providers were reviewed during the same period and seven of these received a 'satisfactory' or better Grade; and notably, six, were Graded satisfactory. Additionally, one self-regulated institute was reviewed and its overall effectiveness was judged to be 'outstanding'.

FIGURE 60: GRADES AWARDED FOR OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS FOR CYCLE-2 REVIEWS (ACCUMULATED FOR 57 PROVIDERS)



Out of all the providers reviewed in Cycle 2, 45 institutes were subjected to reviews in Cycle 1 and Cycle 2. Comparing the results of these reviews reveals that 42% of the institutes have improved their grade by at least one point, which Figure 61 indicates. It is worth mentioning that two out of three institutes Graded 'below satisfactory' in Cycle 1 reviews have improved their provision and were awarded a 'satisfactory' grade in Cycle 2 reviews. The vast majority of institutes have managed at the very least to maintain their previous status. The grades of a few institutes, however, dropped by one grade. It is evident from Cycle 2 reviews that most institutes have improved their respective procedures and practices in relation to evaluating learners' initial attainment, maintaining learners' achievement records, measuring the progress achieved by learners, and they have provided effective support to enhance learners' achievement and attainment. Some good practices in using pre- and post-course assessment to measure groups' progress as well as individual achievement trends, and to inform course planning and decision making were reported. However, a number of providers still lack a systematic mechanism for incorporating all available information on learners' attainment and achievement into their decision-making processes.

FIGURE 61: CHANGES IN RESULTS FROM CYCLE-1 TO CYCLE-2 FOR OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS

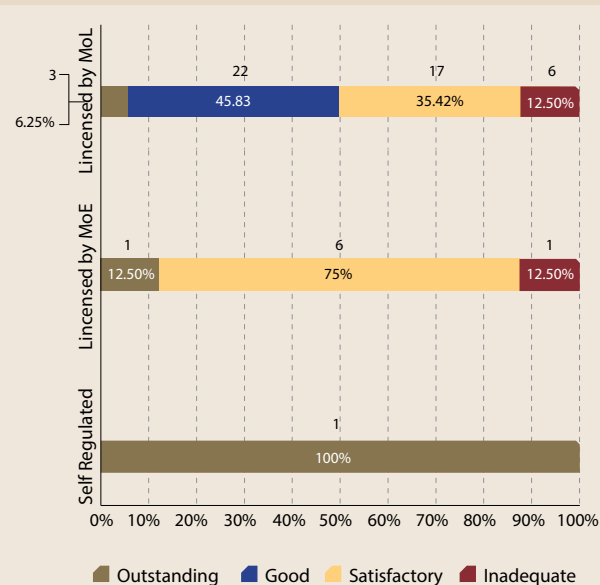


LEARNERS' ACHIEVEMENT

This main question focuses on the extent to which learners develop appropriate vocationally relevant knowledge and skills and achieve the qualifications for which they aim. Reviewers also evaluate the progress made by individuals and/or particular groups in comparison to their prior attainment and potential, and the extent to which they have become competent, self-directed learners and show commitment to their learning.

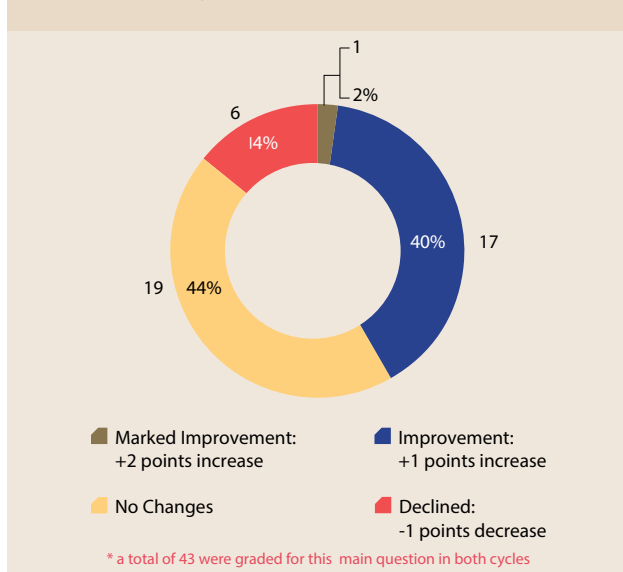
88% of the providers licensed by the MoL and reviewed during 2012-2013, were awarded 'satisfactory' or better Grades, of which 52% were graded 'good' or better. Out of the eight MoE licensed providers reviewed during the same period, six (75%) were graded 'satisfactory' and only one (12.5%) was graded 'outstanding'. No provider licenced by the MoE was graded 'good' for this main question. One self-regulated institute was reviewed during the same period and received an 'outstanding' judgement for this main question. Figure 62 summarises the grades for learners' achievement of all Cycle 2 reviews, conducted until the end of June 2013.

FIGURE 62: GRADES AWARDED FOR LEARNERS' ACHIEVEMENT FOR CYCLE-2 REVIEWS (ACCUMULATED FOR 57 PROVIDERS)



In comparing the outcomes of Cycle 1 and Cycle 2 for this main question, 42% of the providers were awarded a Grade at least one point higher than the Grade they received in their first review, as indicated by Figure 63. This improvement is largely attributed to introducing formal initial assessment to evaluate learners' attainment at entry level and using its outcome to inform its provision and measure the progress achieved by the learners. However, some institutes still lack suitable initial assessment tools and/or do not maintain accurate records on their learners. This hinders the accurate evaluation of the progress achieved. Although reviewers have seen evidence of some institutes' attempts to address learners' low attendance and poor punctuality issues, tangible impact of such attempts is yet to be seen in most cases.

FIGURE 63: CHANGES IN RESULTS FROM CYCLE-1 TO CYCLE-2 FOR MQ1: LEARNERS' ACHIEVEMENT



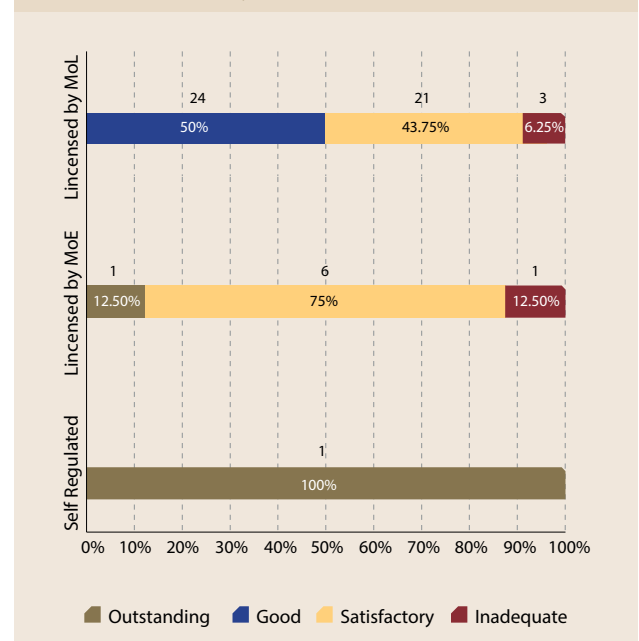
EFFECTIVENESS OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

For this main question, reviewers focus on how well lessons and training sessions are prepared and delivered, how well the needs of individuals and course requirements are met and whether learners are enabled to develop their skills to solve problems, enhance their experience and further their understanding. Reviewers also evaluate the extent to which available resources and materials are utilised to promote learning. In coming to a judgement

on this question, reviewers observe lessons or training sessions, meet with current and past learners, trainers and other stakeholders, and examine samples of learners' work, assessment materials and other relevant teaching and training resources.

For the reviews conducted in the 2012-2013 academic year, more than 90% of the institutes licensed by the MoL were Graded 'satisfactory' or above for teaching and learning, with no institute receiving an 'outstanding' Grade. Only one institute, licensed by the MoE, received an 'outstanding' Grade for the effectiveness of its teaching and training. Figure 64 summarises the results of all Cycle 2 reviews for this main question.

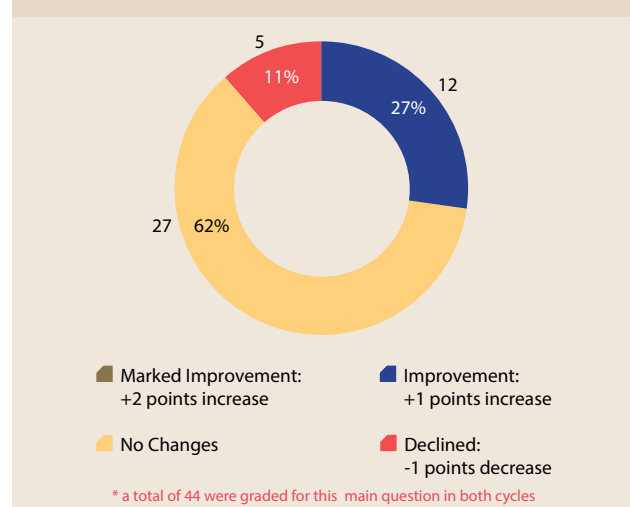
FIGURE 64: GRADES AWARDED FOR QUALITY OF TRAINING FOR CYCLE-2 REVIEWS (ACCUMULATED FOR 57 PROVIDERS)



It is worth mentioning that while the Grades awarded for the effectiveness of teaching and learning follow a similar profile to that of other review aspects, they are generally lower. The changes in Grades for this main question for institutes reviewed and Graded in both Cycle 1 and Cycle 2 are shown in Figure 65. This reveals that 27% of the institutes received one Grade higher in Cycle 2 than the one received

in their previous review. The progress made by institutes in this main question is lower than in other main questions. This is mainly because teaching and training in most cases is too trainer-centred and does not differentiate enough to meet the needs of different learners. In several of cases, teaching and training methods used only target learners with average ability and failed to cater for those with lower or higher abilities. One of the strengths frequently identified is the employment of highly qualified trainers with relevant experience and command of their vocational and subject specialisms. Institutes need to build on this strength and further develop such trainers to be able to deliver learner-centred solutions. Trainers also need to keep accurate and up-to-date records of learners' achievement and utilise such records together with pre-course assessment outcomes to deliver customised training sessions to meet learners' individual needs.

FIGURE 65: CHANGES IN RESULTS FROM CYCLE-1 TO CYCLE-2 FOR MQ2: QUALITY OF TRAINING



THE EXTENT TO WHICH PROGRAMMES MEET THE NEEDS OF LEARNERS AND STAKEHOLDERS

The third main question judges the appropriateness and effectiveness of programmes by evaluating the structure, content and relevance of the programmes, whether they are offered in response to an identified external need or a specific labour market gap and whether they provide

opportunities for learners to progress to higher levels. The reviewers also evaluate the extent to which the programmes are appropriately resourced and supported with relevant activities.

Notably, the institutes reviewed received better grades for this main question than all other aspects of the review, as indicated by Figure 66, with no institute graded 'inadequate'. This is mainly due to the strong links, although informal, that most institutes have with their stakeholders. Review outcomes indicate that providers offering vocational programmes have benefited from the national gap analysis studies conducted by formal government bodies such as Tamkeen. Figure 67 shows that 42% of the providers, subjected to review in Cycle 1 and Cycle 2, have improved in relation to this main question.

FIGURE 66: GRADES AWARDED FOR PROGRAMMES FOR CYCLE-2 REVIEWS (ACCUMULATED FOR 57 PROVIDERS)

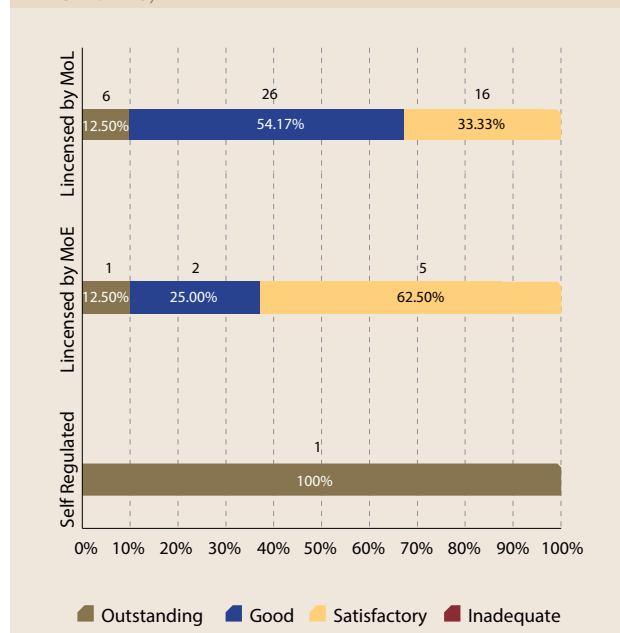
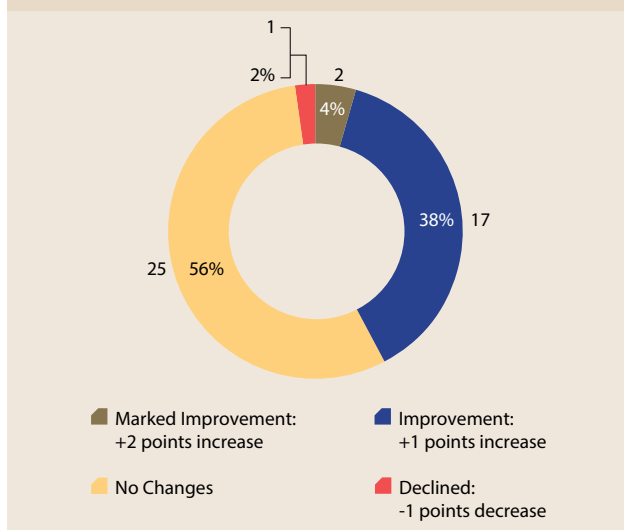


FIGURE 67: CHANGES IN RESULTS FROM CYCLE-1 TO CYCLE-2 FOR MQ3: PROGRAMMES



SUPPORT AND GUIDANCE

This main question evaluates the extent to which providers support and guide learners to achieve better. It assesses the availability and effective support for course-related and personal matters, including initial advice and guidance, information about opportunities for future studies and employment, the quality and impact of the learning environment and the additional learning support available.

For reviews undertaken in the 2012-2013 academic year, the support and guidance provided in 22 out of the 25 MoL licensed providers were judged 'satisfactory' or better, while three institutes were judged 'inadequate'. Although none of the MoE licensed providers received an 'inadequate' judgement under this main question, almost all were judged 'satisfactory'. One provider was judged 'outstanding' and none judged 'good'.

FIGURE 68: GRADES AWARDED FOR SUPPORT AND GUIDANCE FOR CYCLE -2 REVIEWS (ACCUMULATED FOR 57 PROVIDERS)

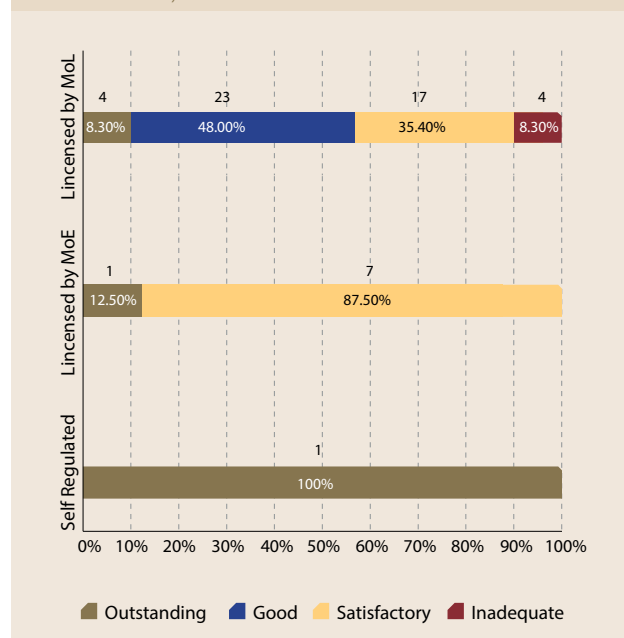
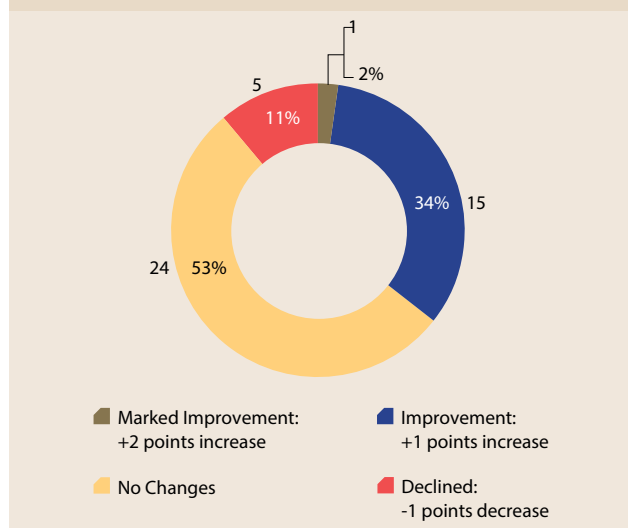


Figure 68 outlines all the Grades awarded to institutes in the Cycle 2 reviews and Figure 69 demonstrates the changes in judgements for the institutes reviewed in both Cycles 1 and 2. As can be seen, most of the institutes, 40 out of 45, at least maintained their previous record with 15 achieving one Grade higher and one achieving two Grades higher. Since the previous reviews, a number of institutes have expanded the support they provide to their learners which has had a positive impact on their learning experience.

FIGURE 69: CHANGES IN RESULTS FROM CYCLE-1 TO CYCLE-2 FOR MQ4: SUPPORT AND GUIDANCE

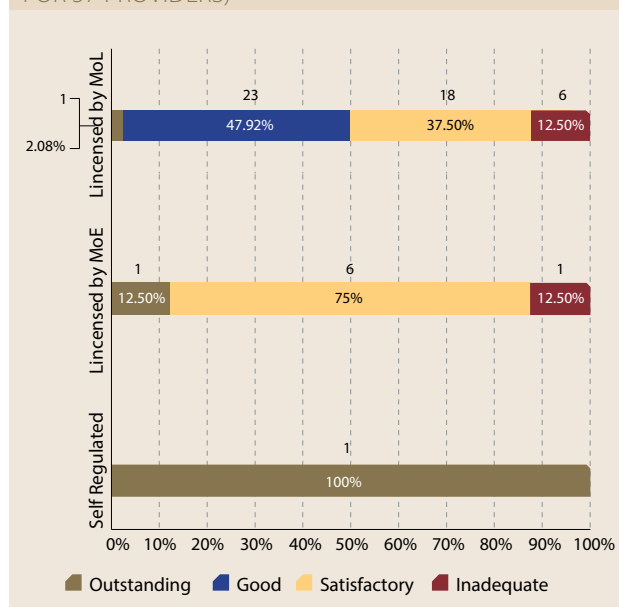


EFFECTIVENESS OF LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management quality is the focus of this main question where reviewers evaluate the appropriateness and impact of the adopted structures and processes. They evaluate the ability of the provider's management team to ensure the quality of the provision (the quality of teaching and training, the range and appropriateness of the programmes offered, the effectiveness of the support and guidance offered to learners) and the impact on the achievement and success of learners. The reviewers also evaluate the health and safety measures taken to ensure that learners and staff study and work in a healthy, safe and secure environment.

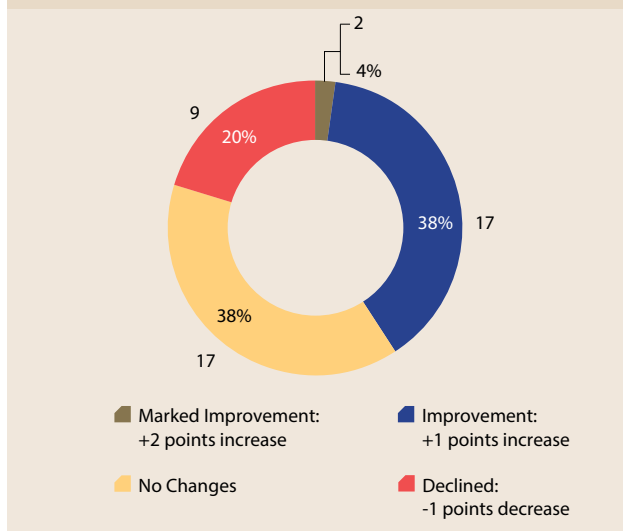
For this main question Figure 70 shows a summary of the outcomes of all Cycle 2 reviews conducted until the end of June 2013. 88% of providers received 'satisfactory' or better Grades for the effectiveness of leadership and management.

FIGURE 70: GRADES AWARDED FOR LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT FOR CYCLE -2 REVIEWS (ACCUMULATED FOR 57 PROVIDERS)



When comparing the Grades awarded for this main question for institutes reviewed in both Cycle 1 and Cycle 2 as shown in Figure 71, it can be seen that the largest number of institutes achieving a Grade lower than the Grade received in their first review is in this aspect. In some cases, Grades were affected by changes in the leadership and management teams of some of the institutes, which have in turn caused some instability. In a number of institutes, however, the management monitoring of the provision is limited despite the trainers providing learners with good training experience and satisfactory or better learners' achievement. Notably, most providers applied pre- and post-course assessment methods in order to measure learners' progress and keep records of learners' achievement. However, only a handful of institutes benefit from the data to perform trend analysis and inform short- and long-term target-setting and decision making. Whilst high quality staff are recruited and effectively deployed in most of the reviewed institutes, a number of these institutes do not critically monitor trainers' performance. Hence, trainers receive only minimal guidance on how to improve in most cases and sometimes none.

FIGURE 71: CHANGES IN RESULTS FROM CYCLE-1 TO CYCLE-2 FOR MQ5: LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT



AFTER THE REVIEW

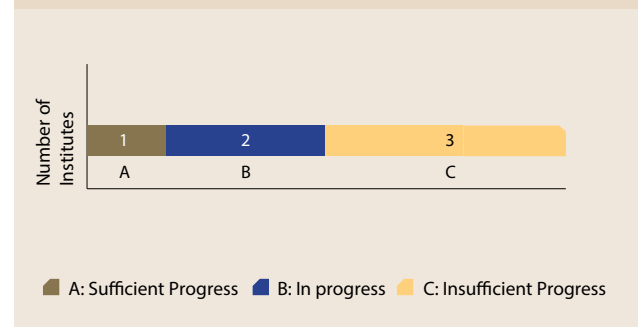
All providers complete an action plan, regardless of the outcome of the review that should address the recommendations published in the review report. Upon submission, the DVR provides appropriate feedback on its content, structure and coverage, particularly on whether it has comprehensively covered the report recommendations. This continues to be an effective way of following up on the review findings and conclusions and assisting providers in their continuing efforts to improve their provision. In addition, those providers judged to be 'inadequate' for their overall effectiveness undergo up to two monitoring visits by the DVR to assess their progress and how effectively they are implementing their action plan and addressing the review recommendations. An institute's progress is judged using a three point scale:

- A: Sufficient progress
- B: In progress
- C: Insufficient progress.

During the academic year covered by this report, a total of six monitoring visits were conducted and the outcomes are summarised in Figure 72. 50% of the providers have shown significant improvement in addressing

the recommendations of the review reports. These improvements are mainly due to the development of a detailed improvement plan with clear targets, time lines, allocated responsibility and the continuous monitoring and follow-up of the implementation of the plan by a committed leadership and management.

FIGURE 72: GRADES AWARDED FOR MONITORING VISITS FOR ACADEMIC YEAR 2012-2013



CAPACITY BUILDING

The DVR continued with its activities of capacity building aiming at spreading the culture of quality assurance and continuous improvement. In its activities of capacity building the DVR emphasises the assurance of quality of provision being the responsibility of the providers itself. The DVR participated in the planning and the organising of the QQA's second conference in February 2013. In addition to participating in presenting a paper titled 'Reflections on Improved Practices in Cycle Two of Bahrain's Vocational Reviews'. The Directorate also invited five speakers who delivered the following papers: 'Employer-Based Competency for Employment and Progression', 'International Experiences of Quality Assuring VET', 'Steps to Design and Implement a VET Performance Monitoring System - Jordan Case Study', 'Comprehensive Quality Concept for Vocational Education and Training-Relevance of Occupational Standards', and 'Quality Assuring Vocational Education and Training - Technology Solutions'. A pre-conference workshop titled 'From Satisfactory to Good VET Provision as a National Target' was delivered by staff members of the DVR and international facilitator expert in Education Reform Programmes and VET policies. A total

of 32 individuals from 15 different institutes participated in this workshop. Feedback collected at the end of the workshop reflected a 100% satisfaction of good or better amongst participants.

As part of its continuous review activities, the DVR has offered a number of regular capacity building activities during the 2012-2013 academic year. All providers scheduled to undergo a review within the next phase and all newly registered providers were invited to attend a training workshop to assist them with the self-evaluation process and the completion of their Self-Evaluation Form (SEF) and the Learners' Performance Data (LPD) workbook. The Directorate organised two self-evaluation training workshops on 19 December 2012 and 19 June 2013, during which a total of 25 and 27 attended these workshops respectively.

In addition, the review team holds planning meetings prior to the on-site review to prepare the provider by going through the review process details by highlighting the questions on which the review team will be making judgements, what evidence they will be looking at to make those judgements and to address any concerns they may have. This is often supported and enhanced with additional one-to-one meetings with the provider's nominee – the person designated to liaise with the DVR – particularly to discuss issues highlighted in the provider's SEF. Written feedback is provided on their SEF, and other relevant documents, in the form of a Pre-Review Brief (PRB) to help them prepare for the review. After the review, feedback on providers' post-review action plan also offers providers effective assistance on the implementation of the review recommendations.

The DVR also conducted two different workshops to train external consultants who shall be part of the review team. The first workshop, to update current consultants with the latest review policies, procedures and methods of evaluations, was conducted on 28 March 2013 and attended by five consultants. The second was a two-day workshop held on 26-27 May 2013 to train newly appointed

consultants on the review framework, policies and procedures. A total of eight participated in this workshop. The DVR provided a number of professional development opportunities for its staff members as they participated in several internal and external training workshops and local and international conferences.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The accumulated results of the reviews conducted in both Cycle 1 and Cycle 2 indicate a steady improvement in the quality of VET provision. A significant minority of providers, especially those licenced by the MoL, have shown improvement in the quality of their provision and received improved Grades in their Cycle 2 review. The improvement can be attributed to reasons including, but not limited to, the critical analysis of the institutes' operations and the steady measures to institutionalise a number of their operations. Throughout the reviews conducted there was ample evidence of providers' attempts to address the recommendations of the previous report and benefit from the good practices identified in published review reports. The capacity building workshops conducted by the DVR have also helped to increase the providers' familiarity with the review process and requirements. Notwithstanding the above, there are a number of areas for development that are common to the different providers, as evident from the reviews conducted in Cycle 2. They can be summarised as follows:

- Strategic and operational planning remains an area for development for a number of providers. Although most providers have some form of planning, it is often not based on clear strategic goals. Some plans lack clearly defined key performance indicators with clear time lines and responsible parties, which limits the management's ability to effectively measure and monitor the progress achieved. Furthermore, operational plans, while existing, are not always linked to institutes' strategic plans.
- Although most institutes have introduced some

measures to assess learners' prior attainment and conduct post-course assessment, most of the assessment tools are not properly verified and the outcomes of these assessments are not fully utilised in session planning and delivery, trend analysis and informing long- and short-term decision making.

- Generally, providers employ highly qualified trainers with command of their vocational and subject specialisms and relevant experience. Teaching and training, in most cases however, is still too trainer-centred and does not address the needs of all learners. Largely, the teaching and training methods used target learners with average ability and fail to support lower or higher achievers. Institutes need to develop further their trainers' abilities in delivering more learner-centred training sessions. Trainers also need to keep accurate and up-to-date records of learners' achievements and utilise such records. In addition they should use pre-course and continuous assessments in planning their training sessions and customising their delivery methods to cater for learners' individual needs.
- While the better providers have implemented robust and effective internal quality assurance systems, most providers are still in the initial stages of developing these. Cycle 2 reviews show a clear improvement in the quality of the self-evaluation conducted by a number of providers, as the gap between providers' grading of themselves in the self-evaluations and those of the review appears to be closing. Still, the self-evaluation of some providers would benefit from more critical and evidence-based evaluation, which clearly identifies areas for improvements.





INTRODUCTION

The Directorate of Higher Education Reviews (DHR) conducts three types of reviews:

1. Institutional Reviews where the whole institution is assessed in terms of the effectiveness of its quality assurance arrangements.
2. Programmes-within-College Reviews where the quality of learning and academic standards are judged in specific programmes.
3. Institutional Follow-up Reviews that check on the improvement institutions have made at least one year after they have received recommendations in their full Institutional Review report.

During the 2012-2013 academic year, the DHR conducted 'Programmes-within-College Reviews' in bachelor and master degrees in Health Science, and Computer Science and Information Technology offered by higher education institutions in Bahrain. The directorate also conducted 'Institutional Follow-up Reviews', which completed Cycle 1 of the Institutional Reviews.

PROGRAMMES-WITHIN-COLLEGE REVIEWS

Programmes-within-College Reviews focus on the academic standards of each programme and its delivery and the quality assurance arrangements within all learning programmes at bachelor and master levels within a college in a particular major disciplinary area. While the term 'college' is used, it includes the terms 'faculty', 'school', or any other equivalent term for an entity within an institution which offers a higher education programme. All programmes leading to a qualification at bachelor or master level are subject to review with the exception of masters that are done only by research. All programmes within a college are reviewed simultaneously.

Programmes-within-College Reviews are carried out using four Indicators each of which has a number of sub-indicators. They are in line with international good practice. These are as follows:

INDICATOR 1: THE LEARNING PROGRAMME

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

INDICATOR 2: EFFICIENCY OF THE PROGRAMME

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

INDICATOR 3: ACADEMIC STANDARDS OF THE GRADUATES

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

INDICATOR 4: EFFECTIVENESS OF QUALITY MANAGEMENT AND ASSURANCE

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

INDICATOR 1: 'The learning programme' is a limiting judgement; i.e. if this Indicator is not satisfied, irrespective of whether the other Indicators are satisfied, there will be a 'no confidence' judgement in the programme as shown in Table 18.

TABLE 18: CRITERIA FOR SUMMATIVE JUDGEMENT FOR PROGRAMMES-WITHIN-COLLEGE REVIEWS

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

FINDINGS OF PROGRAMMES-WITHIN-COLLEGE REVIEWS IN THE FIELD OF HEALTH SCIENCES

During the 2012-2013 academic year four colleges offering seven programmes in Health Science had their programmes reviewed.

Of the seven programmes offered by the four colleges in Health Sciences, as can be seen in Figure 73, six received a 'confidence' judgement; and one a 'no confidence' judgement. The six programmes that received a 'confidence' judgement satisfied all four Indicators. Five of these were in Nursing; four bachelors and one master. The other programme was at bachelor level in Physiotherapy. In the programme that received a 'no confidence' judgement, none of the four Indicators were satisfied; this was in Healthcare Ethics and Law at master level.

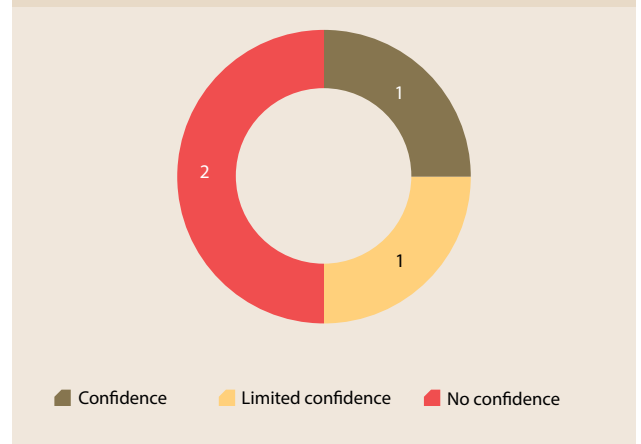
FIGURE 73: FINDINGS OF SEVEN REVIEWS IN COLLEGES OFFERING HEALTH PROGRAMMES



FINDINGS OF PROGRAMMES-WITHIN-COLLEGE REVIEWS IN THE FIELD OF COMPUTER SCIENCE AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

The DHR began reviewing programme offerings at bachelor and master level in colleges of Computer Science and Information Technology in January 2013. There are nine colleges in this field in the higher education institutions in Bahrain. Thus far five colleges have had their programmes reviewed with three having had their reports published. Between them the three colleges offered four programmes. One programme received a 'confidence' judgement, one 'limited', and two 'no confidence' as shown in Figure 74.

FIGURE 74: FINDINGS OF FOUR REVIEWS IN COMPUTER SCIENCE AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY



Three of the four programmes satisfied Indicator 1: 'The learning programme'. These programmes were at bachelor level. Indicator 2 'Efficiency of the programme' was satisfied in two programmes. Indicators 3 and 4 'Academic standards of the graduates' and 'Effectiveness of Quality Assurance and Management' respectively were only satisfied in one programme. The master programme did not satisfy any indicators. The first point to note is that not only was the learning programme not at an appropriate level, range and depth for master programme study, there was no evidence to show that the learning outcomes for the programme were achieved. Study at master level is supposed to provide students with the opportunity to develop advanced knowledge in a specific disciplinary area, which also prepares them for doctoral study if they so wish. It is an opportunity for Bahraini students to specialise in an area which, in turn, contributes to the knowledge and skills expertise in the Kingdom. If the academic standards of the graduates are not fully realised this may negatively impact on graduates' career prospects. Furthermore, in this era of globalisation and the concomitant movement of professionals, students need to be assured that they will graduate with the relevant knowledge and skills, whether these be at bachelor or master level, that allow them to compete successfully in the global marketplace.

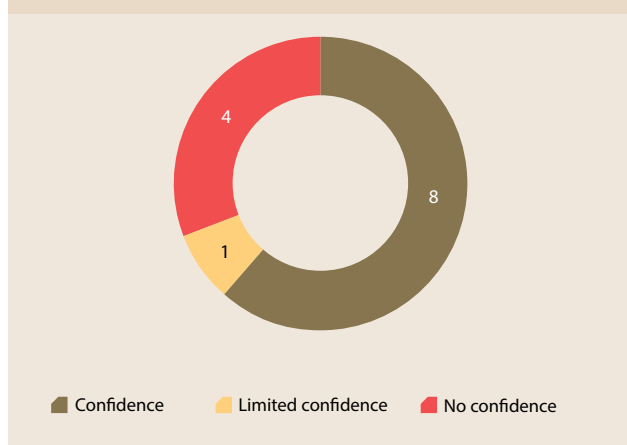
CUMULATIVE FINDINGS OF 13 PROGRAMMES-WITHIN-COLLEGE REVIEWS

Since the inception of Programmes-within-College Reviews in the 2011-2012 academic year, nine colleges offering 13 programmes altogether were reviewed in the fields of Medicine, Health Sciences, and Computer Science and Information Technology. When the results are aggregated, as shown in Table 19 and Figure 75, of the 13 programmes, eight received a 'confidence' judgement, one received 'limited' confidence, and four a 'no confidence' judgement.

TABLE 19: FINDINGS OF PROGRAMME REVIEWS BY LEVEL AND DISCIPLINARY FIELD IN MEDICINE AND HEALTH SCIENCES, AND COMPUTER SCIENCE AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Review by level and disciplinary field	Confidence	Limited Confidence	No Confidence
2 Bachelor of Medicine	1	0	1
5 Bachelor of Health Sciences	5	0	0
2 Master of Health Sciences	1	0	1
3 Bachelor of Computer Science and IT	1	1	1
1 Master of Computer Science	0	0	1
Total: 13 Reviews	8	1	4

FIGURE 75: CUMULATIVE FINDINGS OF 13 PROGRAMME REVIEWS



The eight 'confidence' judgements mean that the programmes satisfied all indicators. In the one programme that received 'limited' confidence Indicators 3 and 4 were not satisfied. In the four 'no confidence' judgements, one

programme only satisfied one indicator – Indicator 1. The other three programmes did not satisfy any Indicators. It is worth noting that two of these three programmes are at master level and the other is in medicine, which, as was noted earlier, has a negative impact not only on the students themselves but also on the Kingdom's efforts to diversify its economy. In the case of medicine this has potentially more severe implications for the citizens of Bahrain.

INSTITUTIONAL FOLLOW-UP REVIEWS

During the years 2008 to 2011 the DHR conducted 14 institutional reviews with the reports having been published. (The Annual Report 2011 provided an analysis of the findings of institutional reviews.) In accordance with the Institutional Review Handbook three months after publication of the review reports, institutions are required to submit to the DHR an improvement plan which states how the institution will use the findings of its review report to improve and enhance the quality of its activities, both at institutional level and in the core functions of teaching and learning, research, and community engagement.

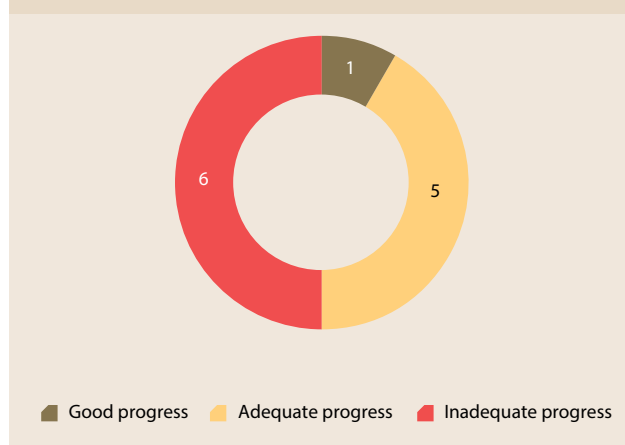
Improvement plans were received from 14 institutions during the academic years 2009 to 2012. These reports were analysed within the DHR and constructive follow-up meetings took place with the senior management of these institutions. The purpose of those meetings was to discuss the viability of the plans and to clarify any queries that the institution may have had on particular aspects of the report with respect to their plans. Of the original 14 institutions reviewed two decided to close after teaching out their pipeline students.

Following submission and discussion of the improvement plan, and at least one year after publication of its institutional review report, an institution submits to the DHR a progress report, which outlines how it has met the goals of its improvement plan and in particular what activities have been undertaken and progress made towards addressing the received recommendations. These reports are analysed and follow-up review visits are undertaken by senior members of the DHR to verify the claims made by the institution.

During 2012-2013 two such follow-up review visits to public higher education institutions took place. Both institutions had made adequate progress overall in addressing the recommendations in their original review reports. One institution had made good progress in student support and research. However, particular attention still needs to be given to teaching and learning in one institution. Both had met most of the outcomes stated within their improvement plans.

All 12 follow-up institutional reviews have been undertaken and when the progress of the two institutions which received follow-up reviews in the 2012-2013 academic year is taken together with the ten reviewed in the 2010-2012 academic years, as can be seen in Figure 76, one made good progress, which means that most of the recommendations were successfully addressed. Five made adequate progress in which most of the recommendations were either fully or partially addressed. Six made inadequate progress either because most of the recommendations or a major recommendation had not been adequately addressed.

FIGURE 76: CUMULATIVE FINDINGS OF THE 12 INSTITUTIONAL FOLLOW-UP REVIEWS 2010-2013



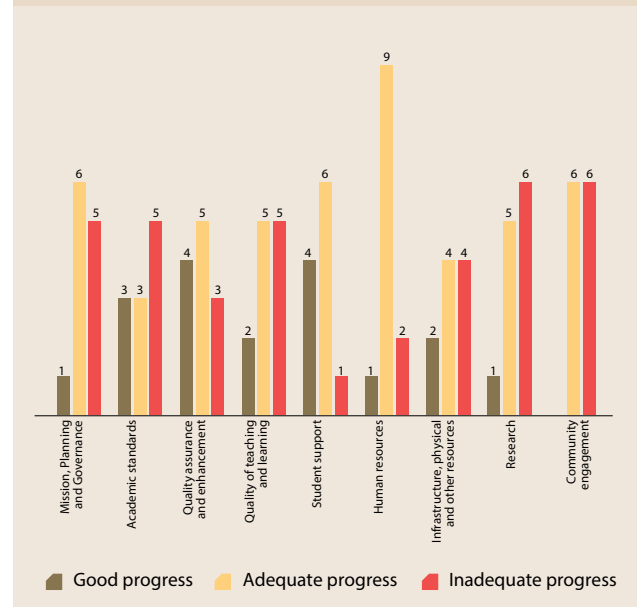
The findings of the Institutional Follow-up review reports are aggregated under the nine themes, as can be seen in Figure 77. These are:

- Mission, planning and governance
- Academic standards
- Quality assurance and enhancement

- Quality of teaching and learning
- Student support
- Human resources
- Infrastructure, physical and other resources
- Research
- Community engagement.

Each is considered in turn.

FIGURE 77: CUMULATIVE FINDINGS OF 12 INSTITUTIONAL FOLLOW-UP REVIEWS 2010-2013 FOR EACH THEME



* In figure 77 When the numbers only add up to 10 or 11 by bar it means that no recommendation was given for one or two institutions in this theme.

Improvement in the theme of 'Mission, planning and governance' has been a challenge for many institutions. Nevertheless six (50%) have made adequate progress, and one good progress. Five institutions are still grappling with this issue. In many cases where the roles between the Board of Trustees and management have now been delineated at least in theory, in practice blurring still occurs. Where new presidents have been appointed, many still do not show evidence of strong academic leadership. The generally limited capacity in governance and management

has a direct negative impact on the quality of education provision. This needs to be urgently addressed.

While many institutions now have strategic plans that are linked to operational plans, the mechanisms for monitoring implementation are often not clear. Benchmarking activities have increased. However, in many cases these are superficial and narrow in scope. Performance needs to be benchmarked at institutional, college, and departmental levels against other equivalent quality reference points. Failure to do so constitutes a serious quality risk to the institution.

Of the 11 institutions that received recommendations for **'Academic standards'** three have made good progress and three adequate progress. However five have not made sufficient progress in this theme. In most institutions summative assessment is the norm. Where formative assessment is purportedly carried out it is typically limited to marked students' work being returned to them so that they can see where their work needs to be improved. While this is good practice, it occurs after the point of assessment and does not give space for interventions to be made during the students' learning experience. There needs to be a more complete understanding of what formative assessment is and how it functions. This then needs to be incorporated into practice so that adjustments to the learning process can be made.

Another generally common issue of concern is the level of assessment, especially at the exit level. The higher level skills of critical thinking and problem solving are often sparse and in some cases absent. This has a negative impact on academic standards and results in a mismatch between the qualification obtained and the acquired skills and competencies of the graduates. This needs to be tackled by a multi-pronged approach, which includes the development and implementation of a robust external moderation system to evaluate the achievement of learning outcomes.

'Quality assurance and enhancement' has improved in 75% of institutions; four of the 12 have made good progress, five adequate and three inadequate in this regard. All institutions now have quality assurance offices, dedicated staff responsible for quality assurance and quality assurance committees. While some have developed and implemented a quality assurance system, the others have at least developed elements of such a system. Most institutions have a suite of policies and procedures. The challenge now for institutions is to adhere to their own policies as well as to develop mechanisms to evaluate the implementation of policies and procedures and to revise them where required. If this is not done the quality of provision is not assured. A quality culture across each institution has still to be embedded in many institutions.

With respect to the **'Quality of teaching and learning'** two institutions have made good progress and five adequate. It is a serious concern that five institutions have still not made the progress expected of them between the publication of the original Institutional Review Reports and the Institutional Follow-up Reviews. The aggregated findings of the original Institutional Reviews showed that generally the quality of teaching and learning is weak. In many institutions this is still the case. Good quality teaching and learning, particularly at undergraduate level, is essential for students to thrive and succeed. There needs to be a range of institutional mechanisms in place to support quality teaching and learning. This includes varied and innovative teaching strategies, robust and transparent assessment, and up-to-date relevant curricula that have the breadth and depth appropriate to the level of the qualification.

Of the 11 institutions that received a recommendation for **'Student support'** the progress made was good in four and adequate in six with one being inadequate. These institutions have mechanisms in place to support students at risk of failure although in some cases these have still to be formalised. This is important so that there is consistency in the support provided for students across the institution. It

also enables monitoring and review so that improvements can be made.

‘Human resources’ improved to the extent that 10 of the 12 institutions have made progress in terms of staffing; one good and nine adequate. However, actual high workloads and a mismatch of the qualifications and expertise of teaching staff with the programmes that they are teaching still remain at unacceptably high levels in the sector.

With regard to **‘Infrastructure, physical and other resources’**, two institutions – one public and one private – did not receive any recommendations in their original review reports. Indeed both received commendations in this theme. Of the other 10 institutions, two have made good progress with four making adequate and four making inadequate progress. The problem remains that in some institutions, higher education is still taking place in inadequate cramped buildings. There is a lack of recreational as well as sufficient library space. This means that the students’ learning experience is severely compromised and urgent steps need to be taken to provide a quality learning environment for students.

In the 12 Institutional Follow-up Reviews, only one made good progress in **‘Research’**; this was the national university. Adequate progress was made in five; 50% of the institutions had not made the progress expected of them in this area. One challenge for the institutions is how to conceptualise research in such a way that it integrates with their teaching and learning programmes and so institutionalises it. Furthermore, all too often institutions take an ad hoc and purely quantitative approach to research. The former shows the lack of institutionalisation, the latter a lack of regard to the quality of research. Neither is sufficient to improve the quality of the learning programmes. Qualitative measurements, such as external ‘blind’ peer review, for research outputs need to be implemented in line with international practice. Institutional coherent research strategies that support the delivery of high quality teaching

and learning programmes need to be developed and implemented. These need to be monitored and evaluated.

No institution has made good progress with respect to **‘Community engagement’**, with 50% making adequate progress and 50% inadequate. The findings of institutional reviews and the subsequent follow-up reviews show that there is confusion across higher education institutions about what community engagement means; how it can be conceptualised for each institution in such a way that it integrates with the other two core functions of a higher education institution; and what it means to institutionalise it. This needs to be addressed. Furthermore, there needs to be a coherent strategy for its implementation that is monitored and evaluated.

Based on the findings of the first cycle of institutional reviews conducted from November 2008 to January 2011, the higher education institutions were classified into three categories determining their situation in the higher education map in the Kingdom of Bahrain during that period. Such classifications are temporary and expired at the end of the institutional follow-up reviews this year and so are now invalid. The Authority will commence the second cycle of institutional reviews of the higher education institutions and issue judgements on the quality of these institutions; hence these judgements will be the new basis for the classifications of these institutions.

CAPACITY BUILDING

The DHR continued with its programme of capacity building activities with the aim of supporting the institutions to prepare for review. Workshops and support meetings were held for six institutions that were due to have their Health Science and Computer Science and Information Technology programmes reviewed. A workshop was also held for institutions whose college of business programmes will be reviewed in the 2013-2014 academic year, ‘Programmes-within-College Review Framework- SER Preparation’ for IT Programmes. The workshops covered the

expectations of the portfolio of evidence including the self-evaluation report that needed to be developed. Support meetings were held for the two institutions that were due to have an institutional follow-up review.

The DHR began its programme to train local reviewers to serve on panels in the Programmes-within-College Reviews. To this end, the DHR conducted a workshop in October 2012 on 'Training Local Reviewers' in the field of IT which was attended by selected potential local reviewers. Like the other review panel members, these local reviewers are subject and/or higher education specialists. Potential reviewers are invited in their personal capacity as they are not representing their institutions during the reviews. The invitees are respected academics in their fields. In line with international practice, the term 'local reviewers' includes Bahrainis and academics working in Bahrain. Participants who complete the training are entered into the DHR's register of international, regional and local reviewers. The DHR also conducted a pre-conference workshop entitled 'Reviewer Readiness' in February 2013, the purpose of which was to provide an overview of the competencies required to be a reviewer.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Taken together the findings of the three external quality assurance tools used by the DHR - Institutional Reviews, Programmes-within-College Reviews, and Institutional Follow-up Reviews - provide a comprehensive picture of the status of higher education provision in the Kingdom of the Bahrain.

While most institutions have made some progress in managing the quality of their education provision, the extent of improvement has been varied. As institutions did not start from the same baseline, for some the climb to become a quality provider of higher education is very steep. For some of those institutions this can only be achieved through incremental improvements that will take a considerable time to get to a minimum threshold of quality. Although institutions may have made adequate

progress in addressing the recommendations, it has to be recognised that coming from a very low baseline may mean that they still do not come close to offering a quality learning experience for their students. Evidence of this can be seen in the continuous receiving of 'no confidence' or 'limited confidence' judgements in reviews of their programmes. These poor performing institutions are likely to have a negative impact on the lives and careers of young Bahrainis.

The following sets out key areas that need to be addressed if higher education institutions in Bahrain are to flourish and deliver high quality education.

Leadership and Management – higher education institutions are complex organisations and as a result need presidents that have a unique set of skills and expertise. They need to be highly respected academics as they are the academic leader of the institution. At the same time they are also the chief executive officer and so need management and administration skills. Most importantly, they need to be ethically grounded.

Teaching and Learning – teaching and learning needs to be seen in its broadest sense. It refers not only to the learning programmes, pedagogy and assessment but also includes admission requirements, staffing, professional development, student support, library and ICT, as well as the learning environment in general. The quality assurance arrangements for all these components is also important. These should not be seen as disparate activities. Indeed this is a case where 'the whole is greater than the sum of its parts'. For students to have a high quality learning experience institutions need to develop and implement a comprehensive teaching and learning strategy that is appropriate for their programme qualification mix and which encompasses all aspects of teaching and learning.

Research - Given that the higher education sector in Bahrain is young with the private higher education institutions only beginning operations in the last decade, it is important that achieving high-quality teaching and learning is a priority.

However, research is a core function of higher education. This is what differentiates a higher education institution from other tertiary institutions. It is essential that academics keep abreast with the latest findings in their discipline, which means that research needs to underpin teaching at higher education level. Thus there needs to be a scholarly endeavour in this regard.

Community Engagement - Sustainable community engagement programmes that are linked to the learning programmes not only benefit students and other stakeholders but contribute to the flourishing of a vibrant civil society at ease with itself. A clear conceptualisation, development and implementation of community engagement that has its basis in mutual respect and trust between all stakeholders will contribute to a flourishing and prosperous citizenry.

The three guiding principles of the Economic Vision 2030 for Bahrain, sustainability, competitiveness and fairness, are ones that can be equally applied to the higher education institutions in Bahrain. To be sustainable, institutions need to provide a quality learning experience across all their programmes. They will be competitive if they are offering programmes that meet the knowledge and skills required to compete successfully in the 21st century global economy. They will be fair if the business of the institutions is conducted in a transparent and ethical manner and in which all are treated equally.

To achieve these desired outcomes, institutions need strong, ethical, academic and administrative leadership. Quality assurance arrangements that are robust and transparent are needed with academic staff who are committed to the scholarly enterprise. Learning programmes should have appropriately designed curricula, assessment and intended learning outcomes which, when achieved, ensure the proper academic standards of graduates. When these aspects come together Bahrain will have a higher education sector that 'enables all Bahrainis to fulfill their ambitions'.

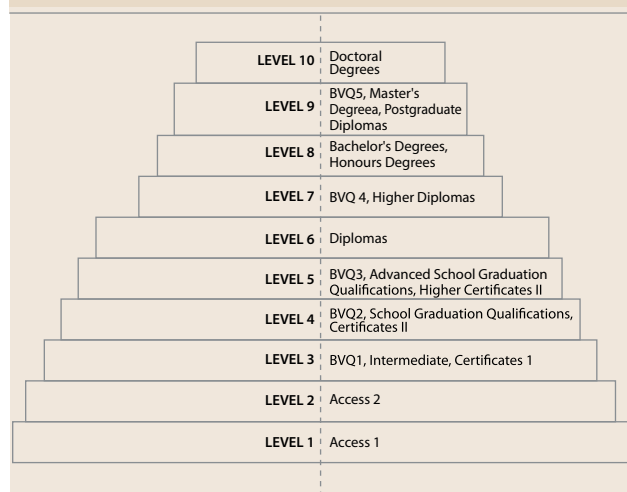




DEVELOPMENT OF THE NQF

The National Qualifications Framework (NQF) is a comprehensive system for all learner achievements. It is classified according to a set of criteria for levels of learning outcomes and allows for horizontal and vertical articulation of all national and foreign qualifications to be aligned with the 10 NQF levels, as depicted in Figure 78. The main purpose of the NQF in the Kingdom is to develop a coherent, transparent, easy-to-understand and quality-assured system for qualifications that meet both national and international requirements.

**FIGURE 78: THE NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS
FRAMEWORK LEVELS**



In 2012, the Education and Training Reform Board (ERB) decided to delegate the responsibility for the development, implementation and maintenance of the NQF to the QQA (QAA at that time). The General Directorate of the National Qualifications Framework (GDQ) was established by Royal Decree No.83 of 2012 and the Royal Decree No.24 of 2013 to regulate the National Authority for Qualifications and Quality Assurance of Education & Training (QQA) to provide coherence, match and clarity to Bahrain's qualifications system by enhancing the quality and value of qualifications in the Kingdom of Bahrain. This would ensure stakeholders' confidence in Bahraini qualifications mapped on the NQF.

The NQF initial work was planned in three stages: Design Stage (2010 - 2011), Set-up Stage (Pilot, 2012 - 2014) and Operation Stage (2014). The main outcome of the Design

stage was the gaining of approval by the ERB of the Framework's architecture including the number of levels, the vision, mission, objectives, and principles underpinning the NQF. During that stage, the NQF project was managed and funded by the Labour Fund (Tamkeen), while the Scottish Qualifications Framework (SQA) was contracted to provide technical assistance support.

NQF SET-UP STAGE

During 2012-2013, and upon placing the NQF under the umbrella of the QQA, the GDQ promptly started the NQF Set-up Stage. The NQF activities focused on the following tasks:

- Development of standards, procedures and manuals based on the policies drafted in the first stage, and establishment of working groups
- Selection of institutions to participate in piloting
- Selection of qualifications to be provisionally mapped to the NQF as part of the piloting
- Capacity building of the selected 17 education and training institutions participating in the pilot, to support testing and evaluating the draft standards, procedures and manuals
- Establishment of the GDQ, and the recruitment and training of staff
- Setting up internal administration systems and processes for institutional listing and mapping of qualifications on the NQF.

GOVERNANCE OF THE NQF WITHIN THE PILOT STAGE

In the Pilot stage, the NQF governance system comprises of the NQF Advisory Committee, the Technical Committee and six consultative working groups as shown in Figure 79. The Council of Ministers' Decree No. 52 of 2013 established the Advisory Committee chaired by the chief executive of QQA and membership of representatives from key stakeholders of education and training sectors in Bahrain.

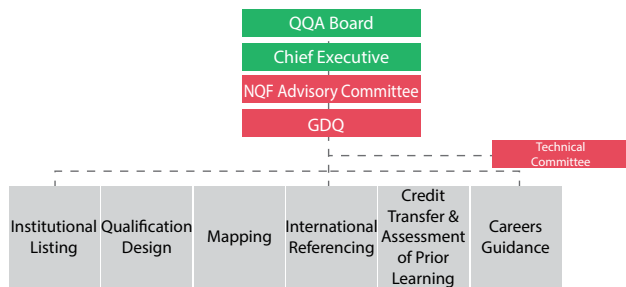


Figure 79: Governance of the NQF within the pilot stage
The Advisory Committee oversees all NQF activities; particularly the approval of policies, procedures and arrangements related to the listing of institutions and mapping of Bahraini qualifications into the NQF.

The NQF Technical Committee oversees the proposed amendments to the set of policies, procedures and arrangements in the light of the pilot stage results to submit them to the Advisory Committee.

The consultative working groups contribute to the development of NQF standards in the light of the policies and procedures developed in the Set-up Stage, propose the necessary amendments based on the NQF pilot, and then submit them to the Technical Committee.

NQF SET-UP STAGE: PILOT INSTITUTIONS & QUALIFICATIONS

The pilot stage was formally launched on 4 October 2012 in the presence of top managers of the main stakeholders in the education and training sectors.

A number of institutions and qualifications were selected to test the NQF policies, standards and procedures. The NQF Technical Committee endorsed the following criteria for the selection of pilot institutions and qualifications:

- Institutions to be selected for piloting should have generally performed well in their respective QQA reviews.
- Qualifications to be selected for piloting must be locally constructed, i.e. be Bahraini qualifications.
- Pilot institutions should include those providing general education, vocational education and training, and higher education sectors; both public and private sectors should be represented.
- The selected qualifications should populate each of the ten levels on the NQF.

The NQF Technical Committee endorsed the selected 17 pilot institutions covering all education and training sectors. Figure 80 shows the numbers of institutions participating according to their educational and training sector. The pilot institutions nominated 79 qualifications to be piloted in this Set-up Stage. Figure 81 shows the number of qualifications selected for piloting according to the education and training sectors.

FIGURE 80: PILOT INSTITUTIONS

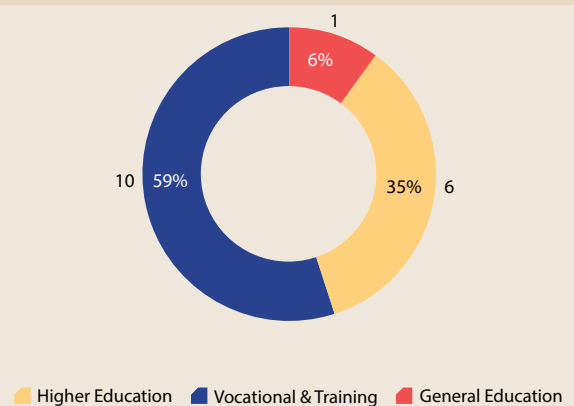
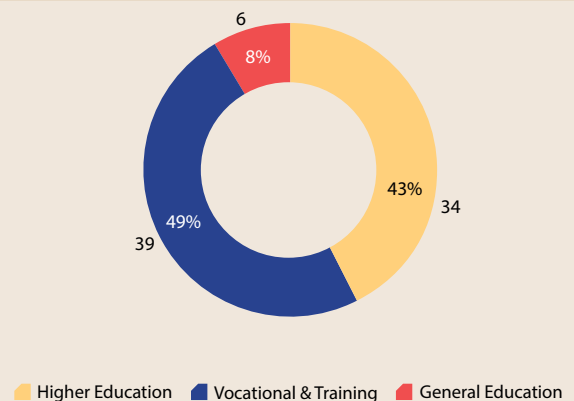


FIGURE 81: PILOT QUALIFICATIONS



The selected qualifications will provisionally cover all 10 NQF levels, with the higher education (HE) sector providing 34 qualifications, the vocational education and training (VET) sector providing 39 qualifications, and the general education (GE) sector contributing six qualifications.

PARTNERSHIP APPROACH

A partnership approach has been adopted in cooperation with stakeholders in education and training sectors since the early stages of the NQF's development. The involvement of the key stakeholders in the development and decision making is essential to the successful implementation of the NQF. The partnership approach was clear in the Design Stage, was a prominent feature in the Set-up Stage and will be the driving force in the Operation Stage. In the Set-up stage, the partnership approach was applied in several forms; namely through the formation of the NQF Technical Committee, six consultative working groups and the Advisory Committee whose members were selected from the stakeholders in education and training sectors in the Kingdom of Bahrain.

WORKING GROUPS

Six consultative working groups were formed to assist in the development of NQF standards and related activities. Those working groups met 24 times during the academic year 2012-2013. The working groups are:

I. INSTITUTIONAL LISTING WORKING GROUP

The remit of the Institutional Listing Working Group is to provide advice and assistance in the development of standards, based on international best practice, for internal quality assurance arrangements within institutions, specifically those related to facilitating the mapping of qualifications to the NQF.

II. QUALIFICATIONS DESIGN WORKING GROUP

The aim of the Qualifications Design Working Group is to provide direction and feedback to the QQA on key activities, policies, procedures and arrangements related to the Design and validation requirements of NQF.

III. QUALIFICATIONS MAPPING WORKING GROUP

The remit of the Qualifications Mapping Working Group is to provide direction and feedback to the QQA on the key activities for the development and piloting of the methodology for mapping qualifications to the NQF.

The remit also includes proposing recommendations on the associated guidance documents, training programmes and credit.

IV. REFERENCING WORKING GROUP

The remit of the Referencing Working Group is to compare the NQF to two mature international frameworks, The Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) and The National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) Ireland. The main outputs from this working group will include three comparison reports:

- NQF to Scotland-SCQF Comparison Report
- NQF to Ireland-NFQ Comparison Report
- NQF Roadmap: Outlining the present status of the NQF and its future aims.

V. CREDIT TRANSFER & RECOGNITION OF PRIOR LEARNING WORKING GROUP

The remit of this working group is to advise and make recommendations to the QQA on the development of systems and mechanisms for credit transfer and recognition and assessment of prior learning.

VI. CAREERS GUIDANCE & COUNSELING WORKING GROUP

The remit of this working group is to develop ideas, make recommendations to the QQA and to finalise an information pack and supporting material for stakeholders about the NQF, tailored for target audiences (learners, parents counsellors and employees).

CAPACITY BUILDING

As part of the national capacity building, a set of intensive workshops were delivered for the pilot institutions on the draft standards and methodology for institutional listing, qualifications approval and mapping procedures.

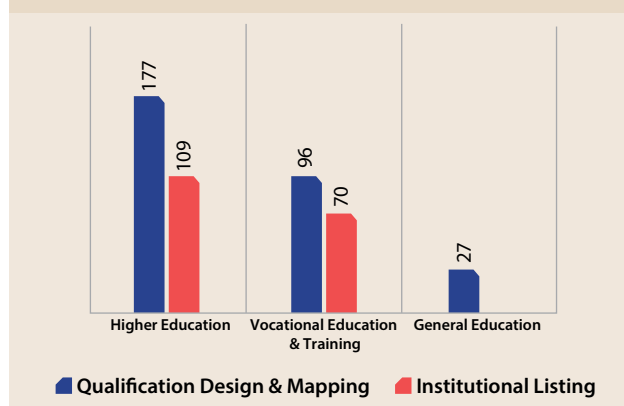
Figure 82 shows the participation of representatives from the selected pilot institutions in the capacity building workshops according to the education and training sectors.

Approximately 300 teaching staff and faculty members attended a series of one-day capacity building workshop on qualification design and mapping. The main purpose of the workshop was to introduce the participants to the draft NQF policies and procedures regarding qualification design and mapping, and to become acquainted with the procedures for inclusion of qualifications on the NQF.

In addition, some 179 staff members working in quality assurance in higher education and vocational institutions which are involved in piloting, attended an introductory seminar on institutional listing and workshops on the procedures to be tested.

Each participating institution was visited by a team of international key experts and GDQ staff members after the capacity building workshops in order to follow up the tasks to be completed for this stage.

FIGURE 82: PARTICIPATION OF PILOT INSTITUTIONS REPRESENTATIVES





Under the patronage of HH Shaikh Mohammed bin Mubarak Al Khalifa, Deputy Prime Minister and Chairman of the Education and Training Reform Board, the Second Conference of the National Authority for Qualifications & Quality Assurance of Education & Training (QQA) was held in the Kingdom of Bahrain on 20 and 21 February 2013. Its theme was 'Quality Education and Training: Challenges & Opportunities'.

The conference aimed to promote the application of international quality standards across the national education and training sectors, as well as provide education and training institutions operating in the Kingdom with the opportunity to explore the challenges and opportunities facing quality assurance agencies locally, regionally and globally.

The conference contributed to raising the status of education in the Kingdom. Education has become the main focus of key development projects as part of the coordination of efforts to strengthen the role of national human capital and qualify Bahrainis to drive the prosperity of Bahrain.

THE FOLLOWING TOPICS WERE DISCUSSED DURING THE CONFERENCE SESSIONS:

- Educational leadership
- Curriculum and assessment in the 21st Century

- The National Qualifications Framework for Bahrain: the potential impact on vocational education and training (VET) in the Kingdom of Bahrain
- Competencies and outcome-based assessment
- Performance monitoring of VET provision – technology and process
- Quality assurance and enhancement
- Teaching and learning
- Community engagement
- The role of assessment in improving educational systems.

The opening speech was delivered by His Excellency Mr. Abdul Aziz Al Fadhel, Minister of Shura Council and Parliament and Chairman of the QQA Board of Directors. HE Mr. Al Fadhel stressed the educational and training institutions are well-prepared to bring about a quality education and training across the Kingdom, based on the visionary leadership's determination to develop the Bahraini citizens and meet their aspirations.

Dr. Jawaher Al Mudhaki, the Chief Executive Officer of the QQA, expressed her appreciation for the efforts and results leading to the current development of education and training sectors in the Kingdom. She pointed out that these two sectors are witnessing a new challenge; which is the

spread of quality culture, and the transition to self-managed education and training institutions through the inclusion of quality principles in their prevalent educational and training practices. She added that these two sectors have already begun to recognise this stage on the development of education and training map.

With the participation of regional and international experts in quality assurance and national examinations from 11 countries, the emphasis of the entire conference was on the practical exchange of ideas and both formal and informal discussions about good practice. Potential solutions to problems and challenges that might contribute to improving and developing education and training were shared and noted.

Over 380 participants, interested in improving the quality of education and from a number of developed countries and with successful experiences, took part in the conference. The delegates were attracted from schools, vocational providers, higher education institutions, and national examinations centres. A group of regional and international experts from education and training institutions and quality assurance agencies contributed also. The mixing of people from different sectors gave opportunities to explore the challenges facing quality assurance agencies both locally and globally. As well as learning from each other's experiences and sharing good practice, opportunities were created for the decision-makers in licensing authorities in the education and training sector to become more acquainted with the latest developments and successful improvement strategies in general use. Participants gained different perceptions and ideas about how to improve their institutions' performance, and promote their practices.

The keynote speaker for the first plenary session was Professor Maria Jose Lemaitre, President of the International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE). She presented a paper titled 'Quality Assurance: the Constant Search for Relevance', in which she briefly explored societal changes and the challenges these pose for higher education, explaining that these

are becoming an increasingly important component of national development. She then focused on the main challenges for quality assurance from the perspective of an effective commitment to the improvement of quality in higher education.

The second plenary session included two keynote speakers, Professor Nadia Badrawi and Dr. Janet Brown. Professor Nadia Badrawi, the President of the Arab Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ANQAHE), presented a paper titled 'Impact of Globalization on Regional and National Higher Education'. In her paper she said that globalisation as a concept has come to the fore throughout the world, during the last decade. There are many forces that have affected globalisation in higher education, such as multilingualism and the explosion in the use of information and communication technology, with their impact on the transportation of programmes across transnational higher education institutions.

Dr. Janet Brown, the Chief Executive of the Scottish Qualification Agency, presented a paper focused on 'The National Qualification Framework: Benefits for the VET Landscape'. She looked at the key players in the VET landscape and then explored the benefits of a National Qualification Framework to each group represented, including individuals, employers in industry and commerce, institutions themselves and governments, and their agencies, communities and wider society. The drivers for the development of qualification frameworks were also identified and discussed.

During the second day, six key presentations were made. Professor Riyad Hamza, the Secretary General of the Higher Education Council, presented the current challenges that face the sector based on key findings in 2012. He discussed issues that providers, students and the overall sector currently face against the backdrop of increased global competition for students and the drive to improve standards.

Dr. Helen Eccles, the Director of Development from

Cambridge International Examinations, UK, presented a paper titled 'Teaching skills and skills-based courses as a means of enhancing curriculum effectiveness'. She discussed the issue that students today require appropriate skills as well as subject content, whether they are progressing on to further study or to the workplace after compulsory education. The rapid uptake of '21st century transferable skills' as the basis for a sound education shows that educators need to take seriously the means by which students can acquire these skills.

Professor Georg Spottl, from the University of Bremen, Germany, focused on 'Comprehensive Quality Concept for Vocational Education and Training - Relevance of Occupational Standards'. He addressed this issue in the context of global economic cooperation and competition, where occupational competence is the key for facing emerging challenges and seizing growing opportunities. He then focused on a quality framework with a number of standards and indicators covering six quality areas within the vocational training processes.

Mr. John Kerr, the Director of Kerr Consulting, UK, discussed 'Quality Assuring Vocational Education and Training - Technology Solutions'. This included an explanation of the currently technologies, for example e-assessment, tracking systems, self-evaluation, e-portfolios. He demonstrated how these can assist in building an effective and cost efficient system, especially in terms of improving transparency and thus building public acceptance and confidence. He concluded his paper by emphasising that only through people and technology can a secure and effective quality system be built.

Dr. Faisal Al-Saud, the Director of the National Center for Assessment in Higher Education, KSA, presented a paper titled 'Analysis of Bahrain Students' Performance in the Dimensions of the General Aptitude Test'. The dimensions measured by the General Aptitude Test and its sub-components were presented with the structural and hypothetical validity of the test through which the credibility of each part or dimension of the parts can be

identified. The presentation focused on measuring the overall level of performance in the test and in the verbal and quantitative parts. It also investigated the proportion of people who fall into different segments of Grades, and attempted to compare the performance of both boys and girls.

Professor Jacky Lumby from the University of Southampton, UK, presented her paper titled 'Improving Schools: The Importance of Culture'. She defined 'culture' as the foundation shaping factor which impels or prevents school improvement. The presentation considered four arenas of culture with which school leaders must engage to achieve successful outcomes for all learners. She also stressed that system-leadership is not leading just one or more schools, but leading the education system as a whole. It implies prioritising the narrowing of the gaps in performance, more than just raising attainment. She then concluded that for the well-being of all children and future society, education requires a cultural shift and fundamental changes in the cultures of organisations, systems and communities. She referred to this work as the new work of leaders for sustainability.

A number of experts in quality assurance presented papers in the area of quality assurance related to education and training.

The conference was preceded by five conference-related workshops. These were on the following topics:

- Measuring students' academic achievement.
- From satisfactory to good VET provision as a national target.
- Bahrain's national examinations results: Interpretation and use.
- Teaching and learning strategies.
- Programme review: external reviewer readiness.

In addition to these five workshops, the conference programme included 33 parallel sessions on all areas of education and training.

CONCLUSION





In this last section of the annual report, the QQA outlines the plans and activities of each directorate for the 2013-2014 academic year. It also sets out through its CE the QQA's membership and board representation on various networks and entities.

OUTLOOK 2013-2014

The **DGS** will ensure during the 2013-2014 academic year that all education stakeholders in Bahrain will be kept informed of the progress that schools are making. A key component of sharing this information is the Annual Report. The high quality, accurate and objective reports on the performance of schools in Bahrain are used in seminars and workshops, so as to share best practices and the lessons learned from school to school.

Although 35% of schools have improved, the rate of progress overall has not been sufficient in closing the gap towards the international aspirations described in the Economic Vision 2030 for Bahrain. As different schools do not start from the same baseline, for many the challenge is not only to provide effective education but also to ensure that provision has direct impact on students' learning and development in the classroom. The school review directorates' forum in February 2014 will address the issue of schools improving from their different starting positions, the theme of "Schools' Quality Challenges and Turnaround Leadership" will focus on the urgent need to improve schools that are judged 'Inadequate'.

A minimum threshold of 'Satisfactory' quality is required across all schools in Bahrain so that 'Inadequate' schools are removed from the education service and students receive their proper entitlement. A 'step-change' is important because although 'Inadequate' schools may have made some progress in addressing the recommendations in their review reports, without making 'sufficient progress' they still do not achieve a 'Satisfactory' standard of education for their students.

Schools which are 'Good' and 'Outstanding' invariably have strong and effective leadership which is sharply

focused on teaching as a focal element which has a direct and consequent impact on students' outcomes. For these schools the outlook is 'Good'. Quality assurance arrangements in the best schools are slim, robust and transparent. They are less so, but still effective enough, in those schools judged to be 'Satisfactory'. Here, deliberate steps 'to raise the bar' need to be taken. It is the learning programmes in the 'Inadequate' schools that need most radical overhaul, so that provision is fit for purpose and achieves the intended outcomes for students. There are sufficient numbers of schools with at least 'Good' performance to provide the vision and springboard for improvement across the school community in Bahrain.

The outlook is on schedule to complete the review of all 206 government schools, as the DGS plans to conduct reviews of a further 73 government schools during the course of the academic year 2013-2014. It will complete Cycle 2 of these reviews in the first semester of the following academic year, 2014-2015, when the remaining 20 schools will be reviewed.

The **DPS** continues to be a key driving force in the quality enhancement of educational services, by attempting to spread the culture of quality and building capacity. With the DGS, the DPS is aiming to help create a culture of on-going debate and discussions, where schools learn from each other in the light of 'Good' practices identified during school reviews. The school review directorates' forum in February 2014 is aimed at recognising senior leadership in schools as the most prominent critical change agent. It will provide opportunities for school leaders and consultants to share their experiences, especially those who have effectively 'turned around' their schools, in spite of difficult circumstances. A rich opportunity is planned to learn from the exchange of successful and practical experiences in schools and kindergartens, both locally and internationally. The DPS will also continue with its capacity building through conducting workshops and forums and through the participation of DPS staff members in the local and international conferences.

Most private schools are not performing sufficiently well to close the gap towards the international aspirations described in the Economic Vision 2030 for Bahrain. Different schools are operating from vastly different baselines and levels of resourcing. In the 'Inadequate' schools in particular, serious improvements are required if they are to reach at least the 'Satisfactory' standards expected in Bahrain's schools. 'Satisfactory' schools need to adopt more of the practices of the 'Good' and 'Outstanding' schools. Recommendations for the 'Outstanding' schools include a call for greater community professional effort to share best practices, despite competition to attract students.

The outlook is on schedule to complete the review of all 62 private schools, as the DPS plans to conduct reviews of a further 19 private schools during the course of the academic year 2013-2014. It will complete Cycle 1 of the private school reviews in the first semester of the following academic year, 2014-2015, when the remaining eight private schools will be reviewed. This completion of the cycle of reviews for private schools will coincide with the completion of Cycle 2 of the government school reviews.

During the academic year 2013-2014, the **DNE** will conduct the sixth national examinations for Grades 3 and 6, the fifth national examinations for Grade 9, and the second national examinations for Grade 12. The DNE will also hold a one-day forum, entitled 'Pros and Cons of International Assessment'. Speakers from the OECD (PISA), the Centre for Education and Employment Research, University of Buckingham and a local speaker from the Ministry of Education, Bahrain, who will present a research paper entitled "International TIMSS Assessment and Decision-Making: A Critical Study", are expected.

The **DVR** is planning to complete Cycle 2 of reviews by the end of June 2014. In the 2013-2014 academic year, the DVR will review 43 providers, 19 of which are licensed by the MoE and 23 by the MoL and one self-regulated. As Cycle 2 comes to an end the DVR will consult with VET providers and other stakeholders to reflect on and gain feedback on the Cycle 2 review framework. The DVR

will also work closely with the NQF as it develops the Cycle 3 framework. The DVR will continue its efforts to communicate and coordinate with different stakeholders through working closely with its main partners, the MoL, the MoE, the Economic Development Board, the Labour Fund (Tamkeen), and the Higher Council for Vocational Training to improve the quality of vocational education and training in the Kingdom.

The DVR will continue with its capacity building activities through conducting workshops and its annual forums and through participating in the QQA conferences and activities.

In its effort to evaluate and improve the whole VET provided in the Kingdom of Bahrain and in line with the right of all Bahraini citizens to high quality education and training, the DVR is planning to conduct preliminary studies of the Special Education Needs providers available in Bahrain and develop and pilot reviews of these institutions.

In the 2013-2014 academic year, the **DHR** will continue implementing 'Programmes-within-College Reviews. Three colleges will have their programmes reviewed in the field of Computer Science and Information Technology, which will finish these reviews. The reviews of the Bachelor and Master programmes offered within the colleges of business will commence. The DHR will continue with its programme of capacity building activities to support institutions in preparing for review. The DHR will also continue with its programme to train local reviewers to participate in the Programmes-within-College Reviews.

With the last institutional follow-up review having taken place in March 2013 and the report published in May 2013, the DHR has formally finished with Cycle 1 of institutional reviews. While Cycle 1 was formative in nature, Cycle 2 will be summative; i.e. judgements will be made. However, before the framework for Cycle 2 of Institutional Reviews is finalised feedback from various stakeholders is required on *inter alia* the nine themes and 25 Indicators, which were used in the first cycle of Institutional Reviews. There is also

a need for a consultation process with stakeholders on the proposed Framework for Cycle 2 Institutional Reviews which will be presented to the Board for approval in 2014. To meet these requirements as well as to strengthen institutions' understanding of the nature and purpose of external quality reviews, in the DHR will hold a forum entitled 'Higher Education: Stronger Together'.

The GDQ will continue with piloting its work. Pilot institutions are expected to submit their qualifications for inclusion on the NQF register by the end of October 2013. However, many started submitting their institutional listing in July 2013.

The working groups will monitor the progress of the implementation plan during the upcoming academic year, and consider the feedback from the selected institutions during the evaluation phase. Furthermore, it is expected that new working groups will be formed to discuss and develop the methodologies of aligning foreign qualifications to the NQF in Bahrain.

As the NQF is a mandatory framework, a phased implementation of the NQF will take place in 2014, by delivering capacity building workshops to the institutions that were not involved in the initial piloting.

A conference will be held in 2014. During the conference, the findings of piloting during the Set-up Stage will be presented. Additionally, international keynote speakers will present several topics related to qualification frameworks.

REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL PRESENCE

Lastly and most importantly through the CE, the QQA proactively takes part in a number of national and international committees and events in order to contribute to policy development where appropriate and to keep fully abreast of all current developments in the area of quality assurance in education and training. The CE of the QQA holds the overall responsibility for the contact with international stakeholders. Since 2008, the CE has accepted

invitations from a number of QA agencies from the Gulf and Arab agencies to present the QQA model, mandates and operations.

The QQA is one of the founding agencies of the Arab Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ANQAHE) established in 2007. The CE is the elected President of ANQAHE, and a board member of the Association of Quality Assurance Agencies of The Islamic World established in 2011. ANQAHE disseminates information, experiences and good practices in the field of quality assurance in higher education to Arab quality assurance agencies, public authorities and higher education institutions. Staff of the QQA attend and contribute to ANQAHE workshops on a regular basis and also attend the organisation's general assembly by invitation of the ANQAHE. The CE has now been elected a member of the Board of the International Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (INQAHE).

The QQA has established strong and vibrant international links for the benefit of sharing good practice between agencies and authorities. From its inception in 2008, the QQA has explicitly set out to operate internationally and has taken frequent initiatives to develop relations with other quality agencies and relevant associations either bilaterally or via membership of networks of quality assurance agencies.

The QQA, through the NQF, participates in the Gulf Qualifications Framework team under the supervision of the General Secretariat of the Cooperation Council for the Arab Gulf states.

SUCCESS STORIES





INTRODUCTION

This section of the Annual Report provides a summary of the most prominent success stories achieved in the path to improvement and development, which the Authority was keen to realise in collaboration with the education and training institutions that have been reviewed over the two cycles of reviews between the academic year 2008-2009 and the academic year 2012-2013.

For the first time since the issuance and publication of its annual report in 2009, the Authority has dedicated a section for selected success stories of education and training institutions in this current annual report. The Authority seeks to show how these institutions succeeded in translating the Authority's recommendations and review teams' observations into achievable action and improvement plans. Hence, this section reflects the value of achievements realised by such institutions, which is the focus of the Authority's core business. This sets an example for the remaining educational and training institutions seeking to achieve key milestones and contributing towards enhancing the education and training model in the Kingdom as a regional, and possibly an international success story.

The purpose of this section is to praise and spread the concept and optimal applications of quality assurance. In addition, it displays models of the opportunities given to education institutions with various capabilities to use innovative improvement mechanisms on the one hand as well as apply the best practices in the field of quality assurance, on the other hand.

In this section, we will present five success stories of government schools; mostly elementary girls schools that adequately responded to their review reports' recommendations; two vocational providers that achieved significant progress, and finally two higher education institutions, which also made remarkable progress in their institutional follow-up reviews that check on the

improvement that institutions have made after they have received recommendations in their full institutional review report in the first cycle of reviews.

According to the Authority's recent review reports results covered by this Annual Report, one of the main reasons for the significant progress made by these institutions was attributed to the strength of leadership and management and the insistence on the follow-up of best practices to develop their improvement plans on the basis of accurate and on-going self-evaluation to identify continuously new development opportunities and areas for improvement on the current improvement plans.

1. GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS

AMINAH BINT WAHAB PRIMARY GIRLS SCHOOL

'Wise leadership for promising vision'



Strategic planning and accurate self-evaluation is an essential platform for enhancing the principles of quality assurance and continuous improvement of the teaching and learning processes. Aminah Bint Wahab Primary Girls School's leadership was greatly aware of the importance of these aspects and this led to the enhancement of its distinguished performance and excellent learning outcomes.

During both review visits within the two cycles of reviews conducted by the Directorate of Government Schools Review (DGS) until the date of this Annual Report, the School's overall effectiveness remained steady and was judged outstanding in the first cycle of reviews in 2009 and the second cycle of reviews in 2012. This is attributed to the School's awareness of the importance of change and a clear cooperative developmental approach in setting up an accurate strategic plan based on the analysis of the School's situation and identification of priorities.

Ms. Badria Swaileh, the Principal of the School, pointed out: 'The application of quality standards and the notable progress cannot be achieved by working randomly; planning for success and excellence through the development of an accurate plan that addresses all aspects of school work, the working groups tasks and the mechanisms of continuous follow-up by the leadership, is the basis for achieving success

stories.' Ms. Badria argued that the fruits of excellence require commitment and full awareness of all achievable aspects. 'The improvement results cannot be realised overnight as they rely on strategic thinking, timetables and rigorous follow-up of their impact. Needless to say the appropriate strategic thinking along with building solid human relationships with teachers and students, are the basis of all subsequent success stories,' she said.

The awareness of the School's leadership, combined with clear thinking and insistence on excellence are clearly



reflected in setting up a comprehensive strategic plan based on full and accurate self-evaluation results of all the school's aspects.

Explaining the reasons for achieving the school's sustainable aspirations of excellence, Ms. Badria said: 'The most important strategic steps that enabled the school to promote the principles of continuous improvement is the focus on setting short- and long-term targets, the implementation of an ongoing self-evaluation process, as well as the flexibility and diversity of learning resources, which result in tangible impact on the improvement efforts.'

The professional and distinct performance of all teachers with regard to the curriculum delivery based on various educational needs of students, was the most prominent strength concluded in the school's second review report published in the academic year 2011-2012. Moreover, the school challenges the students' abilities and provides its staff members with a number of opportunities for the development of leadership skills to rely on them in carrying out many tasks and duties.

The students' results in the Authority's national examinations was a clear indication of the outstanding learning outcomes resulting from accurate strategic planning. Grades 3 and 6 students achieved results that were higher than the national average in the national examinations over three successive years from 2009 to 2011; and particularly in the academic year 2011, where they achieved results that were much higher than the national average in Arabic and English in Grade 6. These results reflected the real and outstanding levels for the majority of students in lessons; especially in Science and Mathematics.

Students achieved high pass and proficiency rates during the first semester of the school year 2011-2012 ranging between 81% - 96% in core subjects. The school played a significant and effective role in promoting these rates through the implementation of a number of educational projects.

The high-quality teaching and learning processes in the vast majority of lessons are consistent, which is reflected directly in the performance of the students. Moreover, teachers have a broad command and knowledge of their subjects, which was reflected in their explicit enthusiasm in all lessons and use of modern teaching methods effectively such as 'problem-solving', 'inductive thinking' and 'brainstorming'.



According to the Principal of the School, 'The impact of the Authority's review reports was evident in the initiatives taken at the educational level in general, and the development of the administrative and teaching staff in the government schools, in particular.'

The school has a clear vision and mission statement that focuses on promoting the school community and is shared by administrative and teaching staff, students and their parents, and is reflected in all aspects of school work in a distinguished manner; especially the students' achievement and teaching and learning processes.

The journey of excellence and continuous improvement does not end at this point. The school needs to continue to apply the best practices to ensure the sustainability of performance within the excellence domain and seek to spread the best practice at the national level.

AL-RAWDHA PRIMARY GIRLS SCHOOL

'Building on strengths in order to sustain quality performance'



In spite of the challenges facing the spread of the culture of quality assurance among the education institutions, an appropriate platform that is based on a scientific and accurate assessment of the institution's situation and their learning outcomes provides a solid ground for ongoing building and development, as well as the desired elements of sustainability.

During the first review conducted in 2010, Al-Rawdha Primary Girls School was among the first schools that were judged 'outstanding', while it set a good example of ongoing excellence based on sound strategic planning in the second cycle of reviews.

The results of the second review complemented and confirmed the core values of the prevailing culture and educational practices in the school, and formed its consistent strengths over the two cycles of reviews. The use of excellent teaching and learning strategies and the focus on distinguished developmental and educational projects enhancing the curriculum were unique characteristics of the school that clearly contributed to promoting the high academic achievement of the students.

According to the school's review report, Al-Rawdha School sought to perform well. Confirming this characteristic, **Ms. Eman Mareed, the Principal of the School** said: 'Perhaps, the only recommendation contained in the first review report that represented a serious challenge to the

school in preparation for the second cycle of reviews, was the spread of the culture of excellence and continuity. The school's strategic plan, which enabled it to undergo the Authority's review visit in a distinguished manner, represented a sound cornerstone to continue the path of excellence through the continuous self-evaluation. The strength of strategic planning enhanced the continuity of the school's outstanding performance.'

Overall, the Authority's review visits of schools, according to the Principal of the School, motivate and urge schools to spread the culture of change that transfers the traditional educational concepts to modern educational methods



and approaches. 'The preparation for the Authority's review visits is not a job that you finish at scheduled dates, but it is a course of action and practice', she said.

Although the school's overall effectiveness was judged 'outstanding', Ms. Eman said that the school exerted its best efforts in order to remain in the circle of 'continuous improvement'.

The most important achievements of the school was the compatibility of its excellent performance in all areas of assessment with all its achievements in the first review visit. This had a direct impact on the excellent teaching and learning processes resulting in achieving students' high success rates in the school examinations ranging between 86% and 100% in the first semester of the academic year 2012-2013. Moreover, they were consistent with the high proficiency rates, particularly in English in the first cycle of education and Science in the second cycle of education. Grade 6 students achieved results that were higher than the national average in the QQA national examinations in all core subjects over 2011 and 2012. In addition, Grade 3 students achieved results that were higher than the national average in Arabic over the years 2010-2012, and in Mathematics during the years 2010-2011.

The Principal of the School pointed out that 'The application of the concept of a culture of quality is a transition from the dominant culture to a culture that meets the latest developments and mechanisms of modern education.' She also stated that the Authority's review reports are the tools assessing how well schools are committed to quality standards in general, and show them the ways to sustainable and quality performance; particularly when they take the review reports' recommendations into account as well as benefit from the support provided by the Ministry of Education to qualify them to meet the quality assurance requirements.

Ms. Mareed also stated that while the review team is an external professional assessment body, the review team's observations reflect the team's awareness and keen interest that their recommendations will optimally help the school and contribute to improving their performance.

According to the school's recent review report, the effectiveness of teaching methods and support and guidance programmes for various categories of students, as well as the programmes aiming to raise the students'



academic standards and the excellent use of the school environment and learning resources are all essential elements contributing to enhancing the excellent level of performance of the teaching and learning processes and high learning outcomes.

Commenting on this, Ms. Mareed said: 'A continuous self-evaluation based on the review team's observations was an indication of the nature of the school's activities and programmes in order to promote the principles of sustainability of excellent performance. In addition, they were a platform for the students' deep adherence to high moral values and behaviour.'

Promoting the school's strengths, coupled with the optimum utilization of opportunities for development and sustainability is the approach on which the school's action plan is based in spreading the culture of excellence and best practices as widely as possible across the school, as well as all the education institutions in the Kingdom to ensure the sustainability of quality performance.

RABIA'A AL-ADAWEYIA PRIMARY GIRLS SCHOOL

'Accurate strategic goals for sustainability'



Sustainability is one of the most prominent values of quality assurance; therefore, the outstanding level maintained by Rabia'a Al-Adaweyia Primary Girls School over the two cycles of reviews is a live model and ideal example of the available practical opportunities to promote the current aspects of excellence and continue to build on these aspects.

During the academic year 2009-2010, the school was reviewed and judged 'outstanding' in the first cycle of reviews. Due to the availability of essential elements and success factors that enhanced the first review report's judgement in terms of the school's outstanding capacity to improve, the results of the second cycle of reviews endorsed the value of such essential elements and success factors and confirmed that excellence goals and achievement can be planned accurately.

Between the two cycles of reviews one of the key challenges facing the school was proving that the culture of quality and excellence is an inherent part of all the school operations to raise the students' achievement and maintain the outstanding level of teaching and learning processes.

Ms. Banneh Mohammed Burshaid, the Principal of the School, said that the QQA's first review visit confirmed the

school's clear vision that was developed back in 2008, and urged the school to review its strategic plan based on an accurate analysis of the school's situation.

'First of all, we were able to identify our strengths and areas for improvement, to develop clearly our vision and strategic goals and to take practical steps based on documented and comprehensive evaluation. This resulted in developing fit-for-purpose programmes, which all contributed to strengthening our focus on making the student the centre of the educational process, in addition to our insistence on employing distinguished teachers to enhance the



educational process, as we are convinced that the more we have good teachers, the more we have good students,' Ms. Banneh added.

Such basic steps were essential for the school and contributed to be judged 'outstanding' in all aspects; particularly in the progress made in the students' academic achievement in core subjects overall.

Such excellence made the school insist on the continuation of well-articulated planning based on the school's resources to devise a realistic model of the sustainability of excellence over almost four years during which the school was reviewed in the two cycles of reviews. This has also resulted in winning Sheikh Hamdan bin Rashid Al Maktoum award for Distinguished Academic Performance (2011-2012).

According to the Principal of the School, the most important step taken by the school to sustain its excellence was 'the formation of the strategy development team that was comprised of an elite of the school's administrative and teaching staff and students who set up the first draft. Then, we conceptualized the final strategy taking into account the Authority's requirements to develop a comprehensive plan covering all the opinions of the school staff members.'

Based on the Authority's review reports, the school's students in the School's both cycles of education maintained their high achievement levels in all core subjects over consecutive years, as well as when they moved to the next cycle of education. All students in various age groups achieve outstanding progress as the school caters for individual differences in the activities and programmes.

The achievement levels of low achievers, students with learning difficulties and inclusion-class students, are raising as a result of the effectiveness of the support given to them.

The vast majority of the school's students demonstrate a strong affiliation to the school, high motivation to learning, and a high degree of awareness and responsibility. This has been enhanced by a number of initiatives taken by the school as well as the open-door policy adopted by the school's leadership.



According to Ms. Banneh: 'The recommendations of the review reports and seeking to take the improvement opportunities helped us a lot and guided us to identify our priorities and initiate our work activities in a harmonious and respectful atmosphere between the school management and the students on the one hand, and the teachers and the students on the other hand.'

Upon the publication of the second review report in which the school maintained its outstanding performance, the school is now seeking to spread its quality practices among the various education institutions in the Kingdom to promote the culture of quality assurance, improve their learning outputs and drive them towards excellence.

AL- KHAWARIZMI PRIMARY BOYS SCHOOL

'Emphasis on the culture of quality is the basis of success'



Achieving the comprehensive improvement goals of the teaching and learning processes is one of the most important requirements of the education institution, provided that it does not deviate from the developmental aspirations. Hence, the quality improvement of Al-Khawarizmi Primary Boys School demonstrates the value of proper planning and good employment of opportunities for development in order to realise the comprehensive improvement goals.

The change of the school's overall effectiveness from 'satisfactory' to 'outstanding' in the two cycles of reviews is an actual translation of the value of quality assurance systems in promoting the improvement and development concepts, as well as overcoming a number of challenges to make significant progress.

The school's capacity to improve – in addition to the overall effectiveness - has changed since the first review from 'good' to 'outstanding' in the Authority's last review report. This is due to a clear and effective strategic planning based on accurate self-evaluation in which the school identified its main priorities and developed its operational plan that was translated into real achievements.

Commenting on the development opportunities, **Ms. Rasha Ali Yusuf, the Principal of the School**, explained that 'I joined the school during the academic year 2010-

2011, and found out that the school was ready for further development. In collaboration with the school's staff members, we conducted a comprehensive survey of the school, which enabled us to identify the administrative, educational and behavioural challenges, and then we translated the results of this survey into real and gradual improvement steps.'

The Authority's second review report demonstrated the outstanding performance of the school leadership in all the administrative and technical aspects. This was strongly reflected in the experienced human resources, which form the second line of leadership supporting the school management.

'The school's improvement plan focused mainly on the investment in human resources and preparing new qualified leaders from the school's administrative and teaching staff members who should be fully aware of the school's priorities of improvement and possess high leadership skills to create a family-like spirit among the staff, in addition to possessing the skills of continuous assessment and improvement,' Ms. Rasha said.

The Principal of the School also pointed out that the work team managed to identify the first steps towards establishing the principles of quality assurance in the school. These steps included the conduct of continuous

self-evaluation of the school and the spread of the culture of measuring the impact of field work upon which the concept of review is based when the Authority's review teams conduct their reviews of the government schools.

The school, according to the Authority's review report, has a vision and mission which focus on improving achievement. These were developed with the participation of the school's community, and was practically reflected on their practices. One of the key achievements demonstrated in the school's second review report was the significant progress in the students' behaviour, their acquisition of leadership skills and a high potential for self- development at the academic and behavioural levels.

Moreover, the students' academic achievement demonstrated that Grade 3 students made significant progress in the Authority's National Examinations during the academic years 2011 and 2012, compared to their results in the previous academic year, 2010. Students achieved results that were much higher than the national average in Arabic in particular. They also achieved high results in Mathematics, which are consistent with the levels of the vast majority of students in lessons.

In addition, students achieved high success rates in the school examinations reaching 100% in all core subjects in the two cycles of education during the academic year 2011-2012 and the first semester of the academic year 2012-2013.

One of the key challenges facing the Principal of the School - in the journey of improvement - was improving the students' behaviour and achieving a high level of parents' satisfaction. Accordingly, she developed a clear behaviour change policy through which a number of motivational projects and activities were developed and covered the morning assembly, break times and lessons.

Ms. Rasha also pointed out that the school's teachers played a key role in achieving this aspiration. The improvement efforts relied on improving the teaching and learning processes on the one hand, and students' personal development behaviour, which achieved their objectives through the teachers' highly collaborative contribution on the other.



The most important characteristics of the quality assurance applications are continuity, and the need to keep abreast with the aspirations of development in light of the growing educational challenges. The notable progress made by Al- Khawarizmi Primary Boys School is attributed to the improvement efforts, which will affect the future of the education of our children. Then the school's role is to seek to emphasize the sustainability of the gains of excellence, take advantage of best practices in the field of quality assurance, and benefit from its achievements across the school and among the education institutions in the Kingdom of Bahrain.

AL-NOOR SECONDARY GIRLS SCHOOL

'Improvement efforts are collaborative responsibility'



The formation of a school visionary leadership that believes in the use of collaborative improvement plans to raise its standard explains the significant progress made by Al-Noor Secondary Girls School over the two cycles of reviews conducted by the Directorate of Government Schools Reviews (DGS) of the QQA.

Since the publication of the school's first review report in the academic year 2009 in which the school's overall effectiveness was judged 'inadequate', Al-Noor School launched a number of comprehensive initiatives to identify the development opportunities in every aspect of the evaluation; namely, the students' academic achievement, the students' personal development, the quality of the effectiveness of teaching and learning processes, curriculum delivery and enrichment, the quality of the students' support and guidance, and the effectiveness of leadership and management and governance.

The school leadership transferred the challenges of the results of its first review report to prospective strengths to improve its standard while drafting the improvement plans. The school managed to instill the principles and culture of quality in the school environment and among its staff members, students, parents and teaching, administrative and technical staff. The result was the development of a collaborative vision shared by all the school community

and stakeholders.

Commenting on this, **Ms. Sameeha Alashkar, the Principal of the School**, said: 'To convince the school staff members of the review report results and the importance of addressing the recommendations of the report with regard to the improvement of the performance of the school, was a major challenge to the school leadership.'

The publication of the Authority's review report, according to Ms. Sameeha, was the catalyst that drove the school leadership to form collaborative work teams to analyze the areas of assessment. Upon the implementation of this



stage, the school immediately drafted an 'after review action plan' in which the recommendations of the report were translated into goals with specific actions and practical steps paving the way to achieve those goals .

In the second review report, the school made significant progress in terms of self-evaluation and strategic planning. This has a direct impact and the school's overall effectiveness changed from 'inadequate' to 'good'.

The strategic steps taken by the school were reflected in the identification of the training needs that drive the school's efforts towards the optimum utilization of the available development opportunities.

The school's review report also pointed out the value of the external support provided to students, and clearly contributed to raising their academic achievement.

Moreover, the school's review report highlighted a number of development opportunities such as the need to set up teaching and learning strategies, especially in core subjects, taking into account the development of higher-order thinking skills, the challenge of students' abilities, catering for students' individual differences in lessons and homework activities, effective use of assessment methods to improve learning and inform lesson planning, and the use of the self-evaluation results to improve teaching and learning processes.

After the last review visit, the DGS review team observed the impact of the school's improvement plans and initiatives on enhancing the students' academic achievement, the significant progress the school made in teaching and learning processes and how the concepts of self-evaluation and strategic planning were established.

Upon the publication of the first review report, Ms. Sameeha explained that 'this report helped us a lot, and we took actual initiatives to develop teaching and learning strategies, and this became a dominant trend in the school environment and among its staff members'.

The Principal of the School also pointed out that the school paid attention to the role of student. The student becomes the centre of the educational process. This has had a



great impact on the students' personal development and academic achievement, which is the actual result aspired by any recognized education institution.

The most important recommendations for the next phase are enhancing the school's capacity to develop and improve through the spread of best practices across the school, providing intensive support for low achievers and enriching the curriculum through the development of extra-curricular mechanisms and activities to pave the way towards the continuous development and improvement and enhance the sustainability of the quality of the school performance.

2. VOCATIONAL PROVIDERS

BAHRAIN INSTITUTE FOR BANKING AND FINANCE (BIBF)

'Internal quality assurance system to invest in excellence'



When the importance of the culture of quality assurance is enhanced to become a dominant trend across the providers, and an inherent practice across all their activities, yet ensure that this culture is implemented in most internal policies, such practices become tools showing the right path towards focusing its efforts on quality training outcomes and have a real opportunity to invest in excellence. The Bahrain Institute for Banking and Finance (BIBF) may be one of the most prominent of these models as they sought to develop and improve to support the quality assurance and clinch high ranks of excellence.

In 2010, BIBF received its first review visit and the overall effectiveness of BIBF was 'good', as were the other aspects except for the quality of the programmes offered which was judged 'outstanding'. The post-review stage was a challenge for the Institute to prove its excellence. BIBF took the Authority's recommendations as a basis to realise its aspirations, and they were clearly reflected in the results of the second review report where the overall effectiveness of BIBF improved to 'outstanding', as were the other aspects except for the quality of teaching and training which was judged as 'good'.

Ms. Solveig Nicklos, Director of BIBF, said that the stage

between both cycles of review was a transition phase for the Institute. 'The Authority's Directorate of Vocational Review (DVR) review report was a turning point that obliged the Institute to move from discussion to an execution stage. BIBF focused on the internal quality assurance and internal review policies through the application of a comprehensive internal quality assurance system, which emphasizes the need for a framework for all BIBF programmes to ensure the quality of provision,' she added.

Ms. Solveig Nicklos explained that the recommendations of



the first review report identified the BIBF strengths and areas for improvement. They also highlighted the importance of developing reliable assessment criteria that form a bigger challenge to learners, as well as improving the lesson observations and learners punctuality procedures to control their attendance mechanism.

These recommendations had a significant impact on BIBF development as upon identifying these aspects they formed a challenge to improve. BIBF management immediately proceeded with addressing these recommendations, and developed strategic and action plans regulating the Institute's functions. In addition, management used the learners assessment mechanism on which the performance of learners is determined before, during, and after the training course. This procedure was based on the QQA's review reports regarding lesson observations to measure progress and success of learners and support them to achieve better. BIBF also recruited well-qualified faculty members with vocational background and experience and has recently broadened the range of its internally and externally-accredited programmes with a wide range of extra-curricular activities to enrich the learning process. Based on this, the curricula were reassessed under the internal quality assurance system to comply their training outcomes with the highest standards of quality assurance required in the labour market, especially the financial and banking sector.

The culture of quality assurance also helped develop the objective measurement of feedback through which the Institute adopted a policy to emphasize the culture of continuous improvement. "Bahrain is really characterized by this type of culture - a culture of quality assurance - particularly in the banking training sector. The development of an internal quality assurance system is a way to continue the Authority's reviews and is a real investment for the institution, whether the investment in time or investment towards excellence," Ms. Nicklos added.

BIBF was judged 'outstanding' in the Authority's second review report in most aspects. Learners' success rates are high on most externally-accredited programmes, such as accounting, banking and leadership and management, while in some programmes learners success rates are compatible with, or higher than, the international success



rates. Learners' success rates are also high on most internally designed programmes and courses. Moreover, the Institute maintains highly effective links with relevant stakeholders and professional communities within the same industry locally, regionally and internationally.

Ms. Nicklos also said: 'One of the most important developments that have been observed after addressing the Authority's recommendations is the high attendance rate, especially among the employed learners. The introduction of a formal attendance policy with rigorous requirements developed their high sense of responsibility that is reflected in their attendance rate. In addition, a general change in the Institute's policy was observed, where the Institute sought to conduct assessment process and collect and consider all views of the relevant stakeholders, whether learners or employers. These opinions are categorized and used in all areas.'

Ms. Nicklos also pointed out that the Authority plays a very important and unique role in promoting trust and providing an effective external assessment. Usually, the training institutions believe they are doing well, which is in contrast to reality. Here, the Authority's role is to provide an accredited and reliable measurement tool of the performance of the all training institutions and compare them with each other.

Achieving excellence in a very short period of time and in comparison with its size and wide range of programmes and courses, BIBF has an opportunity to maintain sustainability and remain an example in the field of training spreading the excellence practices between providers across the Kingdom to drive them towards excellence.

AL MASHREQ TRAINING (PREVIOUSLY ARABIAN EAST TRAINING CENTER)

'The Authority's recommendations lead to first thresholds of excellence'



The principle of partnership adopted by the Authority's vision for the development of teaching and training processes, which is consistent with the Authority's support and guidance to better improve the performance of training institutions, is evident in the Al Mashreq Training (previously Arabian East Training Center) with the remarkable progress it made between the two cycles of reviews.

In 2009, Al Mashreq Training received its first review visit and the overall effectiveness was 'satisfactory'. The review team recommendations were the first seeds towards Al Mashreq's excellence. Although these recommendations have been the biggest challenge for the provision, they were reflected positively on the results of the second review visit in which it made significant progress and was judged 'outstanding'.

Mr. Hassan Ali Ahmed, the General Manager of Al Mashreq Training, pointed out that the management team exerted great efforts to address the recommendations of the first review report and reshaped the institution's strategy to live up to the learner's aspirations and meet the needs of the labour market as well. The management team conducted a study to determine the reasons for the low pass rates of learners, and concluded the need to integrate the principles of quality assurance across the provision's operations and practices including registration, job descriptions and accurate identification of duties, which effectively contributed to

enhancing the internal quality assurance system.

Mr. Hassan pointed out that the Authority's first review visit served as an effective and guidance tool as it established the concrete foundations of quality assurance and bridged the gaps to address the areas for improvement. The recommendations of the first review stressed the need to make learners acquire the basic skills to achieve better success rates, and urged to set up improvement plans and develop trainer appraisal mechanisms to enhance the quality of training in an integrated manner.



Consequently, the management team sought to participate in various forums to keep abreast with the latest developments, especially in the field of health and safety, as well as the best practices and applications in this field. In addition, the management team benefited from the support given by Specific Council for Vocational Training. Accordingly, once the strengths and areas for improvement were identified as listed in the Authority's review reports, Al Mashreq Training was able to identify jobs or tasks that will enable it to exploit its strengths and reduce its weaknesses.

Mr. Hassan also pointed out that the Al Masreq Training facilities were one of the factors that deterred the progress; however, when registered in the Tamkeen Health and Safety Project, the management team was able to invest in the development of facilities to provide a safe and motivating learning environment for all stakeholders. This was enhanced by a high and systematic level of support to learners and the recruitment of more highly qualified trainers and administrative staff on full-time basis. Al Mashreq Training has also concluded partnership agreements with a number of international accreditation bodies to provide a wide range of externally-accredited courses. This was positively reflected in the level of improvement of the center and resulted in a significant increase in the number of learners enrolled in the courses, especially the externally-accredited programmes.

These initiatives have contributed to improving a number of aspects, particularly the learners' achievement levels and success rates that are much higher than the international success rates, compared to the previous stage; in addition to the acquisition of a wide range of vocational skills and knowledge. All these factors helped achieve excellence and consequently A Mashreq Training was judged outstanding by the Authority's review team.

One of the key milestones achieved during the transitional phase, and based on which the DVR judgements were at two Grade differences from 'satisfactory' to 'outstanding' in the second review is, according to Mr. Hassan, the institution's strong belief in the importance of the compatibility of the principles of quality assurance with the work mechanism, which ultimately determines the level of quality of learning outcomes and the quality of acquired knowledge and abilities. In this regard, the management team developed



detailed strategic and action plans focusing on continuous improvement process. 'The quality has no limits and training institutions cannot criticize themselves; therefore, the Authority's reviews are very important and help training institutions proceed to the right path according to their field of specialty,' Mr. Hassan added.

According to the Authority's published reports, Al Mashreq Training has achieved two Grade differences from 'satisfactory' to 'outstanding' in four aspects; namely, the learners' achievement, the quality of programmes, the quality of the learner's support and guidance, and the effectiveness of leadership and management, while the effectiveness of training achieved one Grade difference only.

Moreover, Mr. Hassan emphasized the need to make the effort and work correctly to achieve sustainability saying: 'The distinct institution shall force its will through outstanding performance and shall be able to compete fiercely in the labour market. We, at Al Mashreq Training, aspire to carry out our business activities regionally, and strive to make Bahrain the hub of training. With the help of the QQA as an assessment body supporting the training institutions, we will, no doubt, fulfill all our aspirations.'

After two cycles of reviews and clinching the 'outstanding' Grade, Al Mashreq Training has an opportunity to maintain this level of excellence and seek to spread best practices among the training institutions across the Kingdom to contribute to promoting the exchange of experiences and producing distinguished training outcomes.

3. GOVERNMENT HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

UNIVERSITY OF BAHRAIN

'Sound strategic foundations are a platform for continuous improvement'



The value of deep-rooted higher education institutions is mainly attributed to being a lighthouse of education and an important breeder of educational leaders. In this sense, the concept of quality assurance confirms this value of higher education institutions taking into account the higher institution's basic resources for the optimum utilisation of the available development opportunities.

As for the University of Bahrain, which is the government and biggest university in the Kingdom of Bahrain, the concept of 'quality assurance' emphasises the need to achieve this core value. The Authority's institutional review report in 2010 stressed on this value and considered it a platform for the University's improvement plans.

The published report included 17 recommendations under the themes of: mission, planning and governance, academic standards, internal quality assurance and enhancement, quality of teaching and learning, particularly in terms of the enhancement of stakeholders' feedback, wide student support and enhancement of human resources; in addition to the recommendations in the theme of research to promote the conduct of academic research and provide all the necessary elements for this aspect such as the financial resources, encouragement of academic faculty and provision

of all the necessary facilities to complete research.

Moreover, UoB received 12 affirmations that have been contained in the University's self-evaluation report within the Authority's applicable institutional review procedures, as well as 15 commendations representing UoB strengths based on the Panel's observations.

One of UoB key characteristics is the sound infrastructure, and comprehensive and clear strategic planning, particularly its strategic plan 2009-2014, which covers all the educational



and institutional aspects and focuses on the quality of teaching and learning, community engagement, and administrative processes.

Dr. Hesham Al-Ammal, the Director of Quality Assurance Office at the University of Bahrain during the years 2007-2010, said that one of the main sources that have contributed to strengthening the set-up stage of the strategic plan 2009-2014, is the pilot stage of QQA reviews conducted in partnership with AUQA, in which UoB was one of the reviewed institutions.

Dr. Al-Ammal also said: 'A number of initiatives resulted from this stage, on top of which were the application of outcomes-based assessment, which implicitly aims to promote the concept of quality assurance through the follow-up of the progress of academic programmes, involvement of stakeholders including the students, faculty members and employers. This concept also includes the review of the University's applicable policies and regulations.'

To complement the stages of the institutional review, and upon the submission of the report showing the progress made by the UoB in maintaining or enhancing its commendations, as well as the procedures taken in addressing the affirmations and recommendations contained in the review report, the Directorate of Higher Education Review (DHR)'s follow-up visit was undertaken in 2013 to check on the improvement the UoB has made to enhance its academic and leadership role in the Kingdom.

According to the follow-up visit report results, the UoB clearly took further steps to support and implement the quality management systems at the university, where quality assurance offices have been established in each college of the university to manage and enhance the quality assurance of academic programmes as well as the quality assurance committees that have been formed in each department.

In addition, the results of the institutional review report published in 2010, as stated by Dr. Al Ammal, was a catalyst to strengthen an anti-plagiarism system and promote the postgraduate programmes, and last but not least, to establish the culture of continuous improvement.



The former Director of Quality Assurance Office at the University of Bahrain also said: 'Today, the Entrepreneurship Incubation Center is a strategic step on the road to building knowledge in the field of entrepreneurship, while supporting the learning skills of graduates, as well as the economic development goals pursued by the Bahrain Economic Vision 2030.'

In spite of the tangible steps taken by the University to address the quality assurance indicators and standards for the benefit of the future of higher education sector in the Kingdom, as well as other sectors and industries, continuous improvement requires consistent efforts to maintain sustainability. This is to overcome all the challenges facing the higher education sector, especially the challenges of promoting scientific research that requires the involvement of physical and human resources, and community engagement opportunities on a wider scale.

4. PRIVATE HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

AHLIA UNIVERSITY

'Private higher education and quality assurance opportunities'



The institutional quality assurance of higher education institutions is an essential and complementary part to build the integrated concept of 'quality assurance', which guarantees outstanding teaching and learning processes at government or private higher education institutions on the one hand, and provision of quality learning outcomes to the labour market and the various development sectors on the other hand.

The private higher education sector is among the major challenges facing different countries to strengthen the leading role of the higher education sector. However, and in the light of these challenges, Ahlia University, Kingdom of Bahrain, dealt with the concept of 'quality assurance' in a manner giving the promise of establishing quality assurance in the private higher education sector to contribute positively to the process of social and economic development in the Kingdom of Bahrain.

Following the launch of its institutional review, the main aspects that Ahlia University focused on improving - in response to the Authority's recommendations of the institutional review report in 2011, were, according to **Professor Abdullah Al-Hawaj, President of Ahlia University**, the conveyance and development of the culture of quality assurance across the institution's departments.

This has been clearly reflected in the active participation of its staff members at various levels in the improvement and development tasks.

For Professor Al-Hawaj, the high professionalism and core value of the Authority's reports were a great motivation to strengthen the University's vision towards the emphasis on the quality of their performance and application of modern higher education approaches, which seeks to produce quality university students who are equipped with highly



educational and practical skills to penetrate into the labour sectors according to their specialties.

In the Authority's institutional review report, Ahlia University received 24 recommendations covering the University's development opportunities to enhance their performance; 12 affirmations representing the total development opportunities identified by the University's self-evaluation report to meet the review requirements, and nine commendations representing the University's strengths.

By the time of the follow-up visit, which is part of the institutional review process to check on the performance and enhance the ongoing quality assurance system, Ahlia University made good progress towards addressing the recommendations of the review report, which focused entirely on the main aspects of assessment. This was to identify the possible development opportunities in their mission, planning and governance, the application mechanism of academic standards on programmes and courses, the internal quality assurance systems and enhancement, the quality of teaching and learning processes, the development of human resources and infrastructure of the University, the promotion of scientific and community engagement.

The results of the follow-up report, which was published after being approved by the Authority's Board of Directors and endorsed by the Council of Ministers according to the QQA's applicable procedures with all review reports, reflected that Ahlia University made every effort to address each recommendation of the review report. Hence, the University made tangible progress in addressing some recommendations as a result of the application of clear improvement plans, while the follow-up panel perceived progress in addressing the remaining recommendations in the form of setting up plans to conduct surveys to identify massive information to guide the internal improvement plans at the university.

Insisting on achieving tangible progress towards improving performance levels is a real challenge to education institutions. In this regard, the President of Ahlia University said: 'Needless to say that the application of the concept of 'quality assurance' is not easy, particularly in light of the challenges facing the overall higher education sector at the local or international levels. Time factor and time limit, in addition to the higher education regulatory requirements



and offering internationally-recognised programmes and qualifications may represent the most prominent and most important of these challenges. However, the belief in this issue achieves great milestones, and turns that concept of 'quality assurance' into daily practice at higher education institutions. I personally believe in this concept and stress on it at the University as well as scientific forums.'

According to Professor Al-Hawaj, the establishment of the QQA in Bahrain is one of the most prominent reform initiatives that took place during the past ten years, and is expected to have a good impact on the future of higher education in the Kingdom as it stresses that the higher education issues and challenges must be taken seriously by the higher education institutions.

Ahlia University, similar to all other education institutions, needs to assume its main responsibility to secure the sustainability of improvement efforts. The purpose is to ensure the quality of learning outcomes, and keep abreast with the latest developmental challenges that affect all life sectors and witness ongoing growth.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the National Authority for Qualifications and Quality Assurance of Education and Training (QQA) would like to express its sincere thanks and appreciation to all those who participated in the models of success stories, and particularly the educational and training institutions that were selected based on their review report results over the two cycles of reviews or follow-up visits in the case of higher education institutions, where a follow-up visit is part of the institutional review process for the higher education institutions to check on the improvement institutions have made after they have received recommendations in their full institutional review report in the first cycle of reviews.

The selected institutions set a model of excellence in improving their performance based on the QQA's reviews to achieve the aspirations of development and improvement that the results of these reports seek. In this regard, the Authority is required to publish review reports on the status of the education and training institutions within the Kingdom, conduct the national examinations and implement the National Qualifications Framework (NQF).

While the Authority hopes that a larger section of public and private higher education and training institutions will pay similar attention to continuous improvement opportunities, the Authority will dedicate a complete part to these achievements in its annual reports in the future. The aim is to stress on the value of the Authority's achievements as well as the education and training institutions' milestones, and present a successful model of effective partnership models sought by the publication of its review reports.

The Authority also takes this opportunity to stress one of the core values of quality assurance; namely the continuous development and improvement of performance to help achieve the elements of sustainability. Therefore, the education and training institutions become a real model of continuous self-development and ongoing incubators of the values and principles of quality assurance.





APPENDICES

DIRECTORATE OF GOVERNMENT SCHOOL REVIEWS⁽¹⁾

#	Government schools reviewed	Overall judgements Cycle 1 2008 to 2011	Overall judgements Cycle 2 2011 to 2014
1	Aminah Bint Wahab Primary Girls School	1: Outstanding	1: Outstanding
2	Rabia'a Al-Adaweyia Primary Girls School	1: Outstanding	1: Outstanding
3	Al-Rawdha Primary Girls School	1: Outstanding	1: Outstanding
4	Ain Jaloot Primary Girls School	2: Good	1: Outstanding
5	Al-Sehlah Primary Girls School	2: Good	1: Outstanding
6	Hitteen Primary Boys School	2: Good	1: Outstanding
7	Khawlah Secondary Girls School	2: Good	1: Outstanding
8	Sumayia Primary Girls School	2: Good	1: Outstanding
9	Karrana Primary Girls School	2: Good	1: Outstanding
10	Um Salama Intermediate Girls School	2: Good	1: Outstanding
11	Tubli Primary Girls School	2: Good	1: Outstanding
12	Al- Khawarizmi Primary Boys School	3: Satisfactory	1: Outstanding
13	Al-Mutanabbi Primary Boys School	1: Outstanding	2: Good
14	Al-Manhal Primary Girls School	2: Good	2: Good
15	Al-Sanabis Primary Girls School	2: Good	2: Good
16	Zainab Intermediate Girls School	2: Good	2: Good
17	Al-Hidd Intermediate Secondary Girls School	2: Good	2: Good
18	Al-Safa Primary Girls School	2: Good	2: Good
19	Arad Primary Girls School	2: Good	2: Good
20	Al-Belad Al-Qadeem Primary Girls School	2: Good	2: Good
21	Fatima Bint Asad Primary Girls School	2: Good	2: Good
22	Gharnata Primary Girls School	2: Good	2: Good
23	Zubaidah Primary Girls School	2: Good	2: Good
24	Al-Zallaq Primary Intermediate Girls School	3: Satisfactory	2: Good
25	Bait Al-Hekmah Primary Girls School	3: Satisfactory	2: Good
26	East Rifaa Primary Girls School	3: Satisfactory	2: Good
27	Ruqaya Primary Girls School	3: Satisfactory	2: Good
28	Tubli Primary Boys School	3: Satisfactory	2: Good
29	West Rifaa Primary Girls School	3: Satisfactory	2: Good
30	Zannoobia Intermediate Girls School	3: Satisfactory	2: Good
31	Al-Noaim Secondary Boys School	3: Satisfactory	2: Good
32	Al-Duraz Intermediate Girls School	3: Satisfactory	2: Good
33	Jidhafs Secondary Girls School	3: Satisfactory	2: Good

(1) Reports are published on QQA website www.qqa.edu.bh.

34	Sitra Intermediate Girls School	3: Satisfactory	2: Good
35	Sitra Secondary Girls School	3: Satisfactory	2: Good
36	Omayma Bint Al-Noaman Secondary Girls School	3: Satisfactory	2: Good
37	Al-Noor Secondary Girls School	4: Inadequate	2: Good
38	Aali Intermediate Boys School	4: Inadequate	2: Good
39	Sh. Mohamed Bin Isa Al-Khalifa Primary Boys School	4: Inadequate	2: Good
40	Buri Primary Girls School	2: Good	3: Satisfactory
41	Halima Al-Sa'adeyya Intermediate Girls School	2: Good	3: Satisfactory
42	Hassan Bin Thabit Primary Boys School	2: Good	3: Satisfactory
43	Isa Town Intermediate Girls School	2: Good	3: Satisfactory
44	Mariam Bint Omran Primary Girls School	2: Good	3: Satisfactory
45	Saba' Primary Girls School	2: Good	3: Satisfactory
46	Safrah Primary Intermediate Girls School	2: Good	3: Satisfactory
47	Um Ayman Primary Girls School	2: Good	3: Satisfactory
48	Balqees Primary Girls School	2: Good	3: Satisfactory
49	East Rifa'a Primary Boys School	2: Good	3: Satisfactory
50	Hamad Town Primary Boys School	2: Good	3: Satisfactory
51	Jaw Primary Intermediate Girls School	2: Good	3: Satisfactory
52	Sar Primary Boys School	2: Good	3: Satisfactory
53	Salahuddeen Alayyoubi Primary Boys School	2: Good	3: Satisfactory
54	A'ali Primary Boys School	3: Satisfactory	3: Satisfactory
55	Ahmad Al-Umran Secondary Boys School	3: Satisfactory	3: Satisfactory
56	Al-Busaiteen Intermediate Girls School	3: Satisfactory	3: Satisfactory
57	Al-Yarmook Primary Boys School	3: Satisfactory	3: Satisfactory
58	Al-Qudaibia Intermediate Boys School ⁽²⁾	3: Satisfactory	3: Satisfactory
59	Barbar Primary Boys School	3: Satisfactory	3: Satisfactory
60	Ibn Al-Nafees Primary Boys School	3: Satisfactory	3: Satisfactory
61	Al-Manama Secondary Girls School	3: Satisfactory	3: Satisfactory
62	Khadija Al-Kubra Intermediate Girls School	3: Satisfactory	3: Satisfactory
63	Uqba Bin Nafe'a Primary Boys School	3: Satisfactory	3: Satisfactory
64	Al-Sanabis Primary Boys School	3: Satisfactory	3: Satisfactory
65	Sh. Abdul Aziz Bin Mohd AlKhalifa Secondary Boys School	3: Satisfactory	3: Satisfactory
66	Um Al-Qura Primary Intermediate Girls School	3: Satisfactory	3: Satisfactory
67	West Rifa'a Secondary Girls School	3: Satisfactory	3: Satisfactory

(2) Al Qudaibia Primary Intermediate Boys School Previously.

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68	Yathreb Intermediate Girls School	3: Satisfactory	3: Satisfactory
69	Alzallaq Primary Intermediate Boys School	3: Satisfactory	3: Satisfactory
70	Abu Alaala Almaari Primary Boys School	3: Satisfactory	3: Satisfactory
71	Alahd Alzaher Secondary Girls School	3: Satisfactory	3: Satisfactory
72	Al-Dair Primary Intermediate Girls School	3: Satisfactory	3: Satisfactory
73	Al-Hunaineya Primary Girls School	3: Satisfactory	3: Satisfactory
74	Al-Qayrawan Intermediate Girls School	3: Satisfactory	3: Satisfactory
75	Al-Imam Ali Primary Intermediate Boys School	3: Satisfactory	3: Satisfactory
76	Al- Rasheed Primary Boys School	3: Satisfactory	3: Satisfactory
77	Al-Razi Primary Boys School	3: Satisfactory	3: Satisfactory
78	Ibn Sina Primary Boys School	3: Satisfactory	3: Satisfactory
79	Jidhafs Secondary Technical School	3: Satisfactory	3: Satisfactory
80	Omar Bin Abdul Aziz Primary Boys School	3: Satisfactory	3: Satisfactory
81	Al-Rifaa Intermediate Boys School	3: Satisfactory	3: Satisfactory
82	Salmabad Primary Girls School	3: Satisfactory	3: Satisfactory
83	Al-Dheya Primary Boys School	4: Inadequate	3: Satisfactory
84	Hamad Town Secondary Girls School	4: Inadequate	3: Satisfactory
85	Badr Al-Kobra Primary Boys School	4: Inadequate	3: Satisfactory
86	Abdul Rahman Al-Nassir Primary Intermediate Boys School	4: Inadequate	3: Satisfactory
87	Abu Bakr Al-Siddeeq Primary Boys School	4: Inadequate	3: Satisfactory
88	Al-Jasra Primary Boys School	4: Inadequate	3: Satisfactory
89	Al-Salmaniya Intermediate Boys School	4: Inadequate	3: Satisfactory
90	Alta'awon Secondary Boys School	4: Inadequate	3: Satisfactory
91	Buri Primary Boys School	4: Inadequate	3: Satisfactory
92	Isa Town Primary Boys School	4: Inadequate	3: Satisfactory
93	Al-Wafa'a Secondary Girls School ⁽³⁾	4: Inadequate	3: Satisfactory
94	Jaber Bin Hayian Primary Boys School	4: Inadequate	3: Satisfactory
95	Othman Bin Affan Intermediate Boys School	4: Inadequate	3: Satisfactory
96	Sh. Isa Bin Ali Al-Khalifa Secondary Boys School	4: Inadequate	3: Satisfactory
97	Arad Primary Boys School	2: Good	4: Inadequate
98	Al- Alaa Alhadhrami Primary Boys School	3: Satisfactory	4: Inadequate
99	Al-Khalil Bin Ahmad Intermediate Boys School	3: Satisfactory	4: Inadequate
100	Al- Khamis Primary Boys School	3: Satisfactory	4: Inadequate

(3) Isa Town Secondary Commercial Girls School previously.

101	Al Wadi Primary Boys School	3: Satisfactory	4: Inadequate
102	Ibn Rushd Intermediate Boys School	3: Satisfactory	4: Inadequate
103	Sh. Mohd Bin Khalifa Al-Khalifa Primary Intermediate Boys School	3: Satisfactory	4: Inadequate
104	Sitra Primary Boys School	3: Satisfactory	4: Inadequate
105	Tareq Bin Ziyad Intermediate Boys School	3: Satisfactory	4: Inadequate
106	Ahmad Al-Fateh Primary Intermediate Boys School	3: Satisfactory	4: Inadequate
107	Al-Dair Primary Boys School	3: Satisfactory	4: Inadequate
108	Al-Hidd Primary Intermediate Boys School	3: Satisfactory	4: Inadequate
109	Ammar Bin Yaser Primary Boys School	3: Satisfactory	4: Inadequate
110	Ibn Tufail Primary Boys School	3: Satisfactory	4: Inadequate
111	Al-Duraz Intermediate Boys School	4: Inadequate	4: Inadequate
112	Al-Farabi Intermediate Boys School	4: Inadequate	4: Inadequate
113	Al Maamoon Primary Boys School	-	4: Inadequate
114	Al-Muharrag Secondary Girls School	1: Outstanding	
115	Al-Orouba Primary Girls School	1: Outstanding	
116	West Rifaa Intermediate Girls School	1: Outstanding	
117	A'ali Primary Girls School	2: Good	
118	Al- Hidd Primary Boys School	2: Good	
119	Al-Khansa Primary Girls School	2: Good	
120	Al-Ma'refa Secondary Girls School	2: Good	
121	Al-Qadsiah Primary Girls School	2: Good	
122	Al-Salam Primary Girls School	2: Good	
123	Al- Jazeera Primary Boys School	2: Good	
124	Almustaqbal Primary Girls School	2: Good	
125	Arad Intermediate Girls School	2: Good	
126	Askar Primary Intermediate Boys School	2: Good	
127	Asma That Alnetaqain Primary Girls School ⁽⁴⁾	2: Good	
128	Fatima Al-Zahra Primary Girls School	2: Good	
129	Hafsa Um Almoumineen Primary Girls School	2: Good	
130	Hajer Primary Girls School	2: Good	
131	Hamad Town Primary Girls School	2: Good	
132	Khalid Bin Alwaleed Primary Boys School	2: Good	
133	Al-Muharrag Primary Girls School	2: Good	
134	Al-Nowaidrat Primary Girls School	2: Good	
135	Qalali Primary Boys School	2: Good	
136	Saar Primary Girls School	2: Good	

(4) Asma That Alnetaqain Primary Intermediate Girls School previously.

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137	Safeyia Bint Abdulmuttalib Primary Intermediate Girls School	2: Good	
138	Al-Sanabis Intermediate Girls School	2: Good	
139	Sitra Primary Girls School	2: Good	
140	Sakeena Bint Al-Hussain Primary Girls School	2: Good	
141	Tulaitela Primary Girls School	2: Good	
142	Um Kalthoom Intermediate Girls School	2: Good	
143	West Rifa'a Primary Boys School	2: Good	
144	A'ali Intermediate Girls School	3: Satisfactory	
145	Abufiras Alhamadani Primary Boys School	3: Satisfactory	
146	Abusaiba Primary Boys School	3: Satisfactory	
147	Al-Busaiteen Primary Boys School	3: Satisfactory	
148	Al-Busaiteen Primary Girls School	3: Satisfactory	
149	Al-Daih Primary Intermediate Girls School	3: Satisfactory	
150	Al-Duraz Primary Girls School	3: Satisfactory	
151	Al-Hedayah Al-Khalifa Secondary Boys School	3: Satisfactory	
152	Al-Hoorah Secondary Girls School	3: Satisfactory	
153	Al- Ja'afari Religious Institute	3: Satisfactory	
154	Al-Khaleej Al- Arabi Intermediate Girls School	3: Satisfactory	
155	Al Ma'ameer Primary Boys School	3: Satisfactory	Closed
156	Al-Nabeeh Saleh Primary Girls School	3: Satisfactory	
157	Al-Qudes Primary Girls School	3: Satisfactory	
158	Al-Sehlah Primary Intermediate Boys School	3: Satisfactory	
159	Al-Andalus Primary Girls School	3: Satisfactory	
160	Al-Imam Al-Tabary Primary Boys School	3: Satisfactory	
161	Al-Nuzha Primary Girls School	3: Satisfactory	
162	Al- Rawdha Primary Boys School	3: Satisfactory	
163	Awal Intermediate Boys School	3: Satisfactory	
164	Barbar Primary Girls School	3: Satisfactory	Closed
165	Al-Budaiyya Primary Intermediate Girls School	3: Satisfactory	
166	East Rifaa Intermediate Girls School	3: Satisfactory	
167	Fatima Bint Alkhattab Primary Girls School	3: Satisfactory	
168	Hamad Town Intermediate Girls School ⁽⁵⁾	3: Satisfactory	
169	Al-Imam Malik Bin Anas Primary Boys School	3: Satisfactory	
170	Isa Town Intermediate Boys School	3: Satisfactory	

(5) Hamad Town Intermediate Secondary Girls School previously.

171	Jidhafs Primary Boys School	3: Satisfactory	
172	Nasiba Bint Ka'ab Primary Girls School	3: Satisfactory	
173	Osama Bin Zaid Primary Boys School	3: Satisfactory	
174	Qurtoba Intermediate Girls School ⁽⁶⁾	3: Satisfactory	
175	Primary Religious Institute	3: Satisfactory	
176	Sa'ad Bin Abi-Waqqas Primary Boys School	3: Satisfactory	
177	Sar Secondary Girls School	3: Satisfactory	
178	Sanad Primary Boys School	3: Satisfactory	
179	Sanad Primary Girls School	3: Satisfactory	
180	Shahrakan Primary Boys School	3: Satisfactory	Closed
181	Shahrakan Primary Girls School	3: Satisfactory	
182	Abdul Rahman Al-Dakheel Intermediate Boys School	4: Inadequate	
183	Al-Imam Al-Ghazali Intermediate Boys School	4: Inadequate	
184	Al-Esteqlal Secondary Girls School ⁽⁷⁾	4: Inadequate	
185	Al-Jabiriyah Secondary Technical School	4: Inadequate	
186	Al-Muharrarq Secondary Boys School	4: Inadequate	
187	Arad Primary Intermediate Boys School	4: Inadequate	
188	Al-Belad Al-Qadeem Intermediate Boys School	4: Inadequate	
189	Al-Budaiya Primary Boys School	4: Inadequate	
190	East Rifaa Secondary Boys School	4: Inadequate	
191	Hamad Town Intermediate Boys School	4: Inadequate	
192	Hamad Town Secondary Boys School	4: Inadequate	
193	Isa Town Secondary Boys School	4: Inadequate	
194	Isa Town Secondary Girls School	4: Inadequate	
195	Jidhafs Intermediate Boys School	4: Inadequate	
196	Karzakan Primary Boys School	4: Inadequate	
197	Omar Bin Al-Khattab Primary Intermediate Boys School	4: Inadequate	
198	Religious Intermediate Secondary Institute	4: Inadequate	
199	Safra Primary Intermediate Boys School	4: Inadequate	
200	Samaheej Primary Intermediate Boys School	4: Inadequate	
201	Sh. Abdulla Bin Isa Al-Khalifa Secondary Technical School	4: Inadequate	
202	Sh. Khalifa Bin Salman Institute of Technology	4: Inadequate	
203	Um Alhassam Primary Boys School	4: Inadequate	

(6) Qurtuba Primary Intermediate Girls School previously.

(7) Al-Esteqlal Commercial Secondary Girls School previously.

MONITORING VISITS TO GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS JUDGED 'INADEQUATE' IN CYCLE 1⁽¹⁾

#	Government schools receiving monitoring visits in 2011-12	Monitoring visit 1	Monitoring visit 2 ⁽²⁾
1	Aali Intermediate Boys School	Sufficient progress	-
2	Abu Bakr Al-Siddeeq Primary Boys School	Sufficient progress	-
3	Al-Duraz Intermediate Boys School	Sufficient progress	-
4	Buri Primary Boys School	Sufficient progress	-
5	Al-Belad Al-Qadeem Intermediate Boys School	In progress	Sufficient progress
6	Al-Esteqlal Secondary Girls School ⁽³⁾	In progress	Sufficient progress
7	Al-Wafa'a Secondary Girls School ⁽⁴⁾	In progress	Sufficient progress
8	Hamad Town Intermediate Boys School	In progress	Sufficient progress
9	Isa Town Primary Boys School	In progress	Sufficient Progress
10	Isa Town Secondary Boys School	In progress	Sufficient progress
11	Jaber Bin Hayian Primary Boys School	In progress	Sufficient Progress
12	Omar Bin Al-Khattab Primary Intermediate Boys School	In progress	Sufficient progress
13	Safra Primary Intermediate Boys School	In progress	Sufficient progress
14	Um Alhassam Primary Boys School	In progress	Sufficient progress
15	Al-Budaiya Primary Boys School	In progress	Sufficient progress
16	Al-Imam Al-Ghazali Intermediate Boys School	In progress	Sufficient progress
17	Al-Jabiriyia Secondary Technical School	In progress	Sufficient progress
18	Al-Muharrarq Secondary Boys School	In progress	Sufficient progress
19	East Rifaa Secondary Boys School	In progress	Sufficient progress
20	Hamad Town Secondary Boys School	In progress	Sufficient progress
21	Isa Town Secondary Boys School	In progress	Sufficient progress
22	Religious Intermediate Secondary Institute	In progress	Sufficient progress
23	Sh. Abdulla Bin Isa Al-Khalifa Secondary Technical School	In progress	Sufficient progress
24	Sh. Kalifa Bin Salman Institute Of Technology	In progress	Sufficient progress

25	Arad Primary Intermediate Boys School	Insufficient progress	Sufficient progress
26	Abdul Rahman Al-Nassir Primary Intermediate Boys School	Insufficient progress	Sufficient progress
27	Al-Farabi Intermediate Boys School	Insufficient progress	Sufficient progress
28	Al-Jasra Primary Boys School	Insufficient progress	Sufficient progress
29	Al-Salmaniya Intermediate Boys School	Insufficient progress	Sufficient progress
30	Alta'awon Secondary Boys School	Insufficient progress	Sufficient progress
31	Badr Al-Kobra Primary Boys School	Insufficient progress	Sufficient progress
32	Sh. Isa Bin Ali Al-Khalifa Secondary Boys School	Insufficient progress	Sufficient progress
33	Sh. Mohamed Bin Isa Al-Khalifa Primary Boys School	Insufficient progress	Sufficient progress
34	Samaheej Primary Intermediate Boys School	Insufficient progress	Sufficient progress
35	Jidhafs Intermediate Boys School	In progress	In progress
36	Abdul Rahman Al-Dakheel Intermediate Boys School	In progress	In progress
37	Othman Bin Affan Intermediate Boys School	Insufficient progress	In progress
38	Karzakan Primary Boys School	Insufficient progress	In progress

MONITORING VISITS TO GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS JUDGED 'INADEQUATE' IN CYCLE 2⁽¹⁾

#	Government schools receiving monitoring visits in 2012-13	Monitoring visit 1 ⁽²⁾	Monitoring visit 2
1	Al Wadi Primary Boys School	Sufficient progress	-
5	Al- Alaa Alhadhrami Primary Boys School	Sufficient progress	-
8	Tareq Bin Ziyad Intermediate Boys School	Sufficient progress	-
2	Ibn Rushd Intermediate Boys School	In progress	
3	Sitra Primary Boys School	In progress	
4	Al-Khalil Bin Ahmad Intermediate Boys School	In progress	
6	Sh. Mohd Bin Khalifa Al-Khalifa Primary Intermediate Boys School	In progress	
7	Al- Khamis Primary Boys School	In progress	

(1) Reports not published on QQA website www.qqa.edu.bh.

(2) **Sufficient progress:** The school has fully addressed all the recommendations. No further monitoring is required before the next school review. **In progress:** The school has not addressed most of the recommendations or a recommendation in relation to teaching and learning or effectiveness of leadership and management. The school requires a second monitoring after one year. **Insufficient progress:** The school has not addressed most of the recommendations or a recommendation in relation to teaching and learning or effectiveness of leadership and management. The school requires a second monitoring after one year.

(1) Reports not published on QQA website www.qqa.edu.bh.

(2) **Sufficient progress:** The school has fully addressed all the recommendations. No further monitoring is required before the next school review. **In progress:** The school has not addressed most of the recommendations or a recommendation in relation to teaching and learning or effectiveness of leadership and management. The school requires a second monitoring after one year. **Insufficient progress:** The school has not addressed most of the recommendations or a recommendation in relation to teaching and learning or effectiveness of leadership and management. The school requires a second monitoring after one year.

(3) Al-Esteqlal Commercial Secondary Girls School previously.

(4) Isa Town Secondary Commercial Girls School previously.

APPENDICES

DIRECTORATE OF PRIVATE SCHOOLS & KINDERGARTENS REVIEWS⁽¹⁾

#	Private schools reviewed 2011-2013	Stage	Overall judgements
1	The British School Of Bahrain	Grade 1 to 13	1: Outstanding
2	St Christopher's School	Grade 1 to 13	1: Outstanding
3	Modern Knowledge Schools	Grade 1 to 12	2: Good
4	Nadeen School	Grade 1 to 6	2: Good
5	Palms Primary School	Grade 1 to 6	2: Good
6	The French School	Grade 1 to 11	2: Good
7	Al Rawabi School	Grade 1 to 10	3: Satisfactory
8	Arabian Pearl Gulf School	Grade 1 to 12	3: Satisfactory
9	Dilmun School	Grade 1 to 6	3: Satisfactory
10	Middle East Educational Schools	Grade 1 to 12	3: Satisfactory
11	New Indian School	Grade 1 to 12	3: Satisfactory
12	Quality Education School	Grade 1 to 9	3: Satisfactory
13	Naseem International School	Grade 1 to 12	3: Satisfactory
14	International School of Choueifat	Grade 1 to 11	3: Satisfactory
15	Ibn Al-Haitham Islamic School	Grade 1 to 12	3: Satisfactory
16	Asian School	Grade 1 to 10	3: Satisfactory
17	Talent International and Infant School - Riffa	Grade 1 to 8	3: Satisfactory
18	Sacred Heart School	Grade 1 to 10	3: Satisfactory
19	Creativity Private School	Grade 1 to 9	3: Satisfactory
20	Tylos Private School	Grade 1 to 8	3: Satisfactory
21	Alfalsh Private School - Muharraq - Boys	Grade 3 to 12	3: Satisfactory
22	Al-Eman School - Boys	Grade 1 to 12	3: Satisfactory
23	Al-Maaly Gate School	Grade 1 to 6	4: Inadequate

(1) Reports published on QQA website www.qqa.edu.bh

24	Sanabil Private School	Grade 1 to 12	4: Inadequate
25	Talent International and the Infant School - Manama	Grade 1 to 12	4: Inadequate
26	Al-Wisam International School Bahrain	Grade 1 to 12	4: Inadequate
27	Al-Majd Private School	Grade 1 to 9	4: Inadequate
28	Bangladesh School Bahrain	Grade 1 to 10	4: Inadequate
29	Pakistan School (Isa Town Branch)	Grade 1 to 12	4: Inadequate
30	Pakistan Urdu School	Grade 1 to 12	4: Inadequate
31	AMA International school	Grade 1 to 12	4: Inadequate
32	Al Hekma International School	Grade 1 to 12	4: Inadequate
33	Al Mahd Day Boarding School - Saar	Grade 1 to 10	4: Inadequate
34	Almanar Private School	Grade 1 to 11	4: Inadequate
35	City International School	Grade 1 to 9	4: Inadequate

MONITORING VISITS TO PRIVATE SCHOOLS JUDGED 'INADEQUATE' IN CYCLE 1⁽¹⁾

#	Private schools receiving monitoring visits in 2012-2013	Monitoring visit 1 ⁽²⁾	Monitoring visit 2 ⁽²⁾
1	Talent International and the Infant School - Manama	Sufficient progress	

(1) Reports are not published on QQA website www.qqa.edu.bh.

(2) **Sufficient progress:** The school has fully addressed all the recommendations. **In progress:** The school has not addressed most of the recommendations or a recommendation in relation to teaching and learning or effectiveness of leadership and management. **Insufficient progress:** The school has not addressed most of the recommendations or a recommendation in relation to teaching and learning or effectiveness of leadership and management. The school requires a second monitoring maximum when received or Insufficient progress.

DIRECTORATE OF VOCATIONAL REVIEWS⁽¹⁾

#	Provider	Cycle 1 Review Grade	Cycle 1 Repeat Review Grade ⁽²⁾	Cycle 2 Review Grade
1	Institute of Finance	2: Good	-	1: Outstanding
2	Bahrain Institute for Banking and Finance (BIBF)	2: Good	-	1: Outstanding
3	Genetech Training & Development	2: Good	-	1: Outstanding

(1) Reports are published on QQA website www.qqa.edu.bh

(2) Based on the DVR Review Framework in the first cycle of reviews. Now, it is no longer applicable and has been replaced by a new Review Framework since January 2012 and used in the second cycle of reviews.

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4	Kumon- Bahrain	2: Good	-	1: Outstanding
5	Al Mashreq Training (previously Arabian East Training Center)	3: Satisfactory	-	1: Outstanding
6	Bahrain Institute of Hospitality & Retail (BIHR)	2: Good	-	2: Good
7	Berlitz Training Centre	2: Good	-	2: Good
8	Gulf World Institute for Career Development & Quality	2: Good	-	2: Good
9	Al Moalem Institute	3: Satisfactory	-	2: Good
10	Ernst and Young Training Center	3: Satisfactory	-	2: Good
11	Golden Trust for Management & Commercial Training & Consultancy	3: Satisfactory	-	2: Good
12	Gulf Insurance Institute	3: Satisfactory	-	2: Good
13	RRC Middle East	3: Satisfactory	-	2: Good
14	Safety Training & Consultants Center	3: Satisfactory	-	2: Good
15	Victory Training & Development Institute (VTDI)	3: Satisfactory	-	2: Good
16	A.I.T Centre	3: Satisfactory	-	2: Good
17	Dynamics Training Institute	3: Satisfactory	-	2: Good
18	Bahrain International Retail Development Center (BIRD)	2: Good	-	3: Satisfactory
19	National Institute for Industrial Training	2: Good	-	3: Satisfactory
20	Al Banna Training Institute	3: Satisfactory	-	3: Satisfactory
21	Excellence Training Solutions	3: Satisfactory	-	3: Satisfactory
22	Flextrain for Training & Development	3: Satisfactory	-	3: Satisfactory
23	Horizons for Human Resource Development	3: Satisfactory	-	3: Satisfactory
24	I Design Training centre	3: Satisfactory	-	3: Satisfactory
25	Al - Badeel for Training Development	3: Satisfactory	-	3: Satisfactory
26	Al Jazeera Modern Institute	3: Satisfactory	-	3: Satisfactory
27	Bait Al Taleem Institute	3: Satisfactory	-	3: Satisfactory
28	Deena Institute of Technology	3: Satisfactory	-	3: Satisfactory
29	Design Technology Training Center	3: Satisfactory	-	3: Satisfactory
30	Gulf International Institute	3: Satisfactory	-	3: Satisfactory
31	Industrial Petroleum Training Services (I.P.T.S.)	3: Satisfactory	-	3: Satisfactory
32	Leaders Institute for Training & Development	3: Satisfactory	-	3: Satisfactory
33	Osho Training	3: Satisfactory	-	3: Satisfactory
34	Projacs Training Centre	3: Satisfactory	-	3: Satisfactory
35	Success Training Centre (STC)	3: Satisfactory	-	3: Satisfactory

36	Al Mawred Institute	4: Inadequate	-	3: Satisfactory
37	National Institute of Technology (NIT)	3: Satisfactory	-	4: Inadequate
38	Global Institute for Management Science	3: Satisfactory	-	4: Inadequate
39	The Training Centre of the Bahrain society of Engineers	4: Inadequate	-	4: Inadequate
40	Neo vartis Training Centre	-	-	2: Good
41	Yellow Hat Training (S.P.C.)	-	-	2: Good
42	ILC Training	-	-	2: Good
43	Emic Training	-	-	2: Good
44	Logic Institute for Training & Human resource Development	-	-	2: Good
45	Thinksmart for development & Training	-	-	2: Good
46	Beauty Face Institute	-	-	3: Satisfactory
47	Human Performance Improvement (HPI)	-	-	3: Satisfactory
48	Investment for Training and development	-	-	3: Satisfactory
49	Novo-Tech Training	-	-	4: Inadequate
50	Delmon Academy for Computer and Managerial Science (DACMS)	-	-	4: Inadequate
51	Manama Training Centre	-	-	4: Inadequate (Closed)
52	Bridge Training Solutions	4: Inadequate	3: Satisfactory	2: Good
53	London Training Center	4: Inadequate	3: Satisfactory	2: Good
54	Taylos Human Development	4: Inadequate	3: Satisfactory	2: Good
55	English Language Skills Centre	4: Inadequate	3: Satisfactory	3: Satisfactory
56	Aptech Computer Education	4: Inadequate	3: Satisfactory	3: Satisfactory
57	New Vision Training Institute (NTI)	4: Inadequate	3: Satisfactory	4: Inadequate
58	Talal Abu-Ghazaleh Training Group	4: Inadequate	3: Satisfactory	
59	Training Plus Institute (Previously New Horizons Computer Learning Centre)	4: Inadequate	3: Satisfactory	
60	The European Institute	4: Inadequate	3: Satisfactory	
61	Professional Training Institute/ (previously Al Amal Institute for Studies & Training)	4: Inadequate	3: Satisfactory	
62	Future Institute for Training & Development (previously Al Meer Training Center)	4: Inadequate	3: Satisfactory	
63	Bahrain Institute	4: Inadequate	3: Satisfactory	

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64	Bahrain Institute Entrepreneurship & Technology (BIET) (previously Bahrain Institute for Technology)	4: Inadequate	3: Satisfactory	
65	Management Development Centre	4: Inadequate	4: Inadequate	
66	The Gulf Academy For Development of Human Resources	4: Inadequate	4: Inadequate	
67	Hanan Training Institute	4: Inadequate	4: Inadequate	
68	Al Hayat Institute for Human Resources Development	4: Inadequate	4: Inadequate	
69	Bahrain Montessori Centre	1: Outstanding	-	
70	British Language Centre	2: Good	-	
71	Capital Institute	2: Good	-	
72	Daar Al Maarefa Centre	2: Good	-	
73	Sylvan Learning Centre Bahrain	2: Good	-	
74	Al Amjaad Institute	3: Satisfactory	-	
75	Al Moheet Institute	3: Satisfactory	-	
76	American Cultural and Educational Centre	3: Satisfactory	-	
77	Bahrain Training Institute (BTI)	3: Satisfactory	-	
78	Expert Group Training Institute	3: Satisfactory	-	Closed
79	Gulf Business Machine Education Centre	3: Satisfactory	-	Closed
80	Lingo-Ease centre	3: Satisfactory	-	
81	Modern Institute of Science & Computer	3: Satisfactory	-	
82	Al Adwha Learning Institute	4: Inadequate	-	
83	Al Awael Learning Institute	4: Inadequate	-	
84	Al Madina Training & Human Resources Development	4: Inadequate	-	Closed
85	English Plus Institute	4: Inadequate	-	
86	Experts Training Institute	4: Inadequate	-	Closed
87	Fastrack Training & Development Consultancy	4: Inadequate	-	Closed
88	IT Camp International	4: Inadequate	-	Closed
89	Prestige Training Human Resources Institute	4: Inadequate	-	

CULTURAL CENTRES

1	Bahrain Music Institute	1: Outstanding	-
2	Al Madrasa for Art	2: Good	-
3	Bahrain Ballet Centre	2: Good	-
4	Life in Music	2: Good	-
5	Indian Performing Arts Centre	3: Satisfactory	-
6	Kalabhavan Art Centre	4: Inadequate	-

MONITORING VISITS TO INSTITUTIONS JUDGED 'INADEQUATE' ⁽¹⁾

#	Institutes receiving monitoring visits during May 2012 - June 2013	First Monitoring visit ⁽²⁾	Second Monitoring visit ⁽²⁾
1	English Plus Institute	In progress	Sufficient progress
2	Al Adwha Institute	Insufficient Progress	In progress
3	National Institute of Technology (NIT)	Insufficient Progress	In progress
4	Al Awael Institute	Insufficient Progress	Insufficient Progress
5	Kalabhavan Art Centre	Insufficient Progress	Insufficient Progress

(1) All second monitoring visits were published, while all first monitoring visit reports were not published except NIT.

(2) **Sufficient progress:** The provider has fully addressed the majority of the recommendations contained in the review report, and/or previous monitoring report, and includes those which have most impact on learners' achievement, and the rest have been partially addressed. **In progress:** The provider has at least partially addressed all of the recommendations contained in the review report and/or previous monitoring report. **Insufficient progress:** The provider has made little or no progress in addressing the majority of the recommendations contained in the review report and/or previous monitoring report.

DIRECTORATE OF HIGHER EDUCATION REVIEWS⁽¹⁾ INSTITUTIONAL REVIEWS⁽²⁾

#	Institution	Year of last review	Number of Commendations	Number of Affirmations	Number of Recommendations	Follow-up Evaluation ⁽³⁾
1	Ahlia University	2012	9	12	24	Good progress
2	University of Bahrain	2012	15	12	17	Adequate progress
3	Bahrain Polytechnic	2013	7	3	18	Adequate progress
4	Delmon University of Science & Technology	2011	0	9	32	Adequate progress

5	Gulf University	2011	1	4	40	Adequate progress
6	Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland - MUB	2011	5	9	23	Adequate progress
7	Applied Science University	2012	2	7	34	Inadequate progress
8	AMA International University – Bahrain	2011	0	0	47	Inadequate progress
9	University College of Bahrain	2011	2	2	41	Inadequate progress
10	Kingdom University	2012	1	3	36	Inadequate progress
11	Arab Open University - Bahrain	2011	6	3	15	Inadequate progress
12	Royal University for Women	2011	3	2	19	Inadequate progress
13	New York Institute of Technology – Bahrain	2009	0	1	42	Not applicable-withdrawn from Bahrain
14	Birla Institute of Technology	2008	4	3	17	Not applicable-withdrawn from Bahrain

(1) Reports are published on the QAA website www.qaa.edu.bh

(2) No. of Commendations, Affirmations, and Recommendations is not a direct measure of the quality of the institution. Commendations: Areas of strength; Affirmations: Areas in need to improvement recognised by the institution itself, and Recommendations: Areas in need to improvement recognised by the review panel.

(3) **Good progress:** Most of the recommendations successfully addressed (including all major recommendations), **Adequate progress:** Most of the recommendations fully or partially addressed, **Inadequate progress:** Most of the recommendations not adequately addressed or a major recommendation not adequately addressed

CYCLE 1:

HIGHER EDUCATION PROGRAMME REVIEWS⁽¹⁾

BACHELOR OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

#	Institution	Year of last review	No of Satisfied Indicators	Judgement	Follow-up Review Result ⁽²⁾	Re-Review Result ⁽³⁾
1	University of Bahrain	2009	4	Confidence		
2	Ahlia University	2009	4	Confidence		
3	Arab Open University – Bahrain	2009	4	Confidence		
4	Royal University for Women	2009	4	Confidence		
5	Birla Institute of Technology - Bahrain	2009	3	Limited confidence	-	-
6	University College of Bahrain	2011	2	Limited confidence	Successfully met recommendations	

7	Applied Science University	2010	2	Limited confidence	Successfully met recommendations	
8	Gulf University	2010	3	Limited confidence	Not Satisfactory	
9	Kingdom University	2010	1	No confidence		Limited confidence
10	Delmon University of Science and Technology	2010	1	No confidence		Limited confidence
11	AMA International University - Bahrain	2011	1	No confidence		No confidence
12	New York Institute of Technology – Bahrain	2011	1	No confidence		No confidence

(1) Reports are published on QAA website www.qaa.edu.bh

(2) **Follow-up Review:** To measure progress in addressing the recommendations of the review report.

(3) **Re-Review:** To conduct a comprehensive new review of the programme.

BACHELOR OF LAW

#	Institution	Year of last review	No. of Satisfied Indicators	Judgement	Follow-up Review Result
1	University of Bahrain	2010	4	Confidence	
2	Applied Science University	2012	3	Limited confidence	Successfully met recommendations
3	Kingdom University	2012	2	Limited confidence	Successfully met recommendations
4	Delmon University of Science and Technology	2010	0	No confidence	
5	Gulf University	2010	0	No confidence	

MASTER OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

#	Institution	Year of last review	No. of Satisfied Indicators	Judgement
1	Ahlia University	2010	4	Confidence
2	Delmon University of Science and Technology	2010	0	No confidence
3	Gulf University	2010	0	No confidence
4	AMA International University-Bahrain	2010	0	No confidence
5	New York Institute of Technology – Bahrain	2010	0	No confidence

MASTER OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

#	Institution	Year of last review	No. of Satisfied Indicators	Judgement
1	University of Bahrain	2011	4	Confidence
2	Ahlia University	2011	4	Confidence
3	Malaysia Open University hosted by Arab Open University – Bahrain	2011	3	Limited confidence
4	University College of Bahrain	2011	3	Limited confidence
5	Applied Science University	2011	2	Limited confidence
6	Delmon University	2011	1	No confidence
7	AMA International University – Bahrain	2011	1	No confidence
8	Gulf University	2011	1	No confidence

CYCLE 2:

HIGHER EDUCATION PROGRAMMES-WITHIN-COLLEGE REVIEWS COLLEGE OF MEDICINE

#	Institution	Year of last review	No. of Satisfied Indicators	Judgement
1	Ahlia University Bachelor of Science in Physiotherapy - College of Medical & Health Sciences	2012	4	Confidence
2	Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland – MUB Bachelor of Medicine, Bachelor of Surgery, and Bachelor of the Art of Obstetrics - School of Medicine	2012	4	Confidence
3	Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland – MUB Bachelor of Science in Nursing - School of Nursing & Midwifery	2012	4	Confidence

4	Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland – MUB Bachelor of Science in Nursing - Bridging - School of Nursing & Midwifery	2012	4	Confidence
5	Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland – MUB Master of Science in Nursing - School of Postgraduate Studies and Research	2012	4	Confidence
6	University of Bahrain Bachelor of Science in Nursing College of Health Sciences	2012	4	Confidence
7	University of Bahrain Bachelor of Science in Nursing for Registered Nurses College of Health Sciences	2012	4	Confidence
8	Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland – MUB MSc Healthcare Ethics and Law - School of Postgraduate Studies and Research	2012	0	No confidence
9	AMA International University – Bahrain Doctor of Medicine - College of Medicine	2012	0	No confidence

HIGHER EDUCATION PROGRAMMES-WITHIN-COLLEGE REVIEWS FIELD OF COMPUTER SCIENCE AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

#	Institution	Year of last review	No. of Satisfied Indicators	Judgement
1	Arab Open University - Bahrain Faculty of Computer Studies Bachelor of Science in Information Technology and Computing	2013	4	Confidence
2	University College of Bahrain Bachelor of Science in Information Technology	2013	2	Limited Confidence
3	AMA International University – Bahrain College of Computer Studies Bachelor of Science in Computer Studies	2013	1	No confidence
4	AMA International University – Bahrain College of Computer Studies Master of Science in Computer Studies	2013	0	No Confidence