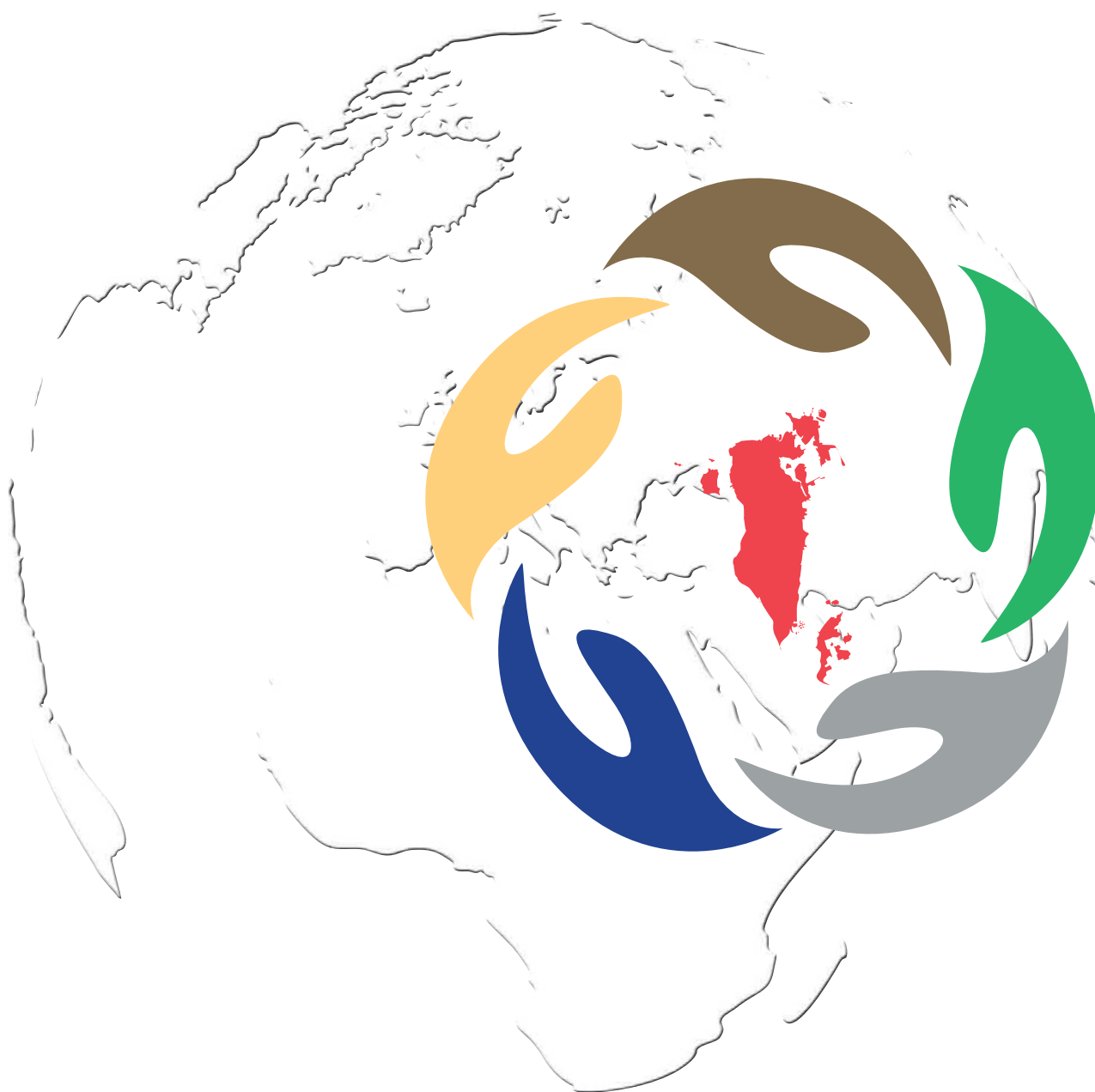# Kingdom of Bahrain
Education & Training Quality Authority
Annual Report 2020

Education in a Changing World

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

HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS
PRINCE SALMAN BIN HAMAD AL KHALIFA
THE CROWN PRINCE AND PRIME MINISTER

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

CONTENTS

BQA MANDATE

The Education and Training Quality Authority (BQA) is an independent national authority governed and supervised by the Cabinet of Ministers of the Kingdom of Bahrain, and carries out its mandate and objectives with the guidance and views of its Board of Directors. It submits its reports to the Supreme Council for the Development of Education and Training for approval and ratification.

The Education & Training Quality Authority (BQA) was founded in 2008 and was reorganised and renamed in accordance with the Royal Decree No. (83) of 2012 and the Royal Decree No. (74) of 2016 as part of the National Education Reform Project that is based on the vision of the Reform Project of His Majesty King Hamad Bin Isa Al Khalifa, King of the Kingdom of Bahrain, in 2002, and a pioneering initiative of the Bahrain's Economic Vision 2030. The main aim of the Education Reform Project is to fundamentally improve the provision and services provided in education and vocational training sectors in the Kingdom of Bahrain, which will, in turn, ensure the professional advancement of Bahrain's high-calibre human capital.

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

Mission
Sustainable improvement of quality and competitiveness in performance of education and training sectors through independent, fair and reliable evaluation that contributes to national capacity-building.

Values
- Fairness
- Sustainability
- Competitiveness

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

The Royal Directives of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa have laid the ideal foundation for the Education and Training Quality Authority (BQA) to achieve great successes toward developing and improving the education and training sectors, The continuous guidance and constant follow-up by His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, have made progressive advances in the visions and initiatives of the development of education and training. The genuine and extensive role of His Royal Highness Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa, the late Prime Minister, may God rest his soul in peace, who spared no efforts in caring and supporting the education and training sectors in the Kingdom of Bahrain, cannot be forgotten.

We also note the great role of His Highness Shaikh Mohammed bin Mubarak Al Khalifa, Deputy Prime Minister and Chairman of the Supreme Council for the Development of Education and Training, who has been and continues to be the true supporter of the advancement and quality of education and training and who, since assuming this vital responsibility, has been advocating the importance of the constant development of the education sector, improvement of learning outcomes and the sector's key role in the prosperity of the Kingdom. We would also like to express our thanks to our brothers and sisters on the Board of Directors of the Education and Training Quality Authority for their efforts, and all BQA employees for their sincere endeavours to improve the education and training system in our beloved Kingdom.

Undoubtedly, the COVID-19 pandemic that has swept the world has tested the readiness of countries and provided an opportunity for rapid development for those prepared, and our Kingdom, with the great efforts exerted by our wise leadership over the past years, has developed an excellent communications infrastructure that has contributed effectively to the rapid transformation in the delivery of education services.

One can hardly disregard the fact that good decision-making is always based on prior awareness, careful study and comprehensive knowledge of the environment in which these decisions are to be implemented. No one can deny the fact that the educational environment is the most important area that requires rigorous and continuous reviews and unceasing development in line with the developments in people's lives and the global economy.

For more than two decades, the world has been inundated with digital developments and technological changes, the extent of which cannot be predicted and their impact on various scientific and research fields cannot be ignored.

Dramatic technological changes and digital developments, which over time, have become of greater impact and broader in scale, affected most education systems, forcing them to allocate adequate and necessary budgets to address them and make the school environment more modern, innovative and mature.

Over the past decade, we have been frequently hearing the terms 'education technology', 'globalization of distance education' and 'digital and technological empowerment', with the related tools, procedures, programmes and software they entail. Despite their urgent nature, what is even more important is striving to account for their strengths and weaknesses during implementation in order to ensure the success of the education system first, and then to ensure the ability to keep pace with students' future careers, not just their educational future.

We have started to hear the term 'distance education' more frequently during the

COVID-19 pandemic, and those who look at the history of that educational approach will find that it has been applied internationally and locally for decades, and its impact has gradually increased with every technological development in the world. Therefore, success and professionalism in distance education has become a true measure of the development of the education system in any country, as that approach is subject to extensive experimentation, to see how education institutions can utilize technological and digital developments as the real tools impacting an education system that is linked to the labour market and economy.

When it comes to "Education in a Changing World", one cannot overlook the term 'flexibility', which has been tackled by many experts and included in many international reports on future education, as classroom and school–based education cannot be applied to everyone under all circumstances, which has been proven by the current global pandemic.

Distance education and open or flexible education have become forms of education associated with lifelong learning, or education in a changing world, because they belong in the space of technology and digital development and can overcome the obstacles of economic difficulties and health and environmental disasters, and are – in the short and long terms – less costly for governments and even better investments.

The choice of "Education in a Changing World" as the slogan of this Annual Report 2020 confirms the BQA's belief in the digital technological knowledge advancement and its direct impact on teaching and learning processes, as well as the importance of looking ahead to develop accurate strategies and plans which can produce the right road map. This facilitates taking informed decisions that take into account the revolutions that are taking place in education and technological and digital sectors, so that our education system is being primarily focused as our wise leadership always seeks to ensure and enhance.

Mr. Ayman Bin Tawfiq Al-Moayyad
Minister of Youth and Sport Affairs
Chairman of Board of Directors

When properly managed, technology can play a significant and effective role in the advancement of human communities, bringing them closer and enabling them to share their experiences; overcoming the barriers of time, space and financial cost. The fourth industrial revolution (4IR) has contributed to promoting the role of digital technology in all areas of life in general, and in education and training in particular. In response to the technology advancement, the education and training sector in the Kingdom of Bahrain has undergone rapid changes, with the introduction of smart boards in classrooms as well as installation of displays and interactive data show devices. Furthermore, learning management systems and distance education platforms used by some institutions have provided opportunities to offer distance education services and environments that best suit the nature and needs of students.

However, the adoption of this form of learning was slow and limited before the spread of COVID-19 pandemic, as not all the functionalities of distance education platforms were effectively and productively utilised, and most education and training providers were not keen on moving to blended education and continuing to rely on traditional forms of education. However, the COVID-19 pandemic has tipped the scales and created a new reality, turning distance education from an option to a necessity that everyone needs to embrace and utilise in a broad and integrated manner.

Big densely populated countries have succeeded in making a smooth transition to working from home and distance education, as the traditional way of life became no longer possible to maintain. Conversely, we have seen countries experiencing many difficulties in sustaining and managing community life remotely, in terms of education, work and

services; consequently, everyone started to realise that success in developing and strengthening the infrastructure of strategic state projects in times of prosperity can protect them in times of hardship. This is especially applicable in the essential functions that communities are absolutely indispensable, which should be established in systems and minds as the most important lesson to be learned from this crisis.

The Kingdom of Bahrain was one of the countries that succeeded in dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic, thanks to Allah the Almighty first and foremost and the readiness and distinctive management of Team Bahrain led by His Royal Highness the Crown Prince and Prime Minister.

. In addition, the Education and Training Quality Authority, based on its role in Team Bahrain and its national role at all levels and in all areas to promote successes and excellence in various sectors, has developed plans and started implementing them to carry out its responsibilities according to its establishment Royal Decree and its national duty in these critical times for the world and our beloved Kingdom.

Like other state institutions, BQA has done its part to carry out its responsibilities remotely, working in stages, starting by ensuring BQA's readiness in terms of frameworks and working mechanisms and training specialists to conduct reviews remotely. The second stage started by communicating with education and training institutions in Bahrain regarding their preparations to provide distance education to their students, teachers and academia. Forms were distributed to measure the readiness of these institutions, and questionnaires about the effectiveness of distance education and training which took place during this period were sent to parents, students and teachers.

In the third stage, the BQA conducted

an assessment of distance education in government and private schools, as well as vocational education and training institutions across the Kingdom of Bahrain, by assessing virtual sessions and reviewing teaching processes and interaction and participation between learners and teachers/trainers, in addition to identifying the levels of support provided during distance classes.

In compliance with its mandate, powers and responsibility towards its students in public and private higher education institutions, the BQA also evaluated the practices and applications of distance education in place in these institutions. This is in order to identify the applicable distance education platforms and ensure that they are easily accessible to students, as well as identifying the procedures followed by these institutions to support students during periods of distance education.

To complete the abovementioned stages, the Authority conducted pilot remote reviews of two higher education institutions, two vocational training institutions and four private schools, to evaluate and present their good experiences and practices while maintaining their privacy. In addition, the results of these processes were used to ensure the appropriateness of the review frameworks and mechanisms used in remote reviews and revise them as necessary. Furthermore, presenting the efforts and preparations carried out by all education and training institutions during this emergency and obtaining their feedback can benefit them all, especially if distance education continues for an unspecified period of time until this pandemic is over.

Our slogan for this year's annual report, "Education in a Changing World", is aimed at documenting this period through which the entire world is going, and showing the precautions and measures implemented by the Kingdom of Bahrain to reduce the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic and the consequent adoption of 'distance education' during this historic period.

The recent developments and alternatives to traditional education that have been adopted, brought many challenges and sparked new visions for the future, where all gaps are addressed and systems, mechanisms and infrastructure are developed to improve education and training and ensure the quality of provision to our children regardless of the circumstances. This is to ensure their right to good education that qualifies them to serve their country efficiently and competently.

The genuine roots and foundations laid by His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa as part of the Reform Project aimed at achieving unity and prosperity of our beloved country, as well as the care and follow-up by His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, are the true safeguards that will help our beloved Kingdom safely overcome this pandemic and achieve Bahrain's Economic Vision 2030 to the fullest. We also do not forget the achievements of His Royal Highness Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa, the late Prime Minister, may God bless his soul and reward him for his good deeds for our beloved nation leading to the prosperity of our country and its institutions in the most difficult circumstances.

In addition, the great care and attention of His Highness Shaikh Mohammed bin Mubarak Al Khalifa, Deputy Prime Minister and Chairman of the Supreme Council for the Development of Education and Training, is the pillar and compass for the development of the education and training system, as he is the true patron of all development initiatives in the education and training sectors in the Kingdom of Bahrain.

Furthermore, the impact of the sincere efforts of His Excellency Mr. Ayman Bin Tawfiq, Minister of Youth and Sport Affairs and Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Education and Training Quality Authority, and the members of the Board of Directors to develop plans and provide guidance and follow-up, to ensure that the Authority can perform its duties, is evident in the BQA's achievements. The results of the efforts exerted by the Authority and its employees, who are always loyal to His Majesty the King and our country, and who believe in the significance of their work to achieve education and training quality and contribute to creating promising generations for the prosperity of our beloved country, have been clearly reflected in the outstanding reputation of BQA and our precious Kingdom in the region and worldwide.

Our world is rapidly changing, and, in order to succeed in developing the right vision that can lead us to excellence and accomplishment, we need forward-looking planning for a flexible form of education that can transform the rigid and limited traditional education systems into more flexible and open ones that provide skills, abilities and development opportunities to all members of society based on 'lifelong learning' and 'Education in a Changing World' approaches. This will contribute effectively to learning process and enhance Bahrain's ability to smoothly and successfully meet the changing needs of labour.

Jawaher Shaheen Al Mudhahki
Chief Executive

HE Ms. Amna Alarayedh
Chief, Research-Office of
the First Deputy Prime
Minister

**HE Dr. Aysha Salem
Mubarak**

**HE Ms. Aysha Mohammed
AbdulGhani**

**HE Dr. Ebrahim
Mohammed Janahi**
Chief Executive Officer of Tamkeen
BQA Vice Chairman

HE Mr. Ayman Tawfiq Al Moayyad
Minister of Youth and Sport Affairs
BQA Chairman

HE Dr. Mohammed Mubarak Bin Daina
Special Envoy for Climate Affairs
Chief Executive of the Supreme Council for Environment

HE Dr. Abdulrahman Abdulhussain Jawahery
President of GPIC

HE Mr. Faisal Mohammed Al Mahroos

Dr. Tariq Al Sindi
General Director, General
Directorate of National
Qualifications Framework and
National Examinations

Dr. Jawaher Al Mudhahki
Chief Executive

Mrs. Esmat Jaffar | **Mrs. Wafa Al Yaqoobi** | **Dr. Sh. Lobna Al Khalifa** | **Dr. Wafa Al Mansoori**

Dr. Haya Al Mannai
General Director, General
Directorate of Education &
Training Institutes Reviews

Dr. Hasan Al Hammadi **Mr. Khalid Al Mannai** **Dr. Khalid Al Baker** **Mrs. Dua'a Sharafi**

THE GENERAL DIRECTORATE OF EDUCATION & TRAINING INSTITUTES REVIEWS

The Education and Training Quality Authority (BQA), represented by the General Directorate of Education and Training Institutes Reviews (GDR) and through its four directorates, continues to conduct its reviews according to the criteria and indicators of the approved review frameworks. These are reviewed and updated by the Authority following the completion of each review cycle, in line with internationally recognised best practices and based on the results of feedback received from reviewers, education and training institutions and other relevant stakeholders. The reviews aim to determine the standard of performance of the education and training institutions across the Kingdom of Bahrain, as well as to publish the review findings in order to indicate the quality of performance of these institutions to decision-makers and relevant stakeholders. In addition, they provide such institutions with detailed review reports that highlight their strengths and areas for improvements. This contributes to their continuous developmental process, thereby enabling learners and trainees to acquire the necessary knowledge and skills required to meet national needs.

During the academic year 2019-2020, the General Directorate continued the approved review cycles. However, these reviews were affected by the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic which forced it to postpone the site visits that were scheduled to take place from early March to the end of the current academic year. During this period, the BQA tracked the trend of distance education of the education and training institutions in the Kingdom of Bahrain, to monitor and examine the efforts made by these institutions and assess their effectiveness for purposes of development and improvement. This was pursued through collection of data and information on distance education, evaluation of distance sessions offered in these institutions and feedback received from students, trainees, educational faculties, and trainers. Moreover, the views of relevant students' parents were also surveyed, with related reports, upon completion of the required assessments, submitted to the concerned bodies. Additionally, virtual pilot reviews were conducted for a number of education and training institutions.

The Education and Training Quality Authority (BQA) through the Directorate of Government School Reviews (DGS) continued the fourth cycle of government schools' reviews during the 2019-2020 academic year. The performance of 37 government schools have been reviewed. These reviews comply with the Directorate of Government School Reviews and Directorate of Private Schools & Kindergartens Reviews 'Schools Review Handbook', for use in the review of schools in the Kingdom of Bahrain.

The Schools Review Framework is organised into three main domains. The First Domain focuses on the quality of outcomes and includes two aspects, namely the academic achievement aspect and personal development and social responsibility aspect. The Second Domain addresses the quality of main processes, including two aspects, namely the teaching, learning and assessment aspect and the empowerment and meeting special needs aspect. The Third Domain is about the quality assurance of outcomes and processes, including the leadership, management and governance aspect. The criteria in all aspects of the Framework are judged based on a four-point scale, being 'Outstanding', 'Good', 'Satisfactory' and 'Inadequate'. During phases 2 and 3 of Cycle 4 of reviews, the performance of 24 primary schools, ten intermediate and three secondary schools was reviewed.

This report highlights the performance results of the 37 government schools reviewed in the 2019-2020 academic year. It presents an overview of these schools' performance across the Kingdom of Bahrain according to the latest findings achieved through reviewing their overall cumulative results based on the outcome of their most recent review visits. The report also presents the results of monitoring visits during the 2019-2020 academic year to the schools that were judged 'inadequate' in the last review visits.
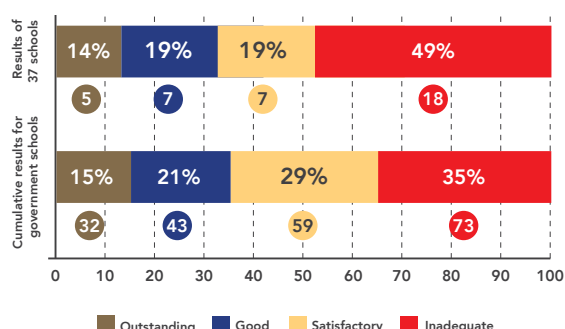
It is noteworthy to mention that reviews were suspended from early March to the end of May as part of the Authority's Precautionary Plan to tackle and mitigate the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. During the suspension period, the Directorate evaluated distance education practices and applications in the Kingdom's government schools, to determine the efforts made in this regard and assess their effectiveness. This was conducted through collecting and analysing distance education data and information from all government schools, evaluating the central virtual sessions offered by the Ministry of Education, as well as evaluating the televised sessions. Additionally, the views of students and their parents were collected and analysed. BQA will submit its final report to the concerned authorities upon completion of all required evaluation processes.

1. Overall effectiveness

The overall effectiveness judgement is the final aggregate judgement for the school, which is mainly dependent on the quality of the school's outcomes and the quality of the school's processes, especially those related to the teaching, learning and assessment. Consideration is also given to the effectiveness of the quality assurance of processes reflecting the standards of leadership, management and governance practices. An increase has been seen in the proportion of schools that were judged 'Inadequate' (49%) in the results of the batch of schools reviewed during 2019-2020 academic year, while the remaining percentages were distributed as follows: 14% of schools were judged 'Outstanding', 19% 'Good' and 19% 'Satisfactory', as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Overall Effectiveness for 37 government schools reviewed during 2019-2020 academic year and the cumulative results of Overall Effectiveness for 207 government schools

Results of 37 schools	14%	19%	19%	49%
	5	7	7	18
Cumulative results for government schools	15%	21%	29%	35%
	32	43	59	73

Outstanding | Good | Satisfactory | Inadequate

The decline in the results of many schools is attributed to the lack of seriousness in addressing the recommendations of the previous BQA review report. Several BQA recommendations are reoccurring as they are not used as basis for improvement since the last review visit. Additionally, they are not addressed in a timely manner and only handled shortly ahead of the subsequent review visit. Although procedural plans are based on the BQA recommendations, they fail to cover all aspects of the school work. This contributed to the lack of improvement in the school performance and sometimes its decline. This has shown directly in the students' academic and personal development.

The cumulative results of the overall effectiveness of the Kingdom's government schools were divided as follows: 36% were judged 'Outstanding' or 'Good', 29% 'Satisfactory' and 35% 'Inadequate'. The high-performing schools were mainly characterised by clear leadership insights, which contributed to raising the teachers' professional competencies and developing their performance with a focus on classroom practices and periodic and regular follow up. This resulted in the students receiving outstanding support, which directly helped them overcome any academic and personal problems during their learning period. On the other hand, the percentage of 'Inadequate' schools still causes concern at the national level, clearly indicating that the quality of provision is ineffective in raising the low academic levels of students. This is consistent with the ineffective use of teaching strategies in these schools, as well as the poor, inappropriate and inaccurate academic progress evaluation processes.

The Education and Training Quality Authority focuses in its recommendations to schools and the concerned bodies at the Ministry of Education on the necessity of building on the review reports received by schools upon completion of the review processes, as this would accelerate the processes of improving and developing performance.

Figure 2 demonstrates the overall picture of the continuity of the phenomenon of girls schools outperforming boys schools in terms of the results of overall effectiveness up to the time of this report being issued. This is evident with 29 girls schools (28%) receiving 'Outstanding' judgements compared to three boys schools (3%). This superiority also extended to the rating of 'Good', as 36 girls schools (35%) received this judgement compared to seven boys schools (7%). With 'Inadequate' ratings, about two-thirds of boys schools (62%, 65 schools) received this judgement, compared to eight girls schools (8%). Boys schools still show their inability to raise students' motivation towards learning, while distinguishly effective teaching and assessment practices strategies are still more apparent in girls schools.
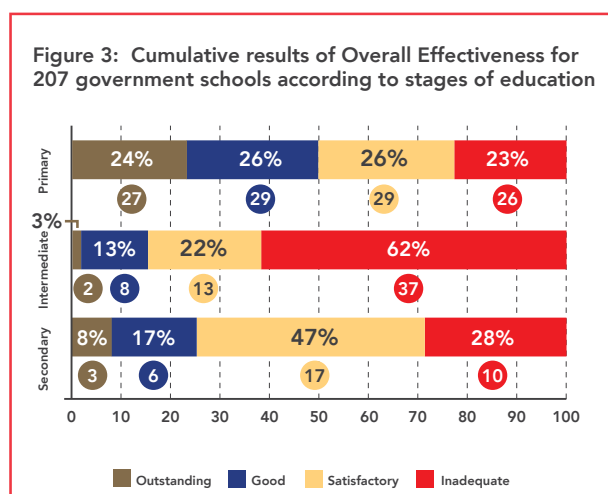
Figure 2: Cumulative results of Overall Effectiveness for 207 government schools according to gender

Boys	3%	7%	29%	62%
	3	7	30	65
Girls	28%	35%	28%	8%
	29	36	29	8

Outstanding | Good | Satisfactory | Inadequate
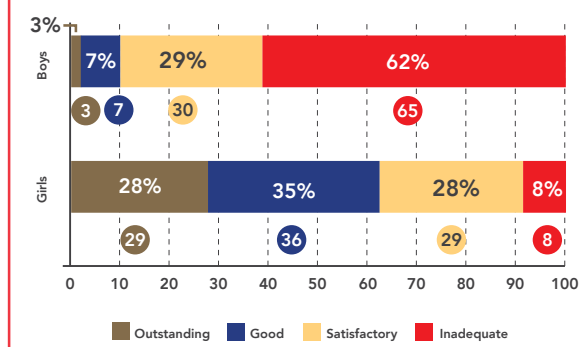
In considering the overall cumulative picture of the performance of all education stages in government schools, as indicated in Figure 3, primary schools remain to show best performance followed by secondary schools. This is mainly due to the better practices related to leadership for learning,

assessment for learning and student-centred teaching strategies are apparent; though these are less in secondary schools.

The proportion of primary schools that were judged 'Inadequate' remains generally disappointing to the level of aspirations in the Kingdom of Bahrain. The greatest challenge arises in the phenomenon of declining performance of the intermediate stage with 37 intermediate schools (62%) remaining 'inadequate'. Such schools face major challenges related to students' behavioural problems, the inappropriateness of the strategies used for their age group, and the poor preparation processes for the transition between education stages, especially when students move from primary to intermediate schools. The issue needs to be addressed urgently by the concerned bodies at the Ministry of Education to develop the optimal solutions.

Figure 3: Cumulative results of Overall Effectiveness for 207 government schools according to stages of education
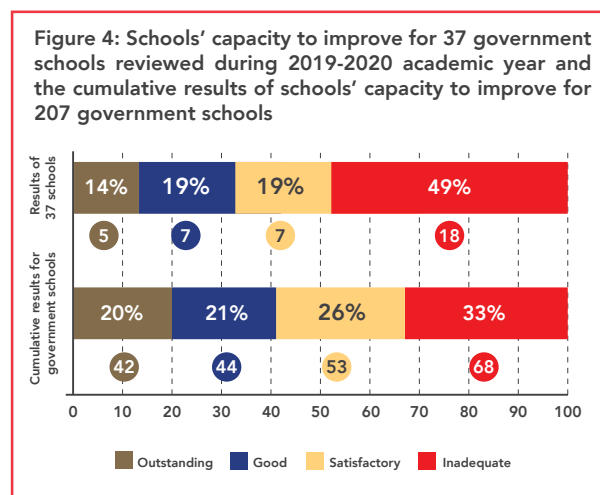
It should be noted that out of a total of 207 government schools, the judgement of 48 remain unchanged at 'inadequate' during the last two review cycles. This number causes great concern as it negatively affects the development of students' standards and prevents the achievement of the Kingdom's aspirations and the goals of Bahrain's Economic Vision 2030.

2. Schools' capacity to improve

Judgements about schools' capacity to improve are based on several factors including the school's awareness of its
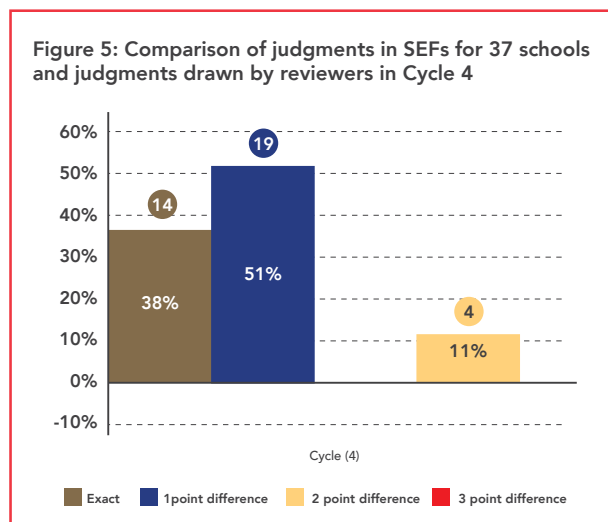
areas for improvement and development of appropriate plans to address them, along with follow-up of these plans and their impact on processes, particularly teaching and learning. The results of the batch of schools reviewed during the 2019-2020 academic year, and the overall cumulative results of the Kingdom's government schools, indicate the increase in the proportion of schools that were judged 'inadequate', amounting to 49% and 33% respectively as seen in Figure 4. The results of the reviewed schools in academic year 2019-2020 were more clearly affected than the previous years due to the instability of teaching and administrative staff. Moreover, the current leaders in the underperforming schools did not show appropriate leadership skills to improve the schoolwork. This matches the overall picture, as these schools' show limited ability to address the challenges relating to students' behaviours and academic progress, school environment, facilities and resources.

Figure 4: Schools' capacity to improve for 37 government schools reviewed during 2019-2020 academic year and the cumulative results of schools' capacity to improve for 207 government schools

A smaller proportion of schools (14% out of the 37 schools and 20% out of the schools' overall cumulative results) demonstrated a distinct ability to assess their real situation, extrapolate their future and develop appropriate procedural plans to raise their performance. It is hoped that these schools' procedures will positively affect their future performance should their situation remains unchanged.

Figure 5 also shows that 38% of the total number of government schools reviewed during the 2019-2020 academic year showed

professional awareness when judging their performance in their Self-Evaluation Forms (SEFs). This is reflected in the match between judgements drawn by schools and reviewers. Confidence can be drawn in these schools' capacity to improve once they have stable teaching and administrative staffing and the appropriate tools. These schools accurately assess their reality, and the concepts are unified between the school and the Education and Training Quality Authority in terms of interpreting and analysing the review standards and aspects. The remaining schools overestimate their performance relatively. This is acceptable when there is a one-point difference as the case in 51% of the schools. However, the fact that 11% of schools overestimate their performance on completing the SEFs is an issue that requires follow-up and support by the concerned bodies at the Ministry of Education upon receiving these schools' review results.

Figure 5: Comparison of judgments in SEFs for 37 schools and judgments drawn by reviewers in Cycle 4
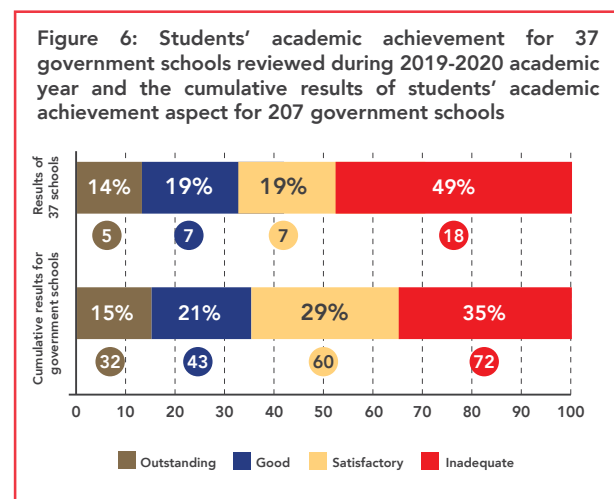
3. Quality of outcomes

The schools' review processes focus on the assessment of the quality of learning outcomes, which are closely related to students' academic achievement and their personal development. The Students' academic achievement aspect is based on three main criteria relating to the students' academic standards, appropriateness to their age group and the progress they make in lessons according to their abilities; in addition to the development of learning skills to achieve a better life. When analysing

the results of the batch of schools reviewed during the 2019-2020 academic year, as shown in Figure 6, the majority of schools (50%) were judged 'Inadequate'. This is a high percentage and indicates the increase in the challenges students face, especially academically, when they move to the next stages of education which may directly affect their motivation towards learning. Nevertheless, 33% of schools were rated 'Outstanding' and 'Good' due to students' acquisition of effective learning skills, along with the use of enabling teaching and learning strategies by the schools' teachers.

The overall cumulative picture of the results of government schools for this aspect follows the pattern of this batch of results but with lower percentage of 'Inadequate' rating. However, the percentage still causes concern in terms of poor academic outcomes. This is directly due to the gap in students' performance when comparing their results in internal school assessments such as tests and projects to their results in external examinations conducted by external bodies. Classroom observations conducted by BQA reviewers further consolidate the discrepancy between the students' actual standards in lessons and their written work levels and the results of internal school examinations which lack accuracy in construction and marking.

Figure 6: Students' academic achievement for 37 government schools reviewed during 2019-2020 academic year and the cumulative results of students' academic achievement aspect for 207 government schools

The Personal development and social responsibility aspect is the second essential output of the quality of outcomes and its criteria focus on measuring students' awareness of their rights, their maturity as

learners responsible for their own learning, and citizens who are aware of their rights and duties towards their community and homeland. An analysis of the results of this batch, as seen in Figure 7, shows that 43% of government schools were judged 'Outstanding' and 'Good' due to students' development of positive attitudes towards their learning and acquisition of outstanding social and leadership skills. Meanwhile, 41% of schools were judged 'Inadequate' with students showing low motivation towards learning, and some negative behaviours and cases of bullying. Furthermore, some teaching strategies employed in lessons provide students with insufficient opportunities to participate in lessons.

The overall cumulative results of the Kingdom's government schools in this aspect were relatively better, with 24% having received an 'Outstanding' judgement, 26% were rated 'good', 23% satisfactory and 27% 'inadequate'. Students' practices in high-performing schools were effective in terms of their participation in various aspects of school life, showing positive communication skills and significant adherence to true citizenship values. The role of parents in terms of monitoring and supporting their children's learning is still limited in a number of 'Inadequate' schools.

Figure 7: Personal development and social responsibility for 37 government schools reviewed during 2019-2020 academic year and the cumulative results of personal development and social responsibility aspect for 207 government schools
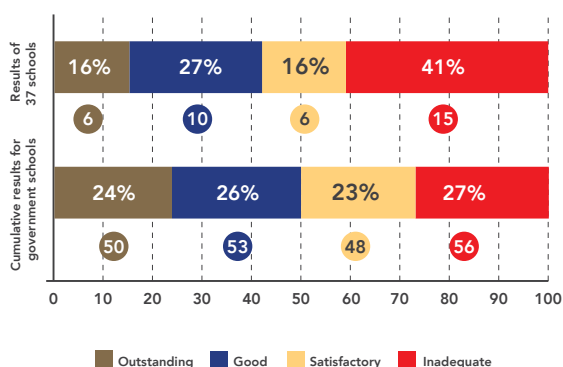
## 4. Quality of main processes

The school plays the greatest role in raising students' academic and personal standards through implementing many processes, which in essence include teaching, learning and assessment, in addition to empowerment and meeting special educational needs.

When comparing the school results of this batch in teaching, learning and assessment aspect, Figure 8 demonstrates that the majority of schools (about 50%) were judged 'Inadequate', following the pattern of the results in the students' academic achievement aspect. This is directly attributable to the fact that these schools are unable to appropriately reach out to students, raise their motivation towards learning and enable them to acquire independent learning skills. Therefore, lessons were unproductive with teachers lacking classroom management skills, contrary to the schools that received 'Outstanding' and 'Good' judgements.

The overall cumulative picture of the results of government schools was relatively better. 16% of government schools were judged 'Outstanding', 20% 'Good', 29% 'Satisfactory' and 34% 'Inadequate', as shown in Figure 8. Lessons in schools with better performance are characterised by teachers' ability to use effective teaching and learning strategies and differentiated activities that support learning. They implement rigorous assessment tools and provide constructive feedback constantly.

One of the most significant negative factors impacting the overall effectiveness of teaching and learning strategies is the number of teachers who prefer rote (instructional) teaching to deliver lessons which renders them to be teacher-centered rather than student-centered. This increases students' dependency on being prompted and negatively affects the development of their learning skills.

Figure 8: Teaching, learning and assessment for 37 government schools reviewed during 2019-2020 academic year and the cumulative results of teaching, learning and assessment aspect for 207 government schools
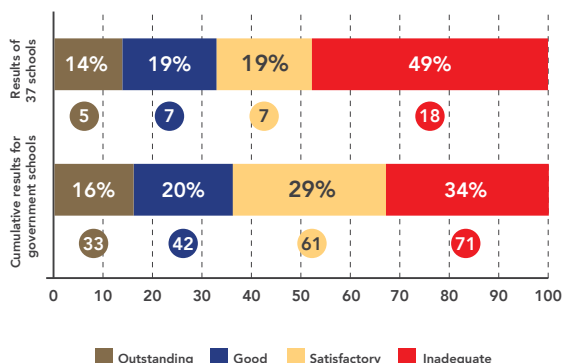
With the empowerment and meeting special needs aspect, the processes are assessed by examining the school's activities, the support provided for students' academic and personal needs, the provision of various learning experiences, and enhancement of their talents and creativity to empower them.

During the academic year 2019-2020, the results of government schools in this aspect fell short of expectations, with 38% of government school receiving 'Outstanding' and 'Good' judgements, 16% 'Satisfactory' and 46% 'Inadequate', as illustrated in Figure 9. The proportion of schools judged 'Inadequate' is high. This is due to the difficulties these schools face in providing academic support to various categories of students as the diagnosis of students' academic needs is either poor or inappropriately utilized to design learning activities and assessment tools accordingly.

The overall cumulative results of government schools were relatively better, with 45% of government schools being judged 'Outstanding' and 'Good', 26% 'Satisfactory' and 29% 'Inadequate'.

High-performing schools in the Kingdom of Bahrain offer support for students with special needs, as well as examining, documenting and taking the necessary action to address special cases. They provide learning experiences for the various categories of students inside and outside the classroom. However, schools that are underperforming encounter many challenges. Recommendations related to the appropriateness and safety of school buildings and facilities, though limited, are still present which are regularly and instantly communicated by the BQA to the relevant bodies at the Ministry of Education.

Figure 9: Empowerment and meeting special needs for 37 government schools reviewed during 2019-2020 academic year and the cumulative results of empowerment and meeting special needs aspect for 207 government schools
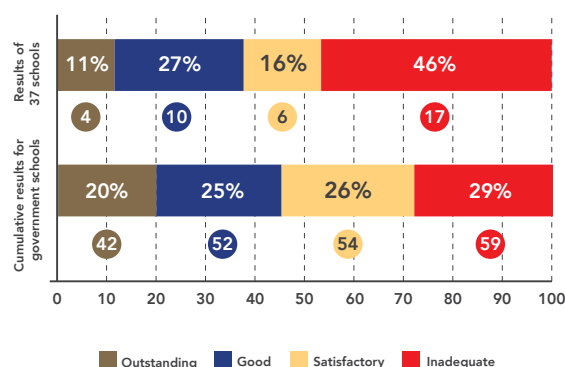
5. Quality assurance of outcomes and processes

The role of the school leadership and management in terms of policies, procedures and rigorous follow-up of school processes and outputs ensures high learning outcomes, development and sustainability. These are assessed in the leadership, management and governance aspect, usually linked to the aspects of academic achievement and teaching and learning processes. This will ensure that students' academic and personal standards are raised.

During the 2019-2020 academic year, 33% of government schools received 'Good' or above judgement, 13% 'Satisfactory' and 49% 'Inadequate', as illustrated in Figure 10. The percentage of schools with 'Inadequate' judgement in this aspect is high. This is attributed to different reasons, mainly the instability of teaching and administrative staff, which affects the continuity of development and improvement

efforts. In addition, the BQA previous review report recommendations have not been used as basis for improvement and professional development is poor. Figure 10 also demonstrates that the overall cumulative results in this aspect were relatively better, with 43% and 25% of government school received 'Outstanding' and 'Good' judgements respectively while 32% were judged 'Inadequate'. Schools that underperform are inclined to consider the BQA review as a transient event, leading to late preparation for the subsequent review visit. This is inconsistent with the review process, which seeks to verify that the schools' practices are institutionalised and well-established and are not temporary procedures with limited impact. Additionally, this trend directly affects the accuracy of the school's self-evaluation process and its strategic and operational plans.

Overall, recommendations received by schools for external support from the concerned parties at the Ministry of Education are repeated in subsequent BQA review reports. This indicates the inability of school management in these schools to deal with current challenges and thus improve school performance. Conversely, the high-performing school management has greater ability to identify their staffing needs, provide professional development solutions, motivate staff towards teaching, and apply distinct procedures to follow-up the school performance, particularly the classroom practices.

Figure 10: Leadership, management and governance aspect for 37 government schools reviewed during 2019-2020 academic year and the cumulative results of leadership, management and governance aspect for 207 government schools

Monitoring visits (2019-2020)

The Education and Training Quality Authority (BQA), through the Directorate of Government School Reviews (DGS), continued to conduct monitoring visits to government schools judged 'Inadequate' in their last review visit. These schools became subject to a first or a second monitoring visit based on the progress they have made in addressing the BQA recommendations as stated in their review reports and in accordance to the applicable monitoring visit mechanisms for government and private schools. A school is only considered that it has addressed the BQA review report recommendations if it receives a 'sufficient progress' judgement.

During the 2019-2020 academic year, the Directorate of Government School Reviews (DGS) conducted five monitoring visits for schools that were judged 'Inadequate' in the third cycle of reviews. Out of these five schools, two were subject to their first monitoring visits; one was found 'in progress' and the other one received 'insufficient progress' rating. Therefore, both will be scheduled for a second monitoring visit. The remaining three schools underwent a second monitoring visit, with one school being given 'insufficient progress' and two receiving 'in progress' judgement. The BQA recommends that the concerned bodies at the Ministry of Education follow up the schools that have not addressed the recommendations in their review reports successfully, and provide them with further support and guidance according to the requirements of each school to speed up the development of its overall performance and support internal improvement efforts.
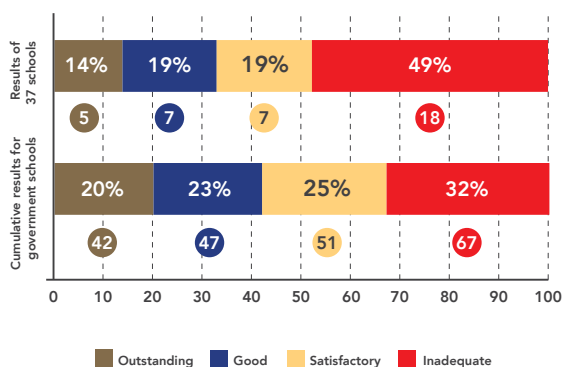
During the academic year 2019-2020, the Education and Training Quality Authority (BQA), represented by the Directorate of Private Schools and Kindergartens Reviews (DPS), reviewed the performance of twelve private schools as part of phases 2 and 3 of the third cycle of private schools reviews which started in February 2019. These reviews are conducted according to the aspects and criteria of the approved '2018-Schools Review Framework'.

As part of the Authority's Precautionary Plan to tackle and mitigate the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, private schools reviews were suspended from March to May 2020. The BQA has meanwhile taken the initiative to communicate with private schools to evaluate their efforts in implementing the executive decisions towards the application of distance education during the pandemic period. This was conducted through collecting the views of parents, gathering data and information from private schools, and evaluating a sample of virtual sessions. In addition, a sample of four private schools were subject to a virtual evaluation process by the Directorate. The BQA will submit its final report on this evaluation to the concerned authorities and decision-makers.
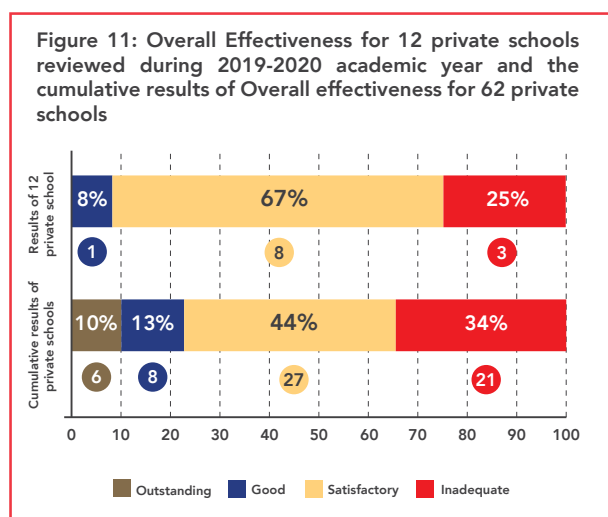
The twelve private schools that have undergone reviews offer different curricula, such as the British, American, and national curricula, and all are co-ed schools except for one whose students are male only. Out of these twelve schools, two include primary and intermediate stages, while the remaining eight include the three stages; primary, middle and secondary stages. The report provides an overview of the results of these twelve schools and their impact on the overall cumulative results of 62 private schools across the Kingdom of Bahrain. The report also presents the results of the monitoring visits conducted to schools that were judged 'Inadequate' in the last review visits.

Analysis of the results of the private schools' reviews during the 2019-2020 academic year, twelve private schools were subject to reviews and the following section of this report presents the results of the review visits of these twelve private schools specifically, and their impact on the overall cumulative results of Bahrain's 62 private schools.

1. Overall effectiveness

The school's overall effectiveness depends on how effective its processes are in achieving quality outcomes, with follow-up to ensure the quality of processes and outcomes. As illustrated in Figure 11, only one school received a 'Good' judgement, due to its rigorous follow-up of performance by the school leaders to ensure achieving high learning outcomes. This was done through focusing the school's efforts on raising the efficiency of processes, particularly teaching and learning practices, and offering academic and personal support to students to raise the school's overall performance. None of the schools reviewed in this academic year received an 'Outstanding' judgement, while eight were rated 'Satisfactory'. The three schools which were judged as 'Inadequate' have retained their judgements over the last two cycles of reviews, with two out of these three schools retaining their 'Inadequate' judgement over the three cycles of reviews. Moreover, all three schools have been judged 'Inadequate' in all review aspects including their capacity to improve. This is a cause for concern, especially as these schools' lack awareness of the effective practices that would contribute to raising their overall performance, as well as the poor planning and follow-up processes in these schools.

When reviewing the cumulative results of the 62 private schools, the overall effectiveness for 14 schools increased by 23%, with six being rated 'Outstanding', eight 'Good', and 27 (44%) 'Satisfactory', while 21 (34%) were judged 'Inadequate'. The most effective
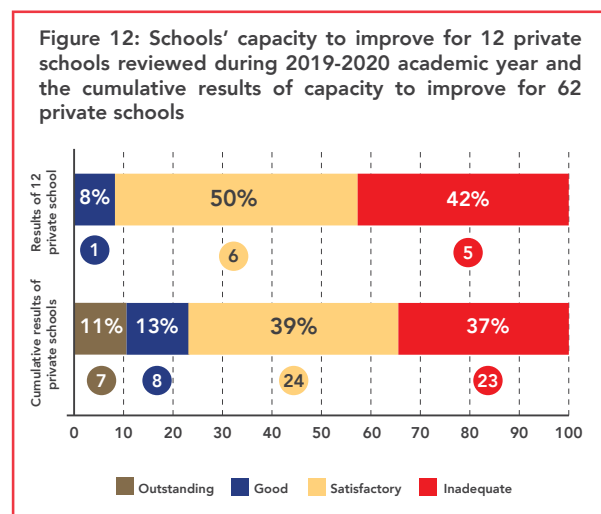
schools are characterised by a conscious focus on the quality of its main processes believing in their importance in achieving high learning outcomes. This includes investment in educational resources and facilities that would enrich students' learning and teachers' professional development programmes that focus on the actual needs of teachers. Schools that are underperforming encounter many real challenges resulting from their focus on short-term measures without ensuring their impact on learning outcomes, in addition to the lack of awareness of improvement priorities, especially those related to teaching, learning and assessment practices.

Figure 11: Overall Effectiveness for 12 private schools reviewed during 2019-2020 academic year and the cumulative results of Overall effectiveness for 62 private schools

2. Schools' capacity to Improve

Figure 12 demonstrates the schools' capacity to improve for the twelve private schools reviewed, where only one received a 'Good' judgement for its capacity to improve. Five schools were judged 'Inadequate' in their capacity to improve compared to three private schools being judged 'Inadequate' in their overall effectiveness. This is due to the fact that out of these three schools two received an 'Inadequate' judgement for their capacity to improve, while they were judged as 'Satisfactory' for their overall effectiveness. These two schools face challenges in terms of the effectiveness of teaching and learning processes, particularly in the later stages of schooling, as well as ineffective assessment methods that meet students' various needs and the ineffective academic support

provided to students. The percentage of schools with 'Inadequate' capacity to improve increased reaching to 37% out of the total of 62 schools. This is a critical proportion and raises concerns over these schools' ability to meet the challenges they face, including poor follow-up of performance, focus on procedures rather than their impact on processes, and the generality of teachers' professional development programmes, with poor investment in human and physical resources by a number of schools which limits their ability to attract appropriate teaching staffing or provide the necessary facilities and learning resources. On the other hand, the percentages of schools receiving 'Outstanding' and 'Good' judgements for their capacity were 11% and 13% respectively, where these schools showed an effective capacity to improve due to utilising accurate self-evaluation processes and effective planning while implementing focused teachers' professional development programmes that meet teachers' actual training needs.

Figure 12: Schools' capacity to improve for 12 private schools reviewed during 2019-2020 academic year and the cumulative results of capacity to improve for 62 private schools

The evaluation of the school's performance in its Self-Evaluation Form (SEF) is also an indication of the school's ability to objectively, thoroughly and accurately diagnose its real situation. As indicated in Figure 13, a match between judgements drawn by schools and reviewers can be seen in only two schools (17%) out of the twelve schools reviewed. Seven schools overestimated their performance with a one-point difference between school and the review team judgement which is

an acceptable difference. However, a two-points difference is found between the school's self-evaluation and review team judgements in three schools (25%) out of the twelve schools. It is noteworthy to mention as this is the third cycle of reviews; these schools have undergone two previous review visits. This necessitates a need to examine the capability of these schools to accurately and transparently evaluate their real situation, identify improvement priorities and develop the schoolwork with focus on thorough plans and programmes. Additionally, these schools seem to lack the awareness of standards and expectations of the appropriate level of school performance.

Figure 13: Comparison of judgements in SEFs for 12 private schools and judgements drawn by reviewers in Cycle 3
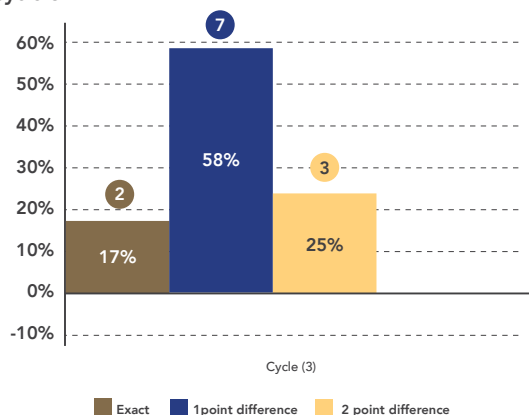
3. Quality of outcomes

The quality of outcomes is the core result of all processes conducted by a school. These outcomes focus on the students' academic achievement aspect and personal development and social responsibility aspect. During the academic year 2019-2020, as illustrated in Figure 14, students' academic achievement aspect judgements are identical to the schools' overall effectiveness judgements. Only one private school was judged as 'Good' and eight schools judged as 'Satisfactory', while three received an 'Inadequate' judgement. This affects the cumulative results of all private schools in the students' academic achievement aspect, where those receiving 'Outstanding' and 'Good' judgements were 10% and 13% respectively, while 44% of schools were rated 'Satisfactory' and 34% 'Inadequate'.

The high performance of schools in the students' academic achievement aspect is attributed to students' high standards and progress in lessons and written work. This corresponds with their high pass rates in examinations. Additionally, there are external benchmarks in the majority of these schools such as the conduct of various international examinations in which students' performance is in accordance with the implemented curriculum and the expected international standards. Students' learning skills have also been one of the positive areas in these schools, as students demonstrate the ability to deal with various data, problem-solving, and the technological culture that supports their learning. However, in the less effective schools, a gap was found between students' high pass rates in internal examinations and their actual standards in lessons. Some of these schools may provide opportunities to students opting for international standard examinations, but their participation rate is usually limited and performance is varied. Students also show limited acquisition of learning skills such as self-learning skills, research, and dealing with maps and data.

Figure 14: Students' academic achievement for 12 private schools reviewed during 2019-2020 academic year and the cumulative results of students' academic achievement aspect for 62 private schools
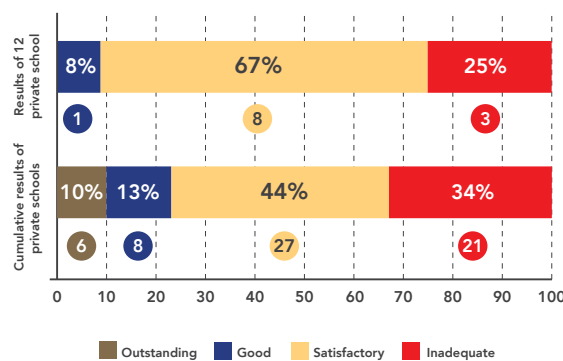
As illustrated in Figure 15, students' personal development and social responsibility aspect is more positive than students' academic achievement aspect. Five schools (42%) were judged 'Good' and four 'Satisfactory', while three schools follow the pattern of the remaining aspect and were judged 'Inadequate'. This affects the overall cumulative results of private schools

in this aspect. Schools that were judged 'Outstanding' and 'Good' amount to 42%, as seen in Figure 15, compared to 23% in the students' academic achievement aspect, as shown in Figure 14. This reflects the whole positive picture of the students' personal development and social responsibility aspect over students' academic achievement aspect. The percentage of schools with 'Satisfactory' rating in this aspect was 35% and schools receiving 'Inadequate' were 23%, which remains a cause of concern.

Students in the most effective schools are able to assume leadership roles, participate effectively inside and outside classrooms, embrace citizenship and self-discipline values. They communicate effectively with their peers and others and show competitiveness and innovation skills through undertaking projects and activities. However, students in the schools receiving an 'Inadequate' judgement take up limited roles due to poor motivation and limited opportunities provided for them, particularly as the teaching methods are teacher-centered rather than student-centered. Furthermore, limited extracurricular activities are provided to students that allow them to participate effectively and be engaged. These skills are less apparent in the majority of schools, some of which having received a 'Satisfactory' judgement.

Figure 15: Personal development and social responsibility for 12 private schools reviewed during 2019-2020 academic year and the cumulative results of personal development and social responsibility aspect for 62 private schools
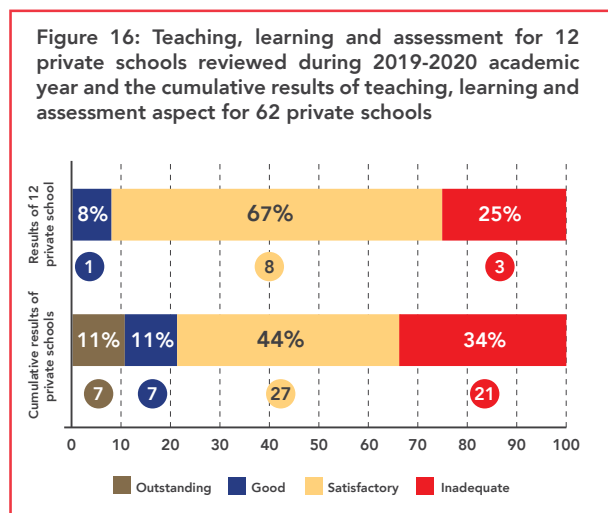
4. Quality of main processes

The school conducts a set of processes to raise students' performance. The domain of quality of main processes includes the teaching, learning and assessment aspect and empowerment and meeting special needs aspect, with a focus on the impact of the adopted procedures in these two areas on the school's learning outcomes. The teaching, learning and assessment aspect directly affects students' academic achievement. Figure 16 demonstrates the match in judgements of the effectiveness of the teaching, learning and assessment aspect with the aspect of students' academic achievement for the twelve schools reviewed during the 2019-2020 academic year. One school (8%) was judged 'Good', eight (67%) 'Satisfactory', and three (25%) 'Inadequate'. Accordingly, the overall cumulative percentage of private schools receiving 'Outstanding' and 'Good' judgements in this aspect were at the rate of 11% for each judgement, while 44% of schools were judged as 'Satisfactory' and 34% 'Inadequate'.

In high-performing schools, the teaching, learning and assessment processes were effective through employing proactive and innovative strategies that contribute to students' learning. These strategies provide them with the opportunity to assume their roles and responsibility towards their learning such as flipped learning and brainstorming. They also employ various assessment methods and use them to provide support to students through lesson planning according to their different learning needs. These schools also use various teaching tools and resources to enrich students' learning, including technological ones that are not limited to presentations but include student interaction and electronic production. Conversely, schools judged as 'Inadequate' face challenges in being less aware of age-appropriate strategies and focus on teacher-centered strategies, which do not contribute to the appropriate students' engagement in the learning process. Moreover, these schools seem to have low expectations and the a shallow content is provided which does not align with the adopted curriculum. This
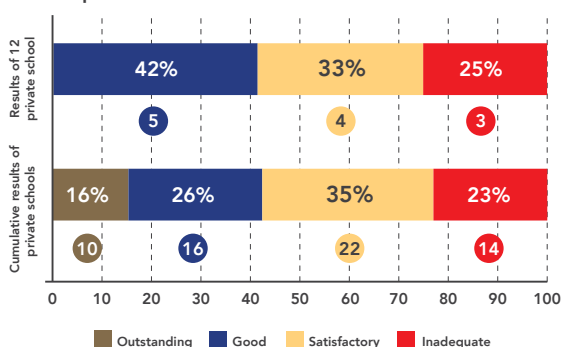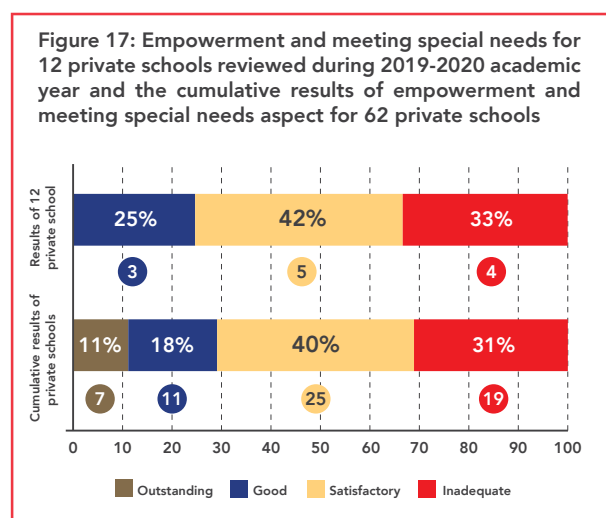
and a shallow content is provided which results in the insufficient development of students' skills, lack of challenge to their abilities, and limited progress in relation to the curriculum expectations. Additionally, challenges include the erratic learning time management due to prolonged sub-activities at the expense of the key activities that would meet learning objectives.

Figure 16: Teaching, learning and assessment for 12 private schools reviewed during 2019-2020 academic year and the cumulative results of teaching, learning and assessment aspect for 62 private schools

The empowerment and meeting special needs aspect, the second aspect of the domain of quality of main processes, affects both the students' academic achievement aspect and personal development and social responsibility aspect. Schools receiving a 'Good' judgement were better in this aspect compared to the teaching, learning and assessment aspect where three schools received this rating, amounting to 25%, and five (42%) were judged 'Satisfactory'. This compares to four schools (33%) judged as 'Inadequate' in this respect. The overall cumulative percentage of private schools receiving 'Outstanding' and 'Good' judgements in this aspect were 11% and 18% respectively, while 40% of schools were graded 'Satisfactory' and 31% 'Inadequate', as shown in Figure 17.

Despite the drop in the percentage of 'Inadequate' schools in this aspect, compared to the percentages of the students' academic achievement aspect and teaching, learning and assessment aspect, it is still considered high. Most schools judged as 'Satisfactory' and 'Inadequate' encounter challenges

in terms of providing sufficient academic support for the various categories of students to help them overcome their academic problems. These schools are characterised by the absence or general nature of academic support programmes due to poor diagnosis of students' academic needs through using accurate and appropriate assessment methods. Furthermore, challenging students of different abilities and developing their talents are limited due to the lack of focus on activities that promote students' experiences and interests. Additionally, some of the school buildings and facilities do not meet safety and security requirements. Conversely, the most effective schools are fully aware of the differing students' needs through implementing various assessment mechanisms, providing effective extracurricular programmes that meet the different academic and personal needs of students, and monitoring their progress in these activities and programmes. They also provide an appropriate hygiene environment, closely follow up risks and carry out necessary maintenance.

Figure 17: Empowerment and meeting special needs for 12 private schools reviewed during 2019-2020 academic year and the cumulative results of empowerment and meeting special needs aspect for 62 private schools

5. Quality assurance of outcomes and processes

The effective mechanisms adopted by the school to follow up the main processes and measure their effectiveness through their impact on the school's main learning outcomes is key in the judgement of the effectiveness of the leadership, management and governance aspect. Judgements in

this aspect often match the judgements given to the aspects of students' academic achievement and teaching, learning and assessment, as illustrated in Figure 18. None of the twelve schools reviewed during the 2019-2020 academic year were judged as 'Outstanding', one (8%) was judged as 'Good' and eight (67%) as 'Satisfactory' in the effectiveness of the leadership, management and governance aspect. The remaining three schools were judged as 'Inadequate' (25%), which matches the judgement of other aspects in these three schools. This causes concern on the ability of these schools to improve their performance, especially as two of these three schools were judged 'Inadequate' during the three review cycles.

The overall cumulative results in this aspect for the 62 private schools evidently demonstrates that 22% of the schools were judged 'Outstanding' or 'Good', with 11% for each, 44% received a 'Satisfactory' judgement, and 34% were judged 'Inadequate'. Leadership teams in the most effective schools strongly focus on teaching and learning processes and provide academic and personal support to students. This is achieved through rigorous and accurate follow-up of all aspects of school performance to determine the school's development priorities and draw up their action plans accordingly. Additionally, they have a clear governance system that guides their strategic direction and is informed by its various experiences. They monitor their performance regularly. Leadership teams in the less effective schools, in contrast, face disturbing challenges represented by the absence of accurate and regular self-evaluation mechanisms of their performance, sometimes due to lack of awareness of standards and characteristics of effective performance and a shortage of financial and human resources at times. This affects their ability to accurately identify areas for development and plan effectively to improve their performance. Moreover, there are variances in the mechanisms for providing appropriate academic support informed by an accurate diagnosis of teaching needs.

Figure 18: Leadership, management and governance for 12 private schools reviewed during 2019-2020 academic year and the cumulative results of leadership, management and governance aspect for 62 private schools
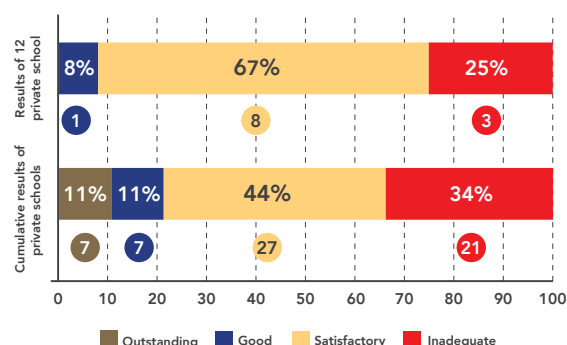
Monitoring visits (2019-2020)

The Education and Training Quality Authority (BQA), represented by the Directorate of Private Schools and Kindergartens Reviews (DPS), conducts monitoring visits to private schools judged 'Inadequate' in their last review visit. This is done in accordance to the applicable monitoring visit mechanisms for government and private schools. During the academic year 2019-2020, the DPS conducted monitoring visits to four private schools that were previously judged 'Inadequate' in the second cycle of reviews. Of these, two schools received their first monitoring visit and two schools were subject to their second monitoring visit. All four schools were rated 'In progress' in addressing the BQA recommendations contained in the review reports. This requires that these schools make greater effort to implement the BQA review recommendations, and focus on the impact of procedures that will improve their performance in line with development priorities to meet the challenges they face.

In February 2019, the Education & Training Quality Authority (BQA), represented by the Directorate of Vocational Reviews (DVR), commenced Phase 1 of the fourth cycle of reviews of Vocational Education and Training (VET) providers. This continued in the academic year 2019-2020, during which the performance of (13) VET providers were reviewed; (12) of which are licensed by the Ministry of Labour and Social Development (MLSD) and one by the Ministry of Education (MoE). This brings the total number of institutions reviewed in Cycle four of reviews to (23).

Review teams assess the performance of VET providers in line with the approved 'Review Framework' based on five review Aspects. These are: Learners' achievement, Effectiveness of teaching/training and assessment, Quality of courses/programmes, Learners' support and guidance, and Effectiveness of leadership, management and governance. Each of these Aspects is evaluated against its criteria stipulated under the Aspect, to arrive at judgements about the overall effectiveness of the institution and its capacity to improve. Grades are awarded on a four-point scale as follows: 'Outstanding', 'Good', 'Satisfactory' and 'Inadequate'.

The first section of this Annual Report provides a comprehensive analysis of the outcomes of the (13) institutions reviewed in the academic year 2019-2020 together with the analysis of the cumulative outcomes of (90) VET institutions operating in the Kingdom of Bahrain – excluding those that have been licensed recently and those that have not undertaken any significant training activity as per the awarded grades in the previous cycle review. The second section highlights the outcomes of monitoring visits conducted in the 2019-2020 academic year for the institutions that were awarded 'Inadequate' judgement. It is worth mentioning that the review activities were suspended from early March to May 2020 as part of the Authority's Precautionary Plan to tackle and mitigate the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Directorate of Vocational Reviews (DVR) communicated with VET providers to evaluate the effectiveness of the online teaching and training practices provided by VETs as a responsive action to the special circumstances imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic. Data was analysed in addition to a number of virtual training sessions were observed, trainers and learners were surveyed as well as detailed evaluations for two providers were conducted. The BQA will raise the final report of these evaluations to the relevant stakeholders and decision-makers.

1. Overall effectiveness

The overall effectiveness is the final accumulative judgement on the vocational education and training institutions which considered by the review team. Reviewers will base their judgements on the outcomes of the five Aspects, in which Learners' achievement being the limiting judgement. This means that the judgement on overall effectiveness will be governed by Learners' achievement judgement and it does not exceed it, taking into account the analysis of the other Aspects and linking them to the overall effectiveness judgement to achieve consistency across all judgements.

In the 2019-2020 academic year, the DVR commenced the second and third phases of Cycle four reviews, reviewing (13) institutions. The overall effectiveness judgements of these institutions were positive, as indicated in Figure (19). (6) institutions represent (46%) received a 'Good' or better grade, broken down as (1) institution receiving an 'Outstanding' judgment and (5) institutions receiving 'Good', of which one of them was reviewed for the first time and the remaining four maintained their 'Good' judgment, as in Cycle three. These outcomes reflect the institutions' ability to develop a clear vision focussing on raising learners' achievement and improving their learning experience and

translating this vision into a strategic plan informed by comprehensive knowledge of the labour market and learners' needs. The remaining (7) institutions representing (54%) were graded 'Satisfactory', while three of these institutions being reviewed for the first time. It is worth mentioning that none of those institutions reviewed during this academic year received an 'Inadequate' judgment.
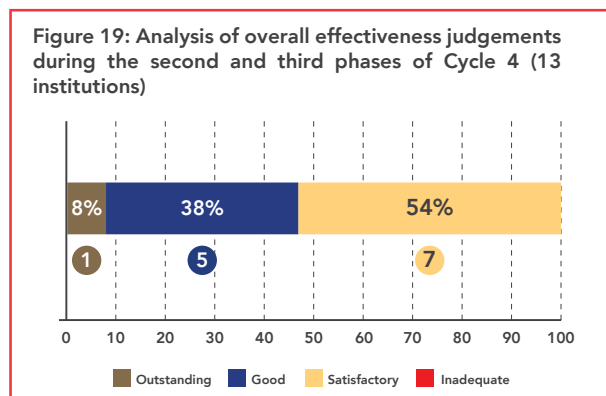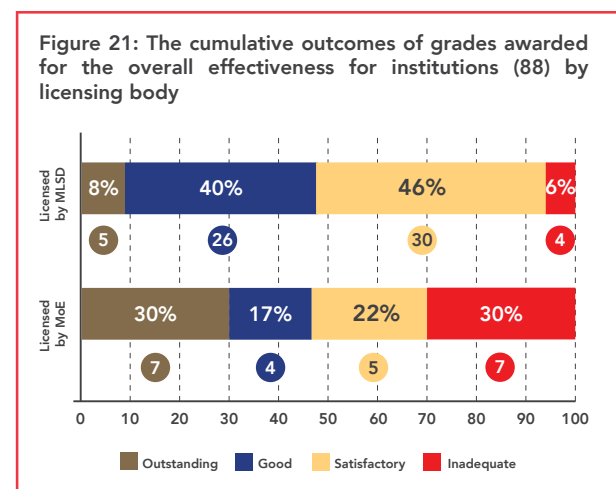
Figure 19: Analysis of overall effectiveness judgements during the second and third phases of Cycle 4 (13 institutions)

Figure (20) highlights the cumulative outcomes of (90) vocational education and training institutions for their overall effectiveness, based on their recent review results, which are promising as (43) institutions (47%) received a 'Good' or better grade, with (12) institutions representing (13%) being judged 'Outstanding' and (31) institutions (34%) being graded 'Good'. The higher proportion of institutions amounting to (36) representing (40%) received a 'Satisfactory' grade. However, the cumulative outcomes of (11) institutions (12%) being rated as 'Inadequate' were due to a lack of clear strategic direction and insufficient monitoring of learners, teaching and training staff's performance.

Figure 20: The cumulative outcomes of overall effectiveness for (90) institutions
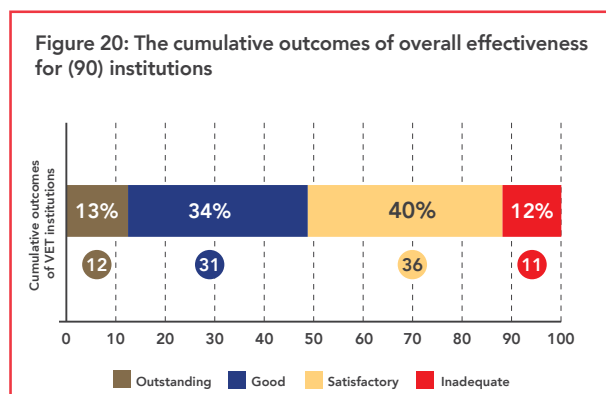
When reviewing the cumulative outcomes of vocational education and training institutions by licensing body, as shown in Figure (21),

(94%) of the training providers licensed by MLSD have received a 'Satisfactory' or better judgment, where (8%) of these being judged 'Outstanding' and (40%) 'Good'. In comparison, (70%) of those licensed by the MoE were graded 'Satisfactory' or better. What draws attention is the polarity of the results of the institutions licensed by the MoE, as the institutions graded 'Outstanding' and those graded 'Inadequate' for their overall effectiveness are equal at seven (30%) for each grade.

It is worth noting that the majority of institutions licensed by the MoE graded 'Inadequate' offer tutorial courses for learners in various stages of education. This should be noted by the relevant stakeholders, particularly as one of these institutions was judged 'Inadequate' in all the review visits over three consecutive cycles of reviews and has not made any progress in the monitoring visit.

Figure 21: The cumulative outcomes of grades awarded for the overall effectiveness for institutions (88) by licensing body

2. Capacity to improve

Reviewers reach judgment about institution's capacity to improve through reviewing its history and improvement of its processes and their impact on enhancing the performance of the institution and raising learners' achievement. Review teams assess the extent to which the institution's leadership and management provide good institutional governance and play a major role in strategic planning, following-up its implementation and ensuring that improvement initiatives are steered in the right direction. They also assess that the institution has the resources and capabilities needed to enhance its performance in a sustainable way and has

the ability to provide effective planning focusing on raising the institution's overall performance through institutionalising its processes and implementing effective initiatives based on clear understanding of the institution's strengths and areas for improvement.
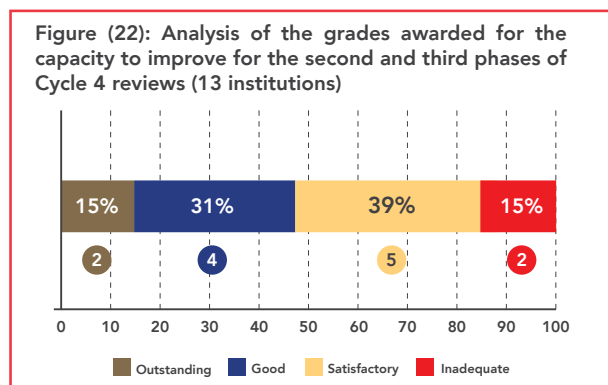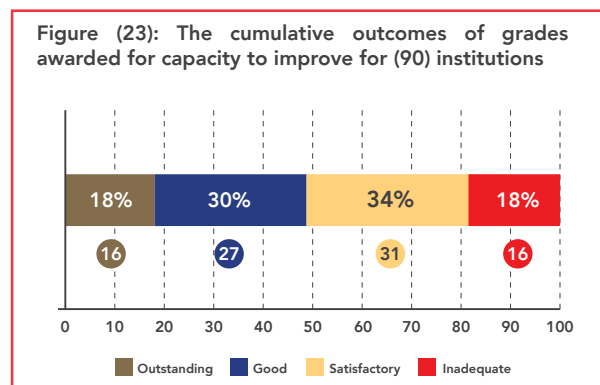
Figure (22): Analysis of the grades awarded for the capacity to improve for the second and third phases of Cycle 4 reviews (13 institutions)

15%	31%	39%	15%
2	4	5	2

0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100

■ Outstanding ■ Good ■ Satisfactory ■ Inadequate

Figure (22) illustrates that out of a total of the (13) institutions reviewed in the academic year 2019-2020, (46%) received a 'Good' or better judgement, of which two institutions (15%) received an 'Outstanding' grade, (4) institutions (31%) achieved 'Good' and (5) institutions (39%) were 'Satisfactory', while (2) institutions (15%) were rated 'Inadequate' of which one was subject to its first review.

The providers' results indicate that, despite two institutions having met the review requirements successfully and being judged 'Satisfactory' for their overall effectiveness, they were rated 'Inadequate' for their capacity to improve. This portends fluctuation in their abilities to draw up diligent institutional and future plans; which may negatively affect their future performance. In contrast, the results show that only one institution received a 'Good' grade for its overall effectiveness while it was judged 'Outstanding' for its capacity to improve; this indicates the merit of the leadership's steps in managing the institution, pushing it towards improvement and development, and its ability to achieve its strategic vision in the future, if it maintains the quality standard of its implementation of processes.

The cumulative outcomes of the latest review as illustrated in Figure (23), show that (82%) of the institutions received a 'Satisfactory' or better judgment for their capacity to improve, of which (16) institutions (18%) were rated 'Outstanding' and (27) institutions (30%) rated 'Good', while the higher proportion of institutions (31) representing (34%) received a 'Satisfactory' grade. However, the cumulative outcomes of (16) institutions (18%) being rated 'Inadequate' is a concern, especially as this judgment has been negatively affected by the providers' inability to meet the requirements of the review criteria relating to the leadership, management and governance Aspect.

Figure (23): The cumulative outcomes of grades awarded for capacity to improve for (90) institutions

18%	30%	34%	18%
16	27	31	16

0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100

■ Outstanding ■ Good ■ Satisfactory ■ Inadequate

3. Learners' Achievement

In assessing this Aspect, the review team focuses on the extent to which learners develop relevant vocational skills, knowledge and competences, and their ability to achieve the qualifications and intended learning outcomes they aim for. This Aspect also focuses on the progress made by learners throughout a programme and over levels in comparison to their prior attainment, and the extent to which they show commitment and ability to critically assess their learning experience and to work independently and/or collectively.

Analysis of the reviews' outcomes for this Aspect in the second and third phases of Cycle four of reviews, for the academic year 2019-2020, as shown in Figure (24), indicates that all institutions received 'Satisfactory' or better grades. (46%) of the institutions were graded 'Good' or better, amounting to (6) institutions out of the (13) that were subject to reviews. It is worth noting that the institution receiving an 'Outstanding' judgment in this Aspect improved by one point compared to its result in the previous cycle.

Developing highly relevant vocational knowledge and skills by learners, achieving the qualifications they aim for within due time, and learners' ability to undertake critical analysis and work independently and collectively are the most prominent strengths in the providers that received a 'Good' or better judgment. The less effective institutions must make greater efforts to improve learners' skills and the knowledge gained through their learning experience, ensuring that these reflect labour market needs and provide appropriate conditions that help learners raise their standards.

The results of the (7) institutions (54%) receiving "Satisfactory" grade indicate that they provide appropriate conditions that help learners raise their standards and enable them to obtain the required skills and knowledge.

It is worth noting that a number of the institutions undergoing reviews in this academic year offered programmes in coordination with the MLSD and Labour Fund (Tamkeen), enabling learners to acquire skills that are directly related to the labour market needs and facilitating their employment in various vocational fields.


Figure (24): Analysis of grades awarded for learners' achievement for the second and third phases of Cycle 4 (13 institutions)
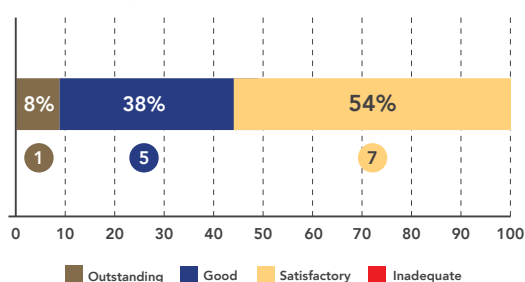
According to the cumulative outcomes of the last review conducted, as seen in Figure (25), (48%) of the institutions received a 'Good' or better judgment due to their ability to enable learners to acquire advanced levels of the intended learning outcomes and to achieve the qualifications they aim for within the specified and expected time, in addition to improve learners' abilities to undertake critical analysis and work independently and collectively. However, the cumulative

outcomes of (11) institutions (12%) being rated 'Inadequate' indicates that these institutions have weakness in applying practices that achieve the intended learning outcomes and qualifications that learners aim for, as well as in developing learners' knowledge, skills and competences relating to their learning experience.

Figure (25): The cumulative outcomes of grades awarded for learners' achievement aspect for (90) institutions
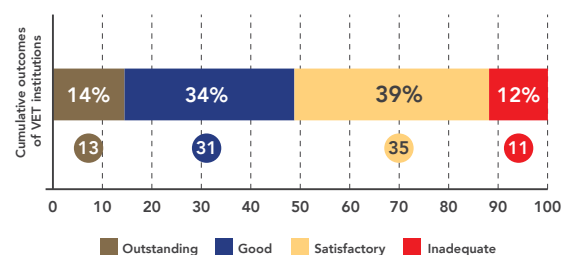
4. Effectiveness of teaching/training and assessment

The effectiveness of teaching/training strategies and the extent to which teachers and trainers employ their theoretical and practical experience of the subjects they teach to achieve the intended learning outcomes, plan and manage sessions in a manner that meets learners' individual needs, use rigorous assessment methods, provide learners with feedbacks, stimulate self-learning and higher order and critical thinking amongst learners, and promote life-long learning are the cornerstones for coming to a judgement on the effectiveness of the learning process.

Figure (26) summarises the grades awarded to the (13) institutions reviewed, relating to the effectiveness of the teaching/training and assessment Aspect during the second and third phases of Cycle four in the 2019-2020 academic year. (4) institutions (31%) received a 'Good' grade, with (9) being rated 'Satisfactory' representing the higher proportion of institutions as (69%). The most effective institutions use effective training strategies that engage most learners in lessons in a systematic manner, employ a range of relevant formative and summative assessment methods to assess learners'

understanding and measure the achievement of the intended learning outcomes, and use the assessment results to review and improve lesson planning in order to meet learners' individual needs to a greater extent.

Figure (26): Analysis of grades awarded for effectiveness of teaching/training and assessment for the second and third phases of Cycle 4 (13 institutions)
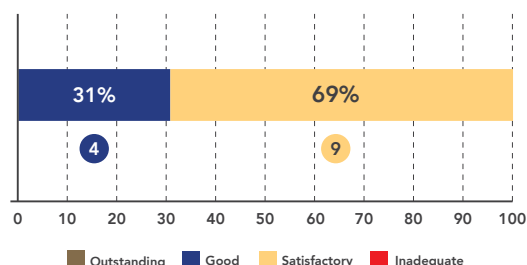
According to the cumulative outcomes of the last review conducted, as illustrated in Figure (27), (49%) of the institutions received a 'Good' or better judgment and (11) institutions (12%) were rated 'Inadequate'. This is a matter that needs to be addressed, especially as such judgment reflects the providers' inability to meet the requirements of the review criteria relating to this Aspect.

The most important characteristics of the institutions being judged 'Good' or better for this Aspect are the trainers' abilities to use various teaching and learning strategies that meet learners' needs and promote their abilities and skills, and use of assessment tools that are aligned to the programme's intended learning outcomes with their rigour is being assured through official moderation mechanisms that are applied systematically and consistently. Also, trainers utilise the assessments outcomes to adjust lesson plans to accommodate learners' needs.

The (11) less effective institutions receiving an 'Inadequate' grade still face challenges that need to be addressed. These include assessment tools not being rigorous, while the outcomes of formative and summative assessments are not utilised in lesson planning to meet learners' various needs and the trainers remain the centre of the learning process in a number of training sessions. In addition, few providers still do not maintain accurate records that reflect learners' actual levels of performance during the training programmes.

Figure (27): The cumulative outcomes of grades awarded for effectiveness of teaching/training and assessment for (90) institutions
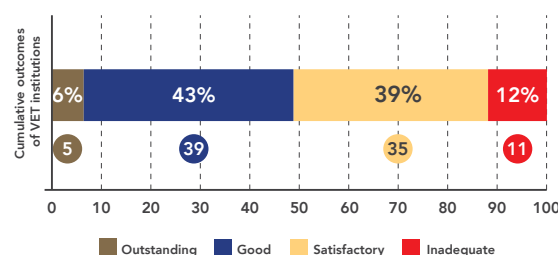
5. Quality of Courses/Programmes

This Aspect focuses on the institution's possession of a comprehensive formal mechanism to understand and identify learners' needs and relevant stakeholders' requirements through conducting a careful analysis of labour market needs and requirements in terms of type, level of courses and skills required. This Aspect also focuses on the institution's ability to effectively plan and structure these programmes through formal mechanisms to design, approve and periodically update them, in addition to the implementation of a suitable admission policy and providing learning resources that contribute to the effective delivery of courses.

Figure (28) illustrates a remarkable performance of the institutions reviewed during the second and third phases of Cycle four in this Aspect, with (46%) of institutions being judged 'Good' or better. (4) institutions were judged 'Outstanding', (2) institutions rated 'Good' and (7) institutions judged 'Satisfactory', while no institution received an 'Inadequate' grade. This indicates that these institutions offer training courses that are based on a clear and sufficient understanding of the Bahraini labour market requirements and learners' needs in relation to the type and level of training course/programmes on offer.

Figure (28): Analysis of grades awarded for quality of courses/programmes for the second and third phases of Cycle 4 (13 institutions)

31%	15%	54%
4	2	7

Outstanding ■ Good ■ Satisfactory ■ Inadequate ■
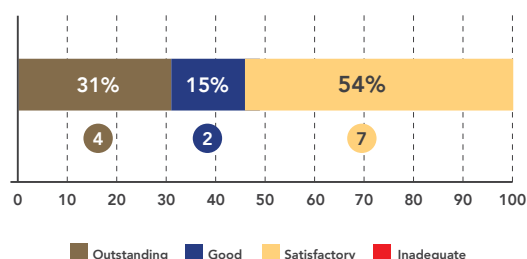
It is noted from the accumulated VET providers' review results for this Aspect, according to the judgements received in their last review, that these institutions performed better in this Aspect than in learners' achievement and the effectiveness of teaching/training and assessment. This is shown in Figure (29), (44) institutions (60%) out of total institutions reviewed during this academic year, were judged 'Good' or better. The most prominent strengths of these institutions lie in their comprehensive understanding of the local labour market needs and maintaining continuous communication with stakeholders when planning, designing and structuring programmes, in addition to implementing good practices in relation to the programmes' content.

Notwithstanding the above, entry policies vary among (8) institutions (9%) in term of clearly stating the admission requirements and their appropriateness for the programme, and the way these requirements are implemented and periodically reviewed. The ability of some of these institutions to formulate the intended learning outcomes and map them with the assessment tools are still in the early stages of development.

Figure (29): The cumulative outcomes of grades awarded for quality of courses/programmes for (90) institutions

Cumulative outcomes of VET institutions

23%	37%	31%	9%
21	33	28	8

Outstanding ■ Good ■ Satisfactory ■ Inadequate ■
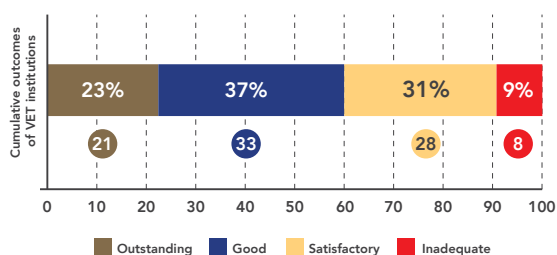
6. Learners' support and Guidance

In arriving at a judgment for this Aspect, review teams assess the formal mechanisms of the institution in relation to learners' support and guidance , and the extent to which these mechanisms are consistently implemented and effective in offering the required support and guidance to learners and provide them with opportunities to enhance their personal abilities, in addition to the availability of effective mechanisms to communicate with stakeholders. The review team also investigates the availability of a formal mechanism to identify and support learners with special needs.

Figure (30) shows that (3) institutions (23%) reviewed in the 2019-2020 academic year were judged 'Outstanding' and (3) institutions (23%) received a 'Good' grade. This reflects the institutions commitment to provide distinct support and guidance consistent with learners' needs and provide effective guidance to learners to enable them to enhance their personal abilities and contribute to grasping employment opportunities. These institutions are also keen to develop formal policies and mechanisms to identify learners at risk of educational and training failure but at varying levels, through adopting formal policies and procedures that contribute positively to raising learners' performance. Moreover, most of these institutions provide learners with induction programmes when they first join, to get them adequately acquainted with the requirements of these courses. All of these practices have had a positive impact on improving the learner's learning and training experience.

Various review teams have noted the increasing number of institutions adopting appropriate formal mechanisms to identify and support learners with special educational and training needs and/or disabilities. This helps a greater number of learners to join various training courses and programmes, although there are some institutions that still do not have clear policies to identify and support this category of learners.

Figure (30): Analysis of grades awarded for learners' support and guidance for the second and third phases of Cycle 4 (13 institutions)

	23%	23%	54%	
	3	3	7	

Outstanding　Good　Satisfactory　Inadequate
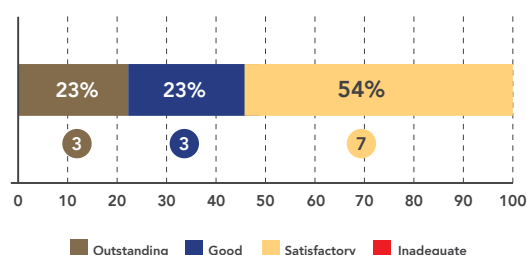
Overall, the cumulative results of VET institutions for this Aspect, according to the judgements received in their last review, indicate that (52%) of the institutions were judged 'Good' or better, while the performance of (9%) was not up to the expected standard, as illustrated in Figure (31). Reasons for this are that these institutions have adopted formal policies and procedures that contribute effectively to raising learners' performance; however, review teams observed variance in the formal policies and mechanisms used to identify learners at risk of educational and training failure. In addition, some providers still do not have clear policies to identify and support learners with special needs and/or disabilities.

Figure (31): The cumulative outcomes of grades awarded for learners' support and guidance for (90) institutions

Cumulative outcomes of VET institutions

22%	30%	39%	9%
20	27	35	8

Outstanding　Good　Satisfactory　Inadequate
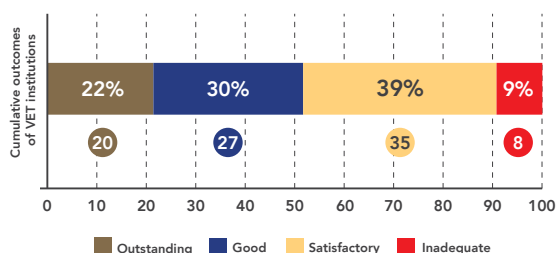
7. Effectiveness of Leadership, Management and Governance

This Aspect is judged on an evaluation of the effectiveness of the leadership, management and governance in adopting strategic plans based on comprehensive, accurate and rigorous self-evaluations and informed by the outcomes of analysis of leaners' achievement. Reviewers also evaluate the appropriateness of the organisational structure and whether there are clear policies and procedures, particularly in relation to quality assurance arrangements, assessment of staff performance and their training needs, in addition to the availability of an appropriate environment that ensures the health and safety of staff and learners.

Figure (32) shows that (6) institutions (46%) received a 'Good' or better grade in the second and third phases of Cycle four, while (5) institutions (38%) were judged 'Satisfactory', and (2) institutions (15%) judged as 'Inadequate'. This indicates that the majority of providers reviewed were able to fulfil the minimum requirements of criteria for this Aspect.

Figure (32): Analysis of grades awarded for the effectiveness of leadership, management and governance for the second and third phases of Cycle 4 (13 institutions)
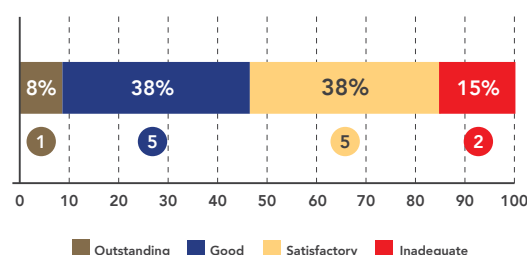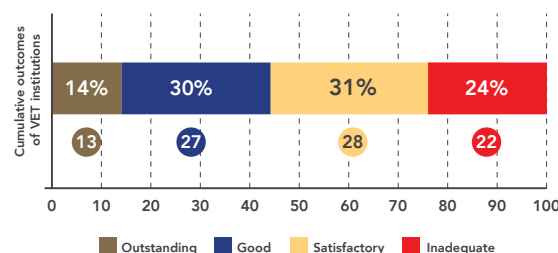
8%	38%	38%	15%
1	5	5	2

Outstanding　Good　Satisfactory　Inadequate

Figure (33): The cumulative outcomes of grades awarded the effectiveness of leadership, management and governance for (90) institutions

Cumulative outcomes of VET institutions

14%	30%	31%	24%
13	27	28	22

Outstanding　Good　Satisfactory　Inadequate

The cumulative results of the last reviews of VET institutions, as shown in Figure (33), indicate the importance of the leadership, management and governance Aspect for the performance of institutions, with (40) institutions (44%) received a 'Good' or better judgment and (28) institutions (31%) being rated 'Satisfactory'. However, the performance of (22) institutions was not up to the expected standard, with (24%) of

the institutions being graded 'Inadequate'; this is a worrying percentage and needs to be considered for further examination to determine the reasons.

The awareness of the role of leadership and management is evident in the better performing institutions. These institutions develop their strategic plans based on regular self-evaluation processes that ensure the sustainability of the institution's overall performance, focusing on raising learners' achievement and improving the quality of overall performance. Furthermore, these institutions closely monitor the performance of both trainers and learners and use their results in drawing up clear improvement action plans with specific indicators that are implemented in a manner that contributes to improve and develop the institutions' overall performance constantly and leads to increase the institutions' ability to fulfil the requirements of review criteria in various activities.

Conversely, the role of leadership and management is still unproductive in some institutions, particularly those receiving an 'Inadequate' grade in this Aspect. This reflects the poor role played by senior leaders and managers in determining the institutions' strategic direction, where these roles are still limited to facilitating the training functions by providing the trainers and infrastructure required to deliver programmes demanded by learners. In addition, they do not institutionalise the mechanisms that enable the institution's leadership to comprehensively monitor the performance of the institution and identify the necessary and critical areas for its sustainability.

Monitoring Visits for the 2019-2020 Academic Year

The Education and Training Quality Authority (BQA), through the Directorate of Vocational Reviews (DVR), conducts up to two monitoring visits to the institutions that are judged 'Inadequate' for their overall effectiveness; to assess the progress made by these institutions in addressing the recommendations of the review reports. In this, an institution's progress is judged using a three-point scale: 'Sufficient progress', 'In progress' and 'Insufficient progress', according to the applied DVR review framework.

In the academic year 2019-2020 one monitoring visit was conducted for an institution licensed by the MoE, which was judged 'In progress' in addressing the recommendations of the last review report. Following this first monitoring visit, the institution will be subject to a second monitoring visit to ensure that all the recommendations of the review report are fully addressed, in order to achieve improvement in the effectiveness of teaching/training and assessment and the overall effectiveness of the institution.

The Directorate of Higher Education Reviews (DHR) completed four institutional reviews in the academic year 2019-2020, in addition to the seven review processes that were carried out in the academic year 2018-2019. These were based on the Cycle 2 Institutional Review Framework, which was approved through the Council of Ministers' Resolution No. 38 of 2015. This brings the total number of institutional reviews conducted by the DHR to eleven, thereby ensuring that all higher education institutions (HEIs) operating in the Kingdom of Bahrain and graduating regular batches of graduates have been subject to institutional reviews. Newly licensed HEIs whose students have not yet graduated were not included in this cycle.

In order to review the academic programmes offered by HEIs in the Kingdom of Bahrain following the ratification of the Cycle 2 Academic Programme Reviews Framework by the Council of Ministers Resolution No. 17 of 2019, the DHR carried out a number of workshops for the HEIs' staff members at the BQA headquarters in Seef District, to train them on drafting self-evaluation reports and on the review processes. The Directorate also continued the follow-up visit reviews of all academic programmes that had been subject to a programme review in phase 2 of Cycle 1 of the academic programme reviews. The plan was for these follow-up visits to be completed by April 2020; however, all follow-up visits and academic programme reviews that had been planned to be carried out from March onwards were postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, the DHR instead utilised this period to evaluate the remote teaching and learning processes that are being implemented by the HEIs, due to the pandemic, in the delivery of their programmes.

This part of the Annual Report presents the cumulative findings of all the institutional reviews conducted in Cycle 2, as well as the cumulative findings of the follow-up visits of academic programmes (Phase 2 of Cycle 1).

1. Analysis of the Cumulative Findings of Institutional Reviews (Cycle 2)

The BQA's institutional review reports include judgments on the institutions' capacity to implement quality assurance arrangements in key areas, with recommendations on how to enhance these arrangements through their core functions of teaching and learning, research, and community engagement. The reports also cover the HEIs' role in the development and implementation of their mission, governance and management. The effectiveness of each institution's quality assurance arrangements is assessed, based on the framework for Cycle 2 of Institutional Reviews consisting of eight Standards comprising 25 Indicators. Each indicator comprises a set of requirements and expectations, and three of the eight are Limiting Standards. This means that if these three standards are not adequately addressed, the overall judgment will be 'Does not meet quality assurance requirements'. In order to receive a judgement of 'Meets quality assurance requirements', the HEI should, if applicable, address as a minimum all indicators of the three limiting standards. These are Standard 1: 'Mission, Governance and Management', Standard 4: 'Quality of Teaching and Learning', and Standard 6: 'Human Resources Management'.

By analysing the cumulative findings of 11 institutional reviews conducted in the period between October 2018 to January 2020, nine HEIs, of which two were government institutions, addressed all the standards and indicators of quality assurance requirements and all institutions received a judgement of 'Meets quality assurance requirements'. The percentage of these institutions out of the total number of HEIs that had undergone reviews is 82%. Conversely, two institutions

did not address some of the quality assurance indicators and received judgments of 'Partially addressed' or 'Not addressed' in some standards, and consequently received an overall judgment of 'Does not meet quality assurance requirements'; these represented 18% of the total number, as indicated in Figure 34.
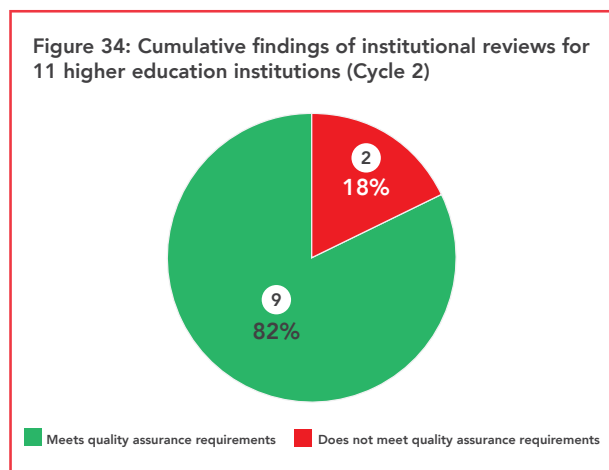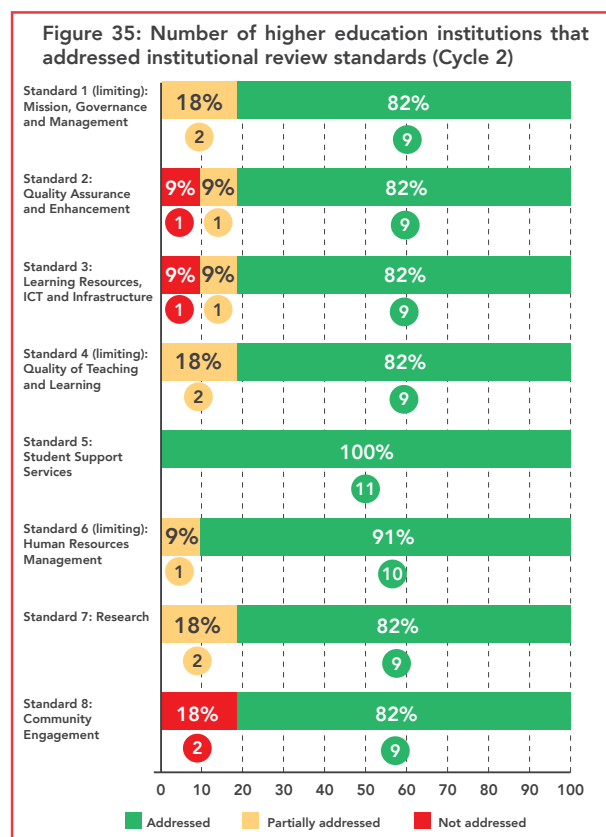

Figure 34: Cumulative findings of institutional reviews for 11 higher education institutions (Cycle 2)

Figure 35 shows the poor performance of two private HEIs that partially addressed the requirements of Standard 1, 'Mission, Governance and Management' and Standard 4, 'Quality of Teaching and Learning', which are limiting standards. They did not meet the requirements and expectations of a set of significant indicators within these two standards, such as Indicator 2, 'Governance and Management' and Indicator 13, 'Management of Teaching and Learning Programmes'. Standard 6, 'Human Resources Management', was only partially addressed by one HEI as it did not meet the requirements of the Indicator relating to the 'employment of human resources that are sufficient in number and appropriately qualified to achieve the mission and to provide good quality higher education.'

Regarding the remaining standards, Figure 35 also illustrates that one HEI failed to address Standard 2, 'Quality Assurance and Enhancement', and Standard 3, 'Learning Resources, ICT and Infrastructure', while two did not address the requirements of Standard 8, 'Community Engagement', and two only partially addressed the requirements of Standard 7, 'Research'. Standards 2 and 3 were also only 'Partially addressed' by one

institution, while one received a judgment of 'Not addressed'. All institutions addressed the requirements of Standard 5, 'Student Support Services', as seen in Figure 35. Below is a summary of the findings of the eight Standards and the significant good practices (Appreciations) and Recommendations identified during Cycle 2 of Institutional Reviews.

Figure 35: Number of higher education institutions that addressed institutional review standards (Cycle 2)

- Standard 1 - Mission, Governance and Managemen

This Standard ensures that the institution has an appropriate mission statement that is translated into strategic and operational plans and has well-established, effective governance and management systems that enable the institution to carry out its different responsibilities to achieve the mission. This Standard is comprised of six indicators. These are, Mission; Governance and Management; Strategic Plan; Organisational Structure; Academic Standards, Governance and Management; Partnerships, Memoranda and Cross Border Education. Figure 36 shows that all HEIs addressed most of the requirements and expectations of Indicator

1, 'Mission', Indicator 5, 'Academic Standards, Governance and Management', and Indicator 6, 'Partnerships, Memoranda and Cross Border Education' where applicable. Two institutions did not address Indicator 2, 'Governance and Management', and one did not address Indicator 3, 'Strategic Plan', and Indicator 4, 'Organisational Structure'. The institutional review reports indicate that out of the 11 institutions, eight received a total of 12 Appreciations and ten were given 58 Recommendations for this Standard.

The findings of institutional reviews show that some institutions made noticeable progress in various Indicators, such as Mission, Strategic Plan, and Academic Standards Management. The Appreciations show the great attention paid by the senior management of these institutions in establishing the university's mission in a manner that reflects a consistent philosophy integrating the different views of all stakeholders, as well as developing effective systems and technologies for monitoring and revising the implementation of the strategic plan, alongside efforts to enhance and achieve academic standards. This shows these institutions' leadership aspirations for continuous development and improvement.

Figure 36: Number of higher education institutions that addressed the Indicators of Standard 1

Despite the fact that all institutions meet the requirements of Indicator 1 'Mission', there are some that still need to revise, establish and develop their mission formulation to clearly indicate the level of quality that they as institutions seek to achieve in their key functions of teaching and learning, research, and community engagement. There is also a need to ensure that a periodic review of the mission's content is carried out in an orderly manner, within a specified timeframe, and through documented procedures involving extensive consultations among all relevant parties, while increasing awareness of the relevant internal and external bodies of the institution's mission.

In some institutions, particularly those that did not meet the requirements of Indicator 2, 'Governance and Management', it was noted that they do not have a clear separation between the duties and responsibilities of the university's Board of Trustees and senior management. Accordingly, they received Recommendations emphasizing their need to develop and implement a set of procedures that ensure effective governance and management of the institution, such as procedures for appointing members of the Board of Trustees and preparing them for their role, as well as adopting appropriate mechanisms to periodically review the effectiveness of the governance and management system.

With respect to strategic planning, some HEIs stood out, with one private institution receiving a recommendation for providing its staff with information necessary to implement and monitor the operational plans, and to keep track of the progress made in key performance indicators on a continuous and regular basis. Despite the finding that most institutions have made progress in developing this aspect of their work and have drawn up strategic and operational plans, some institutions have been somewhat deficient. The review findings show that several institutions do not have measurable performance indicators (KPIs) across the institution to enable them to monitor and achieve their pre-defined goals more smoothly, and that the strategic
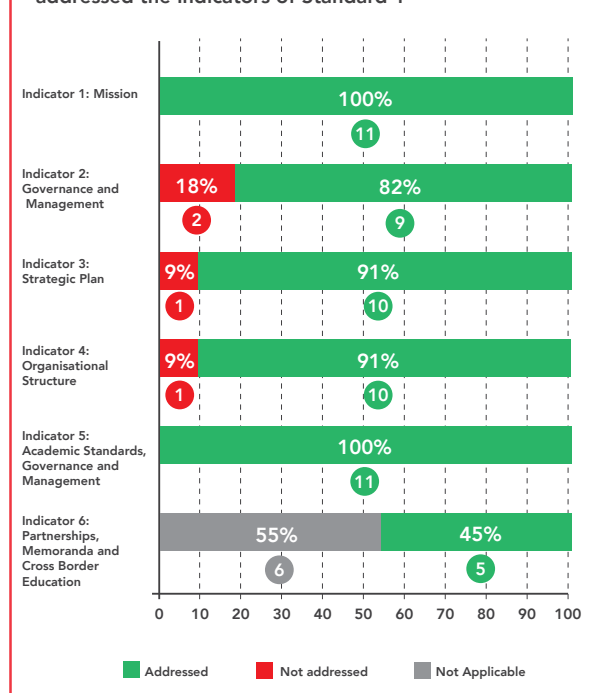
plan review process in some institutions does not involve extensive consultations with the parties concerned. In addition, the operational plans of some administrative and academic units were not subject to regular review and follow-up.

While a limited number of HEIs have been given Appreciations for establishing Quality Assurance Committee systems, which work effectively in guiding planning and operational processes, most of the remaining institutions under review needed to evaluate the effectiveness of their organisational structure in relation to the decision-making processes and to ensure that students are formally and sufficiently represented on different councils and committees. The institutional review reports also indicate that some institutions have key vacancies, requiring them to expedite the recruitment of suitable staff to fill these vacancies.

The institutional review findings show that all HEIs addressed the requirements of Indicator 5, 'Academic Standards Management', with one private institution receiving an Appreciation for its efforts to instil the highest academic standards within the institution's culture. Overall, a need to enhance the role of the University's Board of Trustees in overseeing and maintaining academic standards is noted, as some institutions still lack sufficient and well-designed policies and procedures to address all academic and behavioural violations of students and faculty members.

For those institutions offering academic programmes in partnership with external universities, the institutional review findings indicate that they need to develop policies and procedures for introducing any changes or improvements to such programmes. They also need to support professional development programmes for their faculty members and to draw on the expertise of their counterparts in external institutions, particularly in areas such as assessment and supervision of postgraduate research studies.

- Standard 2 - Quality Assurance and Enhancement

This Standard requires that the institution defines a robust quality assurance system to implement all the quality assurance arrangements across the institution in an accurate and transparent manner, covering all aspects of its academic and administrative operations. This Standard is comprised of three indicators: Quality Assurance, Benchmarking and Surveys, and Security of Learner Records and Certification. Figure 37 shows that ten institutions addressed the requirements of these indicators, and the institutional review reports indicate that out of the 11 institutions, eight received a total of 19 Appreciations: whereas, collectively, all institutions were given 40 Recommendations for this Standard.

The Appreciations received by most institutions indicate the tireless efforts made by these institutions to disseminate quality culture among their staff and students and to integrate it within their core functions and operations, as well as their keenness to implement quality assurance arrangements and policies. Furthermore, the institutional findings highlight the great attention that the university leaders at all levels pay to adopt, monitor and implement a clear and effective quality assurance system in relation to teaching and learning. They also employ effective mechanisms for disseminating information and developments regarding quality enhancement to ensure that all faculty members are aware of the requirements. A significant improvement was also observed in some institutions in the way they manage and conduct surveys to ensure continuous improvements in various aspects of their activities.

Despite all HEIs having defined a clear and effective quality assurance system, a major issue was identified in relation to the internal quality assurance processes in some of the institutions, as these were found to be incomprehensive and rather limited to academic functions and support services only. Therefore, the review reports recommend expanding the scope of quality

assurance policies and processes to cover other aspects of the institution's core functions, such as research and community engagement, while taking the necessary measures to ensure that quality assurance arrangements are coordinated and carried out by the quality assurance centres and offices within those institutions. This is to avoid any potential overlap in roles between those centres, offices and other units across the institutions.

Figure 37: Number of higher education institutions that addressed the Indicators of Standard 2
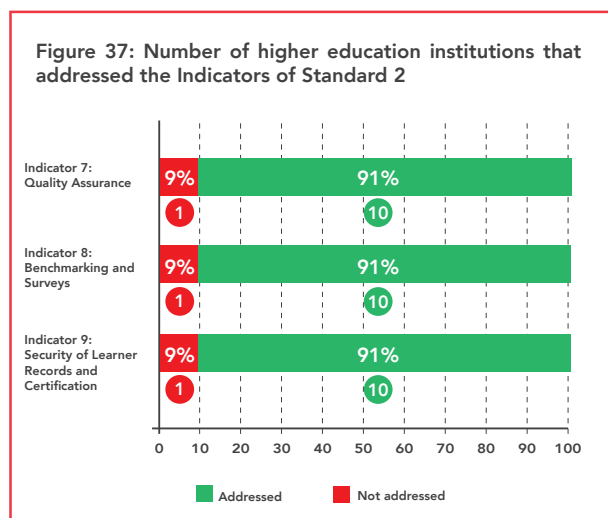
The institutional review findings indicate that many HEIs need to develop and implement formal mechanisms to assess the effectiveness of their quality assurance systems,' in order to systematically identify and adopt the required improvements. Furthermore, they need to periodically review the institution's policies, procedures, and regulations, ensuring their appropriateness and relevancy and that all concerned parties have access to them.

The reviews' outcomes also reveal that the majority of institutions received very similar Recommendations, in relation to the need to review and expand the scope of their benchmarking policy so that it includes, in addition to educational activities, other aspects of institutional operations, such as administrative affairs, research activity and community engagement. The need to review policies for the measurement of opinion surveys has also emerged, to ensure that they are fit for purpose and cover their application scope comprehensively, thus ensuring their effectiveness in monitoring

services offered across the institution and consequently actions taken to improve quality in all areas.

With regard to the 'Security of Learner Records and Certification' Indicator, the findings of institutional reviews show a variance among institutions in terms of the rigour of measures used to maintain the security of learners' records. While the majority of institutions were given Appreciations for this indicator, some received Recommendations to establish a rigorous mechanism that ensures the security and integrity of the certification process and to take the necessary measures for maintaining and ensuring the security of learners' records and examination papers.

- Standard 3 – Learning Resources, ICT and Infrastructure

This Standard requires that the institution has appropriate and sufficient learning resources, ICT and physical infrastructure to function effectively. It is comprised of three indicators, which are Learning Resources, ICT and Infrastructure. Figure 38 shows that ten institutions addressed the requirements of the three indicators, and the institutional review reports indicate that, out of the 11 institutions, eight received a total of 13 Appreciations and nine were given 33 Recommendations for this Standard.

Figure 38: Number of higher education institutions that addressed the Indicators of Standard 3
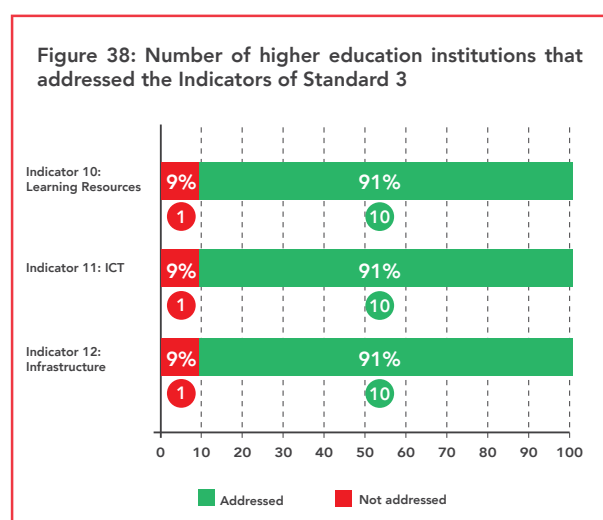
Most of the Appreciations centred primarily on the area of ICT and related services offered by the universities to their users, and in the second instance on infrastructure

and equipment. This suggests that these aspects constitute areas of strength for the majority of institutions reviewed. Most of the Appreciations centred on the provision and effectiveness of IT systems and services that are in operation, to support the management of core functions, operations and decision-making procedures, as well as on the provision of good infrastructure.

As for the Recommendations, most of them (16 out of the total number of Recommendations) focused on the 'Learning Resources' Indicator, while the remaining Recommendations were spread across the other two Indicators as follows: nine Recommendations on ICT and eight on Infrastructure. These Recommendations represent areas for improvement, with some of them being more substantial than others; i.e., they focus on more serious issues, require more attention, and play a key role in addressing this Indicator.

With regard to the 'Learning Resources' Indicator, most institutions encounter many challenges relating to policies and mechanisms for ensuring that the library and learning resources are aligned with the learning requirements of their academic programmes, and that these resources are updated in light of the rapid changes in academic disciplines. The Recommendations, therefore, clearly focus on these aspects, and the need to benchmark all the institutions' learning resources with similar institutions and to expand their benchmarking scope. The Recommendations also indicate that the institutions should pay more attention to implementing on a regular basis effective assessment processes and mechanisms of library provision, in order to enhance their library's collection and services.

The Recommendations for the ICT Indicator stress the importance of employing regular and systematic mechanisms for collecting and analysing feedback from all users, in order to introduce the intended improvements, in addition to stressing the importance of having these actions documented in annual reviews and periodic reports so that they can be submitted to the respective directorates.

Additionally, some institutions need to periodically review and update policies and procedures for ICT resources and services; this helps in drawing up operational plans for their gradual replacement cycles to ensure their effectiveness, security and safety

Finally, with regard to 'Infrastructure', the operational plan to develop and improve the facilities of most institutions is one of the areas for improvement that needs special attention, in order to ensure the appropriateness of these facilities and related equipment and services, and to guarantee that they are efficiently functioning and are commensurate with their intended purpose and correspond well with the expected level of growth of the student population in the future.

- Standard 4 – The Quality of Teaching and Learning

This Standard ensures that the institution has a comprehensive academic planning system, with a clear management structure and processes in place to underpin the quality of the teaching and learning programmes and their delivery. It is comprised of seven indicators, which are Management of Teaching and Learning Programmes; Admissions; Programme Development and Review; Student Assessment and Internal and External Moderation of Assessment Tools and Results; Formulating Learning Outcomes appropriate for the programmes and the proposed academic courses and measuring their achievement; Recognition of Prior Learning; and Short Courses.

Figure 39 shows that all institutions addressed most of the requirements of these indicators, except for 'Management of Teaching and Learning Programmes' Indicator which was not addressed by two institutions, and 'Programme Development and Review' Indicator which was not addressed by only one institution. Figure 39 also highlights that only one private HEI offers short courses and addresses all the requirements of this indicator. The institutional review reports indicate that, out of the 11 institutions, ten received a total of 27 Appreciations and nine were given 66 Recommendations for this Standard.

Most of the Appreciations (11 out of a total number of Appreciations) centred primarily on the 'Student Assessment and Internal and External Moderation of Assessment Tools and Results' Indicator, and on the 'Management of Teaching and Learning Programmes' Indicator (8 out of the total number of Appreciations). Most of the Appreciations centred on the provision of systematic and consistent systems and procedures for assessing the quality of the teaching and learning process, with clear and publicised assessment policies and procedures in place, which contribute to instilling the quality culture across the institutions' core functions and operations. Also, in some institutions, having effective mechanisms for the development and approval of new academic programmes was found to be another area of strength.

Figure 39: Number of higher education institutions that addressed the Indicators of Standard 4
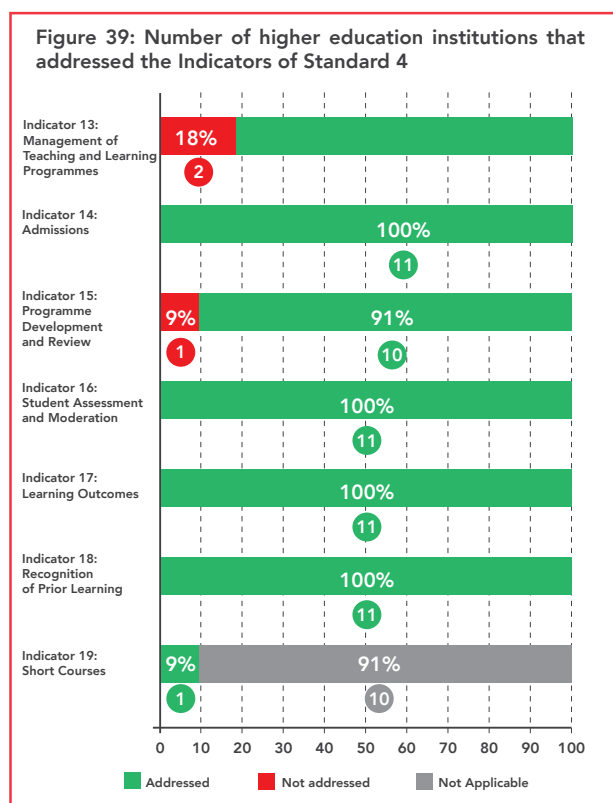
Following the pattern of Appreciations, most of the Recommendations (46) focused on the same two Indicators, namely the 'Student Assessment and Internal and External Moderation of Assessment Tools and Results' Indicator, and the 'Management of Teaching and Learning Programmes' Indicator, and also on the 'Formulating Learning Outcomes appropriate for the programmes and the proposed academic courses and measuring their achievement' Indicator. One main recurrent aspect of these Recommendations revolves around the issue of ensuring that the academic plans of HEIs are developed or reviewed in a manner that reflects the philosophy of education and learning at the institutional level and guide their strategic directions and related operational objectives to facilitate planning and follow-up processes, and that they clearly identify responsibilities relating to teaching and learning aspects. Another recurrent aspect in the Recommendations revolves around ensuring that systematic mechanisms are in place to review work-based learning policies; improving their procedures; employing effective mechanisms to collect feedback from relevant parties; and ensuring that the results are used to introduce the necessary improvements to all work-based learning process arrangements. There are also recommendations that relate to the external moderation of assessments, in particular, and courses in general, where the Recommendations indicate the need to ensure the consistent and widescale application of post-moderation policies and procedures of assessments by external moderators, incorporating all the programmes and curricula offered by HEIs and their assessments, to ensure that they are rigorous and fair.

Finally, the Recommendations focused on the institutions' need to implement rigorous mechanisms to measure the level of achievement of the learning outcomes set for their academic programmes, verifying their alignment and relevance to professional requirements and local labour market needs, by making more effort to apply and use benchmarking with local and regional universities, so as to compare how the learning outcomes of their programmes are consistent with other similar programmes. In addition, there is a need to ensure that HEIs collect data on students' progress and graduates' destinations upon completion of their studies and to conduct an accurate and comprehensive analysis of this data, in order to utilise it in a systematic manner to achieve the desired academic standards and meet labour market needs.

- **Standard 5 – Student Support Services**

This Standard requires that the institution has efficient and effective student administration and academic support services. It is comprised of one indicator, which focuses on the institution's provision of efficient and effective student administration and academic support services and its encouragement of the personal development of students. Figure 40 shows that all institutions addressed the requirements of this Indicator, and the institutional review reports indicate that, out of the 11 institutions, five received a total of 13 Appreciations and seven were given 11 Recommendations for this Standard.

Most of the Appreciations focus on the efforts made by the institutions to provide students with a set of programmes that support their practical training, as well as the 'Career Day' that opens the doors for them to obtain employment and facilitate their recruitment process. The efforts of institutions to provide students with a wide range of extracurricular activities alongside their academic studies and encourage them to participate in these activities have also received Appreciations. Most of the institutions that were subject to reviews provide a wide range of opportunities for students to become involved in social, recreational, sports, cultural and scientific projects and activities that contribute to developing their capabilities and gaining multi-skills. These are in addition to the efforts made to provide students with academic support. Most Recommendations illustrate the need for regularly developing policies to identify students who are at risk of academic failure and examine the effectiveness of the procedures in place, so as to identify methods by which their academic progress can be improved, especially in institutions with a high proportion of low achievers. Some Recommendations also highlight the importance of increasing support services for students with special needs and of improving the provision of student health and administration support services.

Figure 40: Number of higher education institutions that addressed the Indicators of Standards 5 and 6
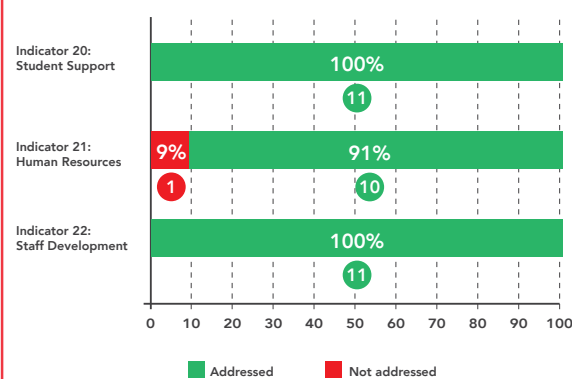
- **Standard 6 – Human Resources Management**

This Standard requires each institution to have appropriate human resource policies and procedures in place, including those for staff development, which demonstrably support and enhance the various operational activities of the institution. The Standard is comprised of two indicators, with the first one relating to the institution employing human resources that are sufficient in number and appropriately qualified to provide good quality higher education, and the second pertaining to professional development provision, which enables staff members to raise their competency levels and encourages them to remain up-to-date in areas of teaching, research and administration.

Figure 40 shows that all institutions addressed the requirements of both Indicators, except for one HEI that failed to address the requirements of the 'Human Resources' Indicator. The institutional review reports indicate that out of the 11 institutions, nine received a total of 13 Appreciations and ten were given 24 Recommendations for this Standard.

Most of the Appreciations focus on the institutions' provision of good career development opportunities for all faculty members to remain up-to-date in their areas of teaching, research and administration. Efforts were also made by some HEIs to encourage their faculty members to develop their professional skills, through fellowship-awarding institutions, and to provide

appropriate induction to all newly-appointed staff.

The majority of Recommendations indicate the need to expand the scope of benchmarking activities conducted by the HEIs with local, regional and international institutions, covering different aspects of human resources and staff development. HEIs should ensure that the policy for appointing faculty members is applied, and that they are sufficient in number and appropriately qualified. The institutional review reports also demonstrate that some institutions need to establish a clear appeals' policy for administrative and academic staff and document complaints' cases, including those that were amicably resolved, to prevent their recurrence in the future. Many institutions critically need to focus on staff retention rates and take actions to improve them.

- Standard 7 - Research

This Standard requires the institution to have a strategic research plan that is appropriate for its mission and which is translated into a well-resourced operational plan that is implemented and monitored. This Standard is comprised of two indicators: Research and Higher Degrees with Research (if applicable). Figure 41 shows that all institutions except for two addressed the requirements of both Indicators. Based on the 11 published institutional review reports in Cycle 2, three of the 11 reviewed institutions received three Appreciations while eight were given 23 Recommendations for this Standard.

With regard to the three Appreciations given, they all centred on Indicator 23 (Research). No institution received an Appreciation for Indicator 24 (Higher Degrees with Research). Some institutions offer no higher degrees and so this Indicator does not apply to them. Appreciations also highlighted the keenness of these institutions to implement scientific research strategies and to link them to their mission and vision statements, in addition to encouraging faculty members to conduct scientific research and publish their research findings internationally.

Figure 41: Number of higher education institutions that addressed Indicators of Standards 7 & 8
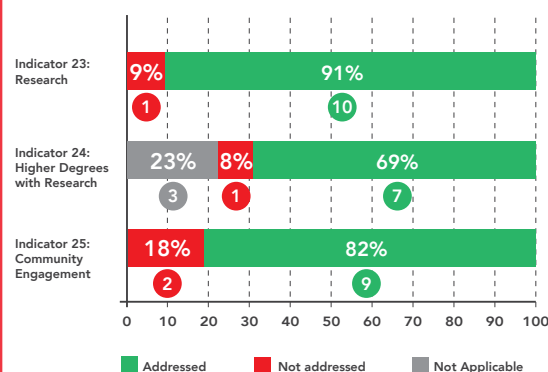
Most of the Recommendations centred on Indicator 23 (Research), with 15 recommendations, while Indicator 24 (Higher Degrees with Research) received eight Recommendations. Most Recommendations for this Standard necessitate that the review of scientific research policies should focus on academic integrity standards and ethical principles of scientific research, while ensuring that this information is contained in manuals for all relevant parties, including faculty members, students, and internal and external examiners. In parallel, the institutional review reports indicate a number of challenges facing institutions in the field of scientific research, including poor scientific research activities among academics, failing to link the institutions' strategic plans with operational plans for scientific research in a number of them, failing to develop and establish a scientific research policy and to review the institution's policy of selecting external examiners for higher degrees, as well as the lack of focus on research-based learning. Therefore, the institutional review reports recommended that attention be given to developing and enhancing the academics' scientific research skills, through organising regular workshops and discussion seminars, encouraging reward-giving and academic promotion, and linking the institutions' strategic plans with operational plans for scientific research. Also, attention should be given to providing scientific research resources, electronic or hardcopy, for academics and students, and there is a need for cooperation in the fields of scientific research between HEIs inside the

Kingdom of Bahrain or abroad, and for the exchange of resources.

- Standard 8 - Community Engagement

This Standard focuses on ensuring that the institution has a clear community engagement plan that is aligned with its mission and operational plans. It is comprised of one indicator (Indicator 25) that stresses that the institution must have conceptualised and defined the ways in which it will serve and engage with local communities in order to discharge its social responsibilities. Figure 41 shows that the performance of two private HEIs was poor and failed to meet the requirements of the last Indicator relating to this Standard. Despite nine institutions meeting the minimum requirements of this Indicator, the institutional review reports of this Standard show that two out of the 11 institutions received a total of two Appreciations, one each, while all HEIs received Recommendations totalling 21. Overall, the performance of the institutions that were subject to reviews was the lowest in this Indicator, given that the concept of community engagement is a qualitatively new concept and it is still in the process of development.

The Appreciations covered the institutions' evident commitment to community engagement by linking community activities to their strategic plan, as well as commitment to encourage students and faculty members to engage in community engagement activities that focus on the learning needs of students and their direct or indirect connection with their academic disciplines, contributing to enhancing and establishing the spirit of belonging and community engagement.

Recommendations show that HEIs face a major challenge in meeting the community engagement Standard. The institutional review reports recommend that the institutions should begin to establish the concept of community engagement for all relevant stakeholders, draw a systematic plan for community engagement activities, and link them to the institution's vision, mission and educational needs. These

activities should be documented, alongside the development of formal mechanisms to collect feedback from relevant stakeholders and analysing their results to introduce the required amendments and improvements, so as to maximise their benefits.

Cumulative findings of academic programmes follow-up visits

The follow-up visits conducted by the BQA are part of a continuous quality assurance and improvement system. All academic programmes that underwent a programme review by the BQA and had received a 'Limited confidence' or 'No confidence' judgement in phase 2 of Cycle 1 of the programme reviews, were subject to a follow-up visit. These visits assess the level of progress achieved by the institution in addressing the original review report's recommendations. For each recommendation, indicated under each of the four Indicators, the panel undertaking the follow-up visit passes its judgement on whether each recommendation is 'Fully addressed', 'Partially addressed' or 'Not addressed'. In addition, the panel makes an overall judgement on whether the institution has achieved 'Good progress', 'Adequate progress' or 'Inadequate progress' in addressing the recommendations as a whole.

Since the commencement of phase 2 of Cycle 1 of the programme reviews in 2012, which was completed in 2018, the BQA undertook 28 follow-up visits, including the first and second follow-up visits of the HEIs' academic programmes that had received a 'No confidence' judgement. Overall, the outcomes of the published follow-up visit reports indicated an improvement in the quality of academic programmes, with many HEIs showing the ability to improve their programme structure and academic and administrative processes in response to the original review reports' recommendations.

During the academic year 2018-2020, the BQA published five follow-up visit reports of programmes offered by four private HEIs and one government HEI. One programme received a 'Good progress' judgment, three made 'Adequate progress' and one was rated

Inadequate progress'. It is worth mentioning that only one programme achieved a 'Good progress' judgment in the follow-up visits that were implemented during phase 2 of Cycle 1 of the programme reviews. The BQA expects to complete the follow-up visits by the end of 2020 for the remaining eight programmes that are offered by a government HEI and had received a 'Limited confidence' judgment.
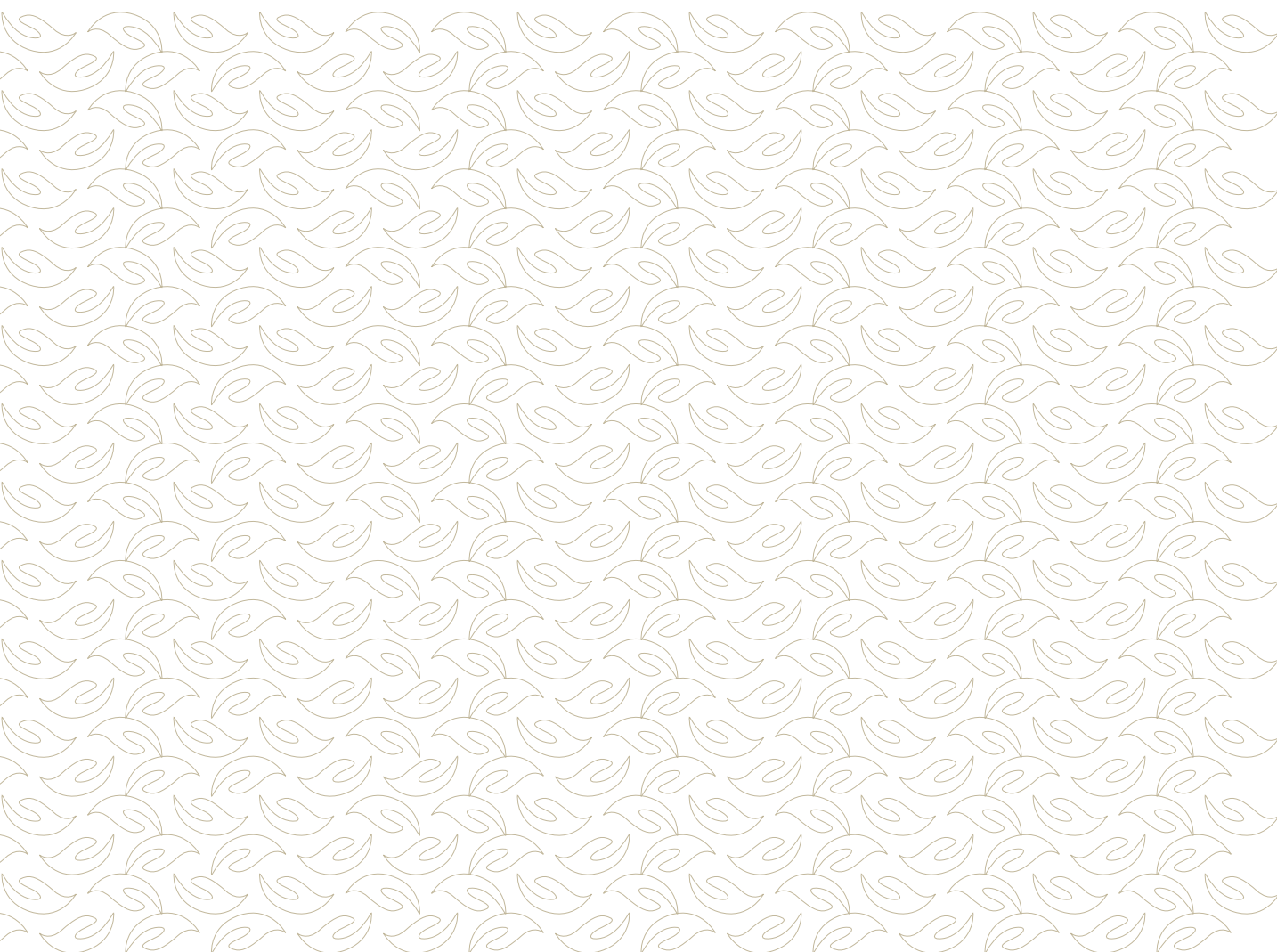
The education and training sector in the Kingdom of Bahrain is a success story whose lines were drawn by the Education and Training Quality Authority (BQA), in collaboration with its strategic partners across the government and private education and training institutions. The BQA is a leading sponsor and a watchful eye that achieves the quality of performance in this sector under the invaluable directives of the Government of the Kingdom of Bahrain. Its mandate, since its formation in 2008, has been to support the education and training institutions and develop strategies and plans with a view to improving the performance of schools, universities and institutes, a number of which have maintained their outstanding performance over the BQA's consecutive review cycles.

To celebrate the role of education and training institutions and in recognition of their efforts over the consecutive review cycles, as well as supporting them in staying on the course of success, the Education and Training Quality Authority (BQA) organised a ceremony to specially honour these institutions in (2019-2020), whereby Dr. Jawaher Shaheen Al Mudhahki, Chief Executive of the Education & Training Quality Authority (BQA), honoured the schools and vocational training providers that have been awarded the BQA Seal of Recognition. It also paid 'remote' special tribute to the honoured institutions after the spread of COVID-19 pandemic, to those government and private schools and education and vocational training institutions that were judged 'Outstanding' and 'Good' in consecutive review cycles following the approval of their review reports in the 36th , 37th, 38th and 39th sets of reports by the Supreme Council for the Development of Education and Training during its meeting over (2019-2020), chaired by His Highness Shaikh Mohammed bin Mubarak Al Khalifa, Deputy Prime Minister and Chairman of the Supreme Council for the Development of Education and Training.

The ceremony honoured nine government schools that received an 'Outstanding' judgement and fifteen that received 'Good', along with one private school that was rated 'Outstanding' with another two that received a 'Good' rating. This is in addition to thirteen vocational training institutions, of which two institutions were judged 'Outstanding' with eleven being graded 'Good' pre and post COVID-19 pandemic.

The government schools judged as 'Outstanding' and honoured by the BQA are: Um Ayman Primary Girls School, Khadija Al-Kubra Intermediate Girls School, Khawlah Secondary Girls School, Hassan Bin Thabet Primary Boys School, Mariam Bint Omran Primary Girls Schools, West Rifaa Primary girls School, Al-Sehlah Primary Girls School, Aminah Bint Wahab Primary Girls School and Al-Sanabis Primary Girls School. The private school honoured for receiving an 'Outstanding' rating is Nadeen Private School. The government schools rated as 'Good' are: Buri Primary Girls School, Al-Alaa Alhadhrami Primary Boys School, Bait Al-Hekmah Primary Girls School, Al-Noor Secondary Girls School, East-Rifaa Primary Girls School, Saba' Girls Primary School, Ruqaya Primary Girls School, Za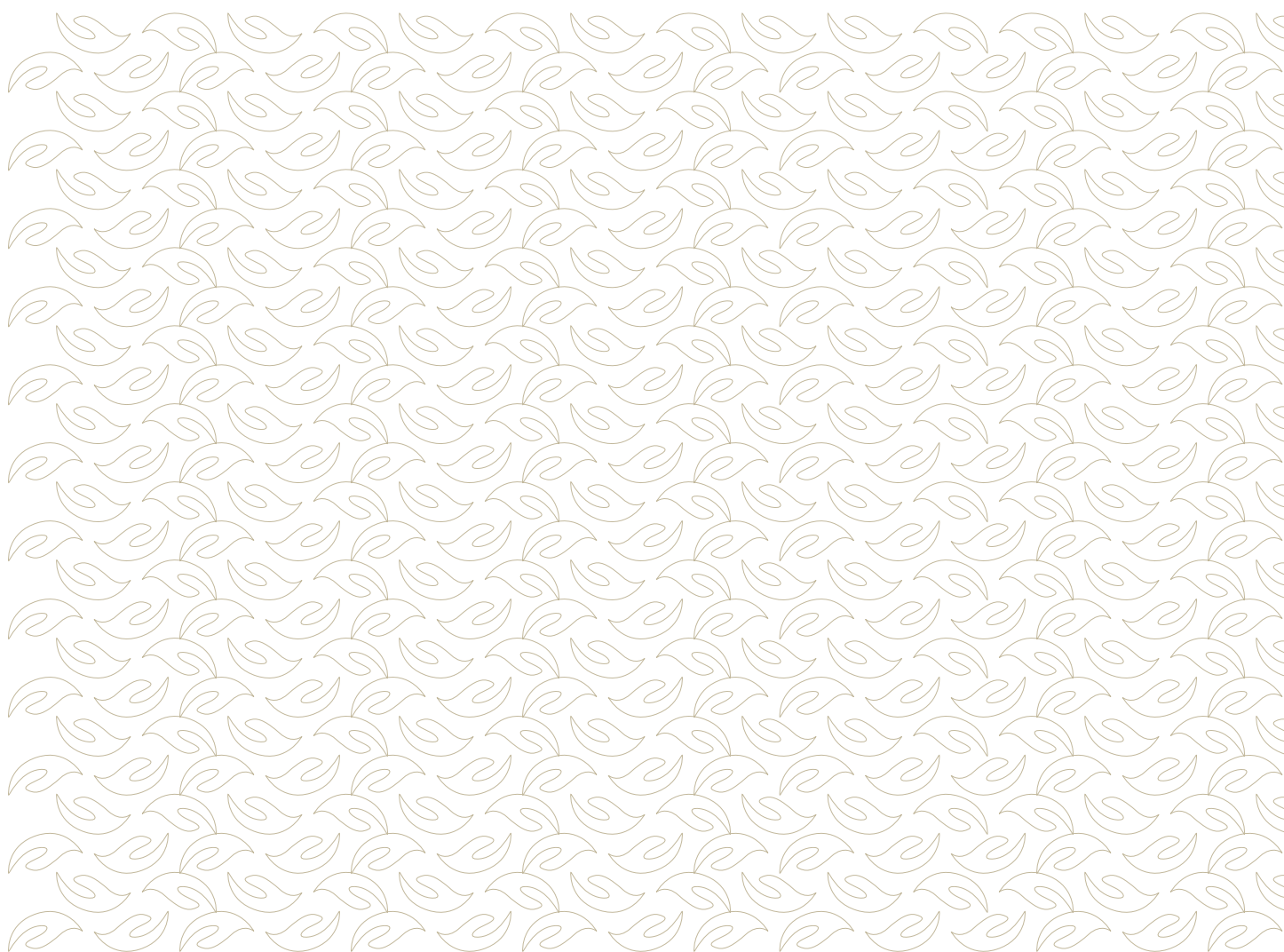nnoobia Intermediate Girls School, Haniniah Primary Girls School, Salmabad Primary Girls School, Hitteen Primary Girls School, Zainab Intermediate Girls School, Balqees Primary Girls School and Uqba Bin Nafea Primary Boys School. The private schools rated as 'Good' are Arabian Pearl Gulf School and Scared Heart Private School.

The vocational education and training institutions rated as 'Outstanding' and honoured by the Authority are: Kumon – Bahrain Center and Delmon Academy for Computer and Managerial Science (DACMS), while those receiving a 'Good' rating are: Golden Trust Institute for Management & Commercial Training & Consultancy, Excellence Training Solutions, Safety Training and Consultants Center (STC), Human Performance Improvement Institute, Technical and Training Centre of the Bahrain Society of Engineers, Aafaq Centre for Human Resources Development, Al Moalem Institute, Al Mashreq Training, ILC Training Institute and NGN Training Institute.

As a continuation of communication and building bridges of cooperation with education and training institutions across the Kingdom of Bahrain, Dr. Jawaher Al Mudhahki presented the Certificate of 'Meets quality assurance requirements' issued by the Authority to a number of higher education institutions; namely, Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland – Medical University of Bahrain, Royal University of Women, Ahlia University, Bahrain Polytechnic and the university of Bahrain, in the presence of a number of officials from the Authority and the universities.

Dr. Jeff Zabudsky, CEO, Bahrain Polytechnic, on Tuesday, 01 October 2019, in the presence of a number of officials from the Authority and the College. Dr. Al Mudhahki also paid a visit to the University of Bahrain and presented Prof Riyad Hamzah, President of the University of Bahrain, with the Certificate of 'Meets quality assurance requirements', issued by the Authority on 29 December 2019.

Dr. Al Mudhahki remotely honoured 'Applied Science University', 'Arab Open University' and 'Gulf University' due to COVID-19 pandemic, whereby each was awarded the

BQA Certificate of 'Meets quality assurance requirements' of the Institutional Reviews Cycle.

This recognition was made to honour the universities for addressing the requirements of the BQA Cycle 2 Institutional Reviews and upon the endorsement of their institutional review reports by the Supreme Council for Education and Training Development, headed by the Supreme Council for the Development of Education and Training, chaired by His Highness Shaikh Mohammed bin Mubarak Al Khalifa, Deputy Prime Minister and Chairman of the Supreme Council for the Development of Education and Training.
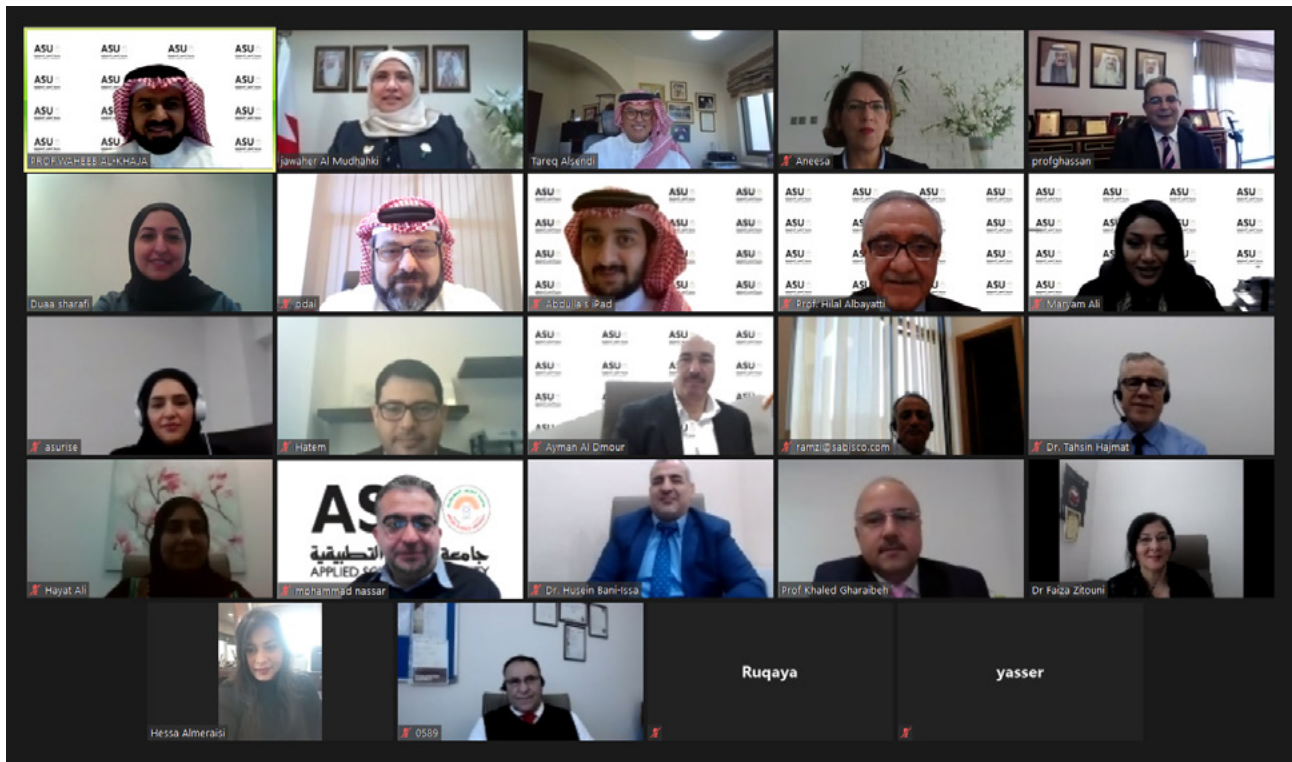
Sustainability of Excellence.

Within the context of enhancing outstanding performance and encouraging the education and training institutions to improve their performance, Dr. Jawaher Shaheen Al Mudhahki visited Khawlah Secondary Girls School, a government education institution that, received an 'Outstanding' judgement in three consecutive cycles due to its dedicated leadership and Bahraini women's efforts. The efforts of the school's teaching and administrative staff were recognised with Ms. Manal Abdullah Sinan, the Principal of Khawlah Secondary Girls School, being presented with the BQA Shield, becoming the first government secondary school to be awarded this shield. This ceremony was on Thursday 5 December 2019 in the presence of a delegation of the BQA's officials and the DGS Director.

Dr. Jawaher Shaheen Al Mudhahki also visited and honoured Kumon – Bahrain Center for receiving an 'Outstanding' judgment in three consecutive review cycles. It is worth noting that Kumon – Bahrain Center is the second training institute that has been awarded the BQA Shield from among the training institutions operating in the Kingdom of Bahrain. Ms. Claire Gaffney, Kumon Director, received the BQA Shield on Wednesday 11 December 2019.

The Education and Training Quality Authority firmly believes that the education sector in the Kingdom receives special care and attention from His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, the King of the Kingdom of Bahrain, with rigorous follow-up by His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, may God protect them and keep them as an invaluable asset to our country, and may the soul of the late Prime Minister His Royal Highness Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa whose wise leadership extending over decades has established a solid and stable infrastructure that will never go away from the memory of our country, rest in perfect peace.

THE GENERAL DIRECTORATE OF NATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK AND NATIONAL EXAMINATIONS

The Education and Training Quality Authority (BQA), represented by the General Directorate of National Qualifications Framework and National Examinations through the efforts of its two directorates, continues its operations. Meanwhile the Directorate of National Framework Operations (DFO) carries out the institutional listing process, the qualification placement process and alignment of foreign qualifications process. These processes are for all the education and training institutions in the Kingdom of Bahrain, demonstrating the institutions' formal arrangements for quality assurance, the compatibility and appropriateness of qualifications to meet the NQF requirements and labour market needs, and their values in terms of levels and credits, thereby establishing greater understanding of them and increasing consistency.

On its part, the Directorate of National Examinations (DNE) completed all preparations for the twelfth national examinations for Grade 6 and the eighth national examinations for Grade 12. Given the exceptional circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic, study in all education and training institutions has been suspended thereby preventing the operation of the National Examinations 2020. While the Directorate of National Framework Operations postponed site visits to education and training institutions due to these circumstances, it continues to evaluate the institutional listing and qualification placement applications and hold virtual meetings with the members of the evaluation panels.

As part of the national efforts to combat the spread of COVID-19, the General Directorate has ensured that national capacity building programmes are sustainable in terms of assessing the performance of the education system and the NQF requirements by remote work teams, through the use of virtual meeting platform (Microsoft Teams). A report on regional and international assessments of learning outcomes has also been prepared to identify educational assessment practices in relation to students' graduation requirements in school-based learning and their enrollment in university.

The National Qualifications Framework (NQF), through its policies, processes, and mechanisms, aims to support education and training institutions to achieve sustainable education that is consistent with the course of events, and corresponds with development plans and the Kingdom of Bahrain's Economic Vision 2030, which is to empower Bahrainis to become the domestic labour market's first choice. The NQF seeks to support education and training institutions to offer academic and vocational qualifications that address labour market requirements and meet the needs of learners and stakeholders, enhance the responsibility of institutions to maintain high quality standards in their qualifications, and improve the opportunities for learners' mobility and progression within and across all education and training sectors for the purpose of enhancing the concept of lifelong learning. These goals directly aim to accomplish Goal 4 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), namely 'quality education' targeting to 'ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all by 2030'.

Achieving the NQF goals is a national responsibility involving the Education & Training Quality Authority (BQA), represented through the Directorate of National Framework Operations (DFO), and all the relevant stakeholders, including regulatory bodies and education and training institutions. They coordinate among themselves so that each performs its core functions according to its mandate, in conjunction with the implementation of initiatives and decisions issued by the Government's Action Plan where a number of joint committees representing the relevant stakeholders had been formed in accordance with the many decisions that stimulate and help education and training institutions to comply with the requirements of the National Qualification Framework and achieve its goals.

As part of the national efforts to combat the spread of COVID-19 the Directorate has ensured that capacity building programmes are sustainably provided for all education and training institutions with regard to the requirements of institutional listing processes, national qualification placement and alignment of the foreign qualifications, through the use of virtual meeting platform (Microsoft Teams) by remote work teams. The same platform is also used to communicate with evaluation panels and to continue to evaluate applications.

1. The National Qualifications Framework Operations

The National Qualifications Framework comprises three main processes, the institutional listing process, the qualification placement process and alignment of the foreign qualifications process.

- Institutional Listing Process

As a prerequisite for qualifications placement process, all education and training institutions providing national qualifications in the Kingdom of Bahrain should apply to the institutional listing process, through which all institution's formal arrangements are reviewed based on the institutional listing standards to ensure that appropriate organisational and governance structures and transparent and sound operational mechanisms are in place to maintain the quality of the qualifications and learning environment. The five institutional listing standards are as follows:

1. Access, Transfer and Progression;
2. Qualification Development, Approval and Review;
3. Assessment Design and Moderation;
4. Certification and Authentication; and
5. Continuous Quality Improvement.

The institutional listing applications are evaluated by panels of local experts with current experience in the quality assurance of education and corporate governance, for which the BQA has established a database of accredited experts from various sectors and disciplines. All experts are subject to training on the NQF procedures and policies and on using institutional listing standards.

In the academic year 2019-2020 a total of five institutional listing applications were evaluated, as illustrated in Figure 42. Four vocational training institutions met the institutional listing standards and were listed in the NQF Register, while the institutions that fail to meet the institutional listing standards are given at least six months from the date of submission of their reports to re-submit their applications. This brings the total number of listed education and training institutions to 28. Of these, eight are higher education institutions and 20 are vocational education and training institutions, as shown in Figure 42.

Figure 42: Total number of institutions listed in the NQF Register in the academic year 2019-2020

8
29%

20
71%

■ Higher education institutions   ■ Vocational education and training institutions
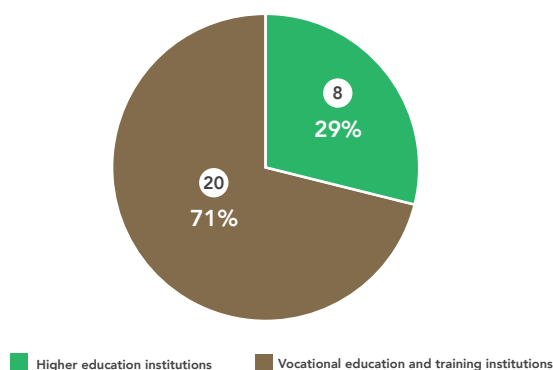
As a result of the collaboration within work activities of the joint committees among the BQA, the Ministry of Labour and Social Development, and Labour Fund 'Tamkeen', the institutional listing standards were integrated as part of the requirements for licensing vocational education and training institutions by the Ministry of Labour and Social Development and the support provided by the Labour Fund 'Tamkeen'. This demonstrates the aggregate national efforts

to achieve the NQF goals. These procedures are expected to enhance the VET institutions' readiness and preparedness to comply with the NQF requirements. An increase is observed in the number of vocational education and training institutions keen to register in the 2020-2021 academic year plan.

Reviewing the academic year 2019-2020 institutional listing applications their quality of these is apparent, as the vast majority of vocational education and training institutions now familiar with the key requirements of the National Qualification Framework. Their formal arrangements were reviewed accordingly, which contributed to closing the gaps in these arrangements and developing the processes and arrangements.

As for areas for improvement, some vocational training institutions still need to build the capacity of their employees in relation to the formal arrangements for credit accumulation and transfer, progression and mobility across learning pathways, verification of assessment, and moderation of assessment results. Furthermore, the awareness of the education and training institutions should be enhanced in relation to developing a comprehensive and integrated quality assurance system to meet the institutional listing standards' requirements. There is a need for better cooperation by a number of vocational training institutions to submit the requirements of their institutional listings according to the specified schedule.

• National Qualification Placement Process

Once the education and training institution is listed on the NQF Register, it is entitled to submit its national qualifications for placement on the NQF, where the placement of academic and vocational qualifications is a means of determining their values in terms of the level and credits. This will help the education and training institutions and relevant stakeholders, including learners, employers and parents, better understand the qualifications. Qualifications are validated using the following five standards:

1. Justification of Need;
2. Qualification Compliance;
3. Appropriateness of Qualification Design, and Content and Structure;
4. Appropriateness of Assessment; and
5. Appropriateness of NQF Levels and Credit Values.

Applications are evaluated by panels comprising educationalists, academics, trainers and business/industry professionals with experience in the field of the qualification. The Authority has established a database of accredited experts from various sectors and disciplines. All experts are subject to training on the NQF procedures and policies and using validation standards.

During the academic year 2019-2020 a total of 58 applications for national qualification placements have been processed. Twenty-three met the validation standards and requirements and were placed on the NQF. The remainder are in the process of fulfilling the conditions set forth in the validation reports and have a transitional period to submit the required fulfilment evidence for a final judgment to be passed on their applications regarding the fulfillment of validation standards. Institutions failing to fulfil the validation standards are given at least three months from the date of submission of their reports to re-submit their applications. To date, this brings the total number of qualifications placed on the NQF to 136. Of these, 87 are higher education qualifications and 49 are vocational training qualifications, as shown in Figure 43.

Figure 43: Total number of national qualifications placed on the NQF in the academic year 2019-2020
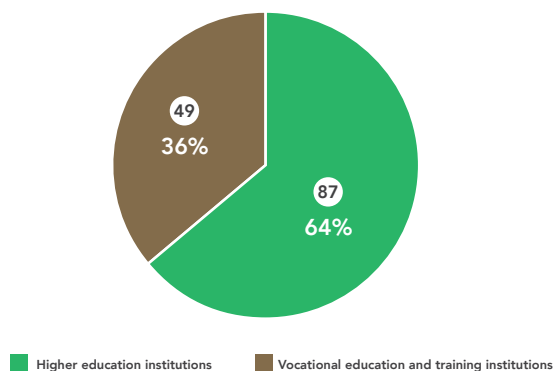
Figure 44 illustrates the distribution of qualification placed on the NQF Register in the academic year 2019-2020, by their levels and sectors. With regard to higher education qualifications, three were master degree qualifications placed on Level 9, nine were bachelor degree qualifications placed on Level 8, and one associate degree qualification was placed on Level 7. As for vocational training qualifications, one professional award was placed on Level 9, another professional award was placed on Level 8, one high national diploma qualification and three professional awards were placed on Level 7, two national diploma qualifications were placed on Level 6, one advanced certificate was placed on Level 5 and one certificate was placed on level 4.

Figure 44: Distribution of qualifications placed on the NQF in the academic year 2019-2020 as per Level and Sector
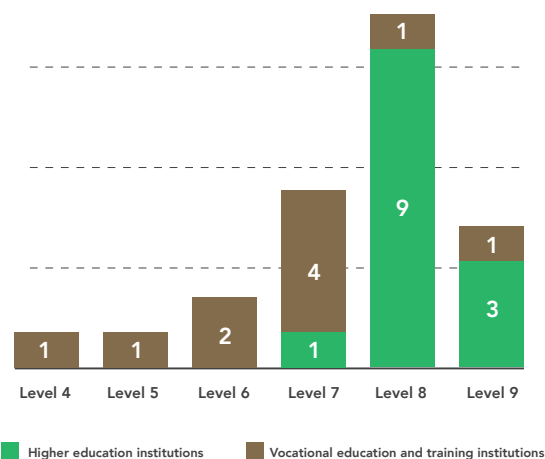
The qualifications placed on the NQF are subject to periodic review to ensure that they continue to fulfill the minimum validation requirements. The Directorate communicates with the education and training institutions on an annual basis to ensure that no major changes have been made to their qualifications placed on the NQF. In the event that changes are made, education and training institutions must inform the Directorate to determine whether such changes have an impact on the agreed level and credit values or not. Major changes require that qualifications be re-validated and re-submitted for placement on the NQF.

Following this process, seven qualifications, all of which are bachelor degrees, have been re-validated to ensure that they continue to fulfill the minimum validation requirements, being subject to some changes in their study plans which in turn have changed the qualification credit.

In response to the recommendations of the joint committees among the BQA, the Ministry of Labour and Social Development, and Labour Fund 'Tamkeen', the number of applications submitted by vocational training institutions has increased, with approximately 70% of the total applications evaluated in the academic year 2019-2020. Vocational training institutions have also been keen to register their national qualifications to be scheduled in the 2020-2021 academic year plan.

When evaluating the qualification placement applications, a number of good practices relating to each validation standard had to be highlighted:

Standard 1 - Justification of Need

One of the most prominent practices of this standard is establishing formal arrangements to periodically survey labour market needs and integrate them in the content of the qualifications offered, to be more appropriate to the requirements of the labour market. These arrangements are based primarily on consultation with the relevant stakeholders through the employers and graduates' questionnaires, advisory committee meetings, and use of the results of studies of labour market needs, if any, in addition to clarifying the career, professional or academic pathways to the qualifications' graduates.

Standard 2 - Qualification Compliance

Among the most notable practices observed for this standard are the incorporation of the NQF requirements as part of the licensing requirements of vocational training institutions by the Ministry of Labour and Social Development, and the support provided by the Labour Fund 'Tamkeen'. This ensures that the design of the qualification complies with NQF design requirements and any relevant regulatory body requirements.

On the other hand, most higher education institutions have adopted benchmarking to ensure that their qualifications comply with regional and international standards. Some vocational training institutions also conduct benchmarking as part of the qualification design process.

Standard 3 - Appropriateness of Qualification Design, and Content and Structure

This standard ensures that the design of the qualification is concise and indicative of its content. Most education and training institutions, as observed during the validation of the qualifications, fulfilled the requirements of the Credit Framework Guidelines, which provides detailed guidelines on qualifications' titles in relation to their NQF levels and credits. Vocational training institutions have also designed their national qualifications based on learning outcomes and benefitting from the BQA's workshops.

Standard 4 - Appropriateness of Assessment

Among the most important practices of this standards is the provision of mechanisms to measure the achievement of learning outcomes for the qualification and its constituent units, which are directly related to the methods of assessment in place and the need to draw improvement plans if these learning outcomes are not fulfilled. Good verification practices have also been observed which ensure that assessment methods are appropriate for learning outcomes, and that the moderation of assessment results is appropriate for accurate. Many education and training institutions have developed an electronic system of verification of assessment and internal and external moderation processes.

Standard 5 - Appropriateness of NQF Levels and Credit Values

This standard ensures the adequacy of the proposed NQF levels, for the overall qualification and for all comprising units and learning outcomes. it also ensures that assigned notional learning time and credit values are appropriate for the targeted learners and in line with the complexity of

the learning outcomes. The requirements of this standard are new to most education and training institutions in the Kingdom of Bahrain yet these have demonstrated a good understanding of the requirements, taking into account the efforts of the Authority to build the capacity of institutions' employees working on placement applications and provide them with continuous support. It is worth mentioning that a number of local experts who were employed as members in the validation panels have transferred their experience to staff in their institutions, resulting in a significant improvement in the quality of QP applications, particularly with the fulfilment of the requirements of this standard.

Regarding the areas for further development, there is still a need to build the capacity of employees in some institutions in relation to the formulation of learning outcomes for qualifications and their constituent modules, to ensure that a mechanism is developed to measure the extent to which such learning outcomes are achieved and to form mapping and confirmation panels and activate their roles, especially during the qualification's verification process. There is also a need to ensure that the qualifications comply with the requirements of the Credit Framework within the terms of the qualification title and minimum credit hours required, based on the level and title of the qualifications. There is a need for greater cooperation by a number of vocational training institutions to submit qualification placement requirements within the specified timeframe. There is also a great need to establish national statistics that show the internal and external needs of the labour market so that the Authority may have access to them during the validation of qualification placement applications.

• Alignment of Foreign Qualifications to the NQF Process

The NQF is used as a comparison tool in the Alignment of Foreign Qualifications process, where the foreign qualifications that meet the alignment standards are evaluated and compared to national qualifications. This leads to a better understanding of the value of foreign qualifications by employers and relevant stakeholders of the education and training system in the Kingdom of Bahrain. The four Alignment of Foreign Qualifications standards are:

1. Ownership of the Qualification;
2. Justification of Need;
3. Quality Assurance; and
4. NQF level and Credit Alignment.

During the academic year 2019-2020 a total of six foreign qualification alignment applications were submitted and all met the alignment standards. Two of these were doctoral qualifications aligned to Level 10, two were professional vocational qualifications in the field of human resources management and development aligned to Level 9, two vocational professional qualifications in the field of insurance were aligned to Levels 6 and 4, as illustrated in Figure 45. These bring the total number of foreign qualifications aligned on the NQF to 24, of which six are higher education qualifications and 18 are vocational training qualifications, as shown in Figure 46.

Figure 45: Distribution of foreign qualifications aligned on the NQF in the academic year 2019-2020, by Level
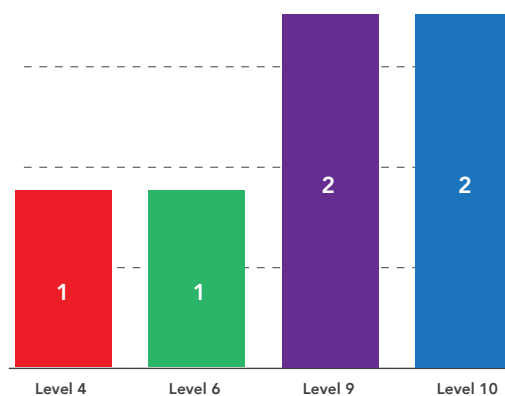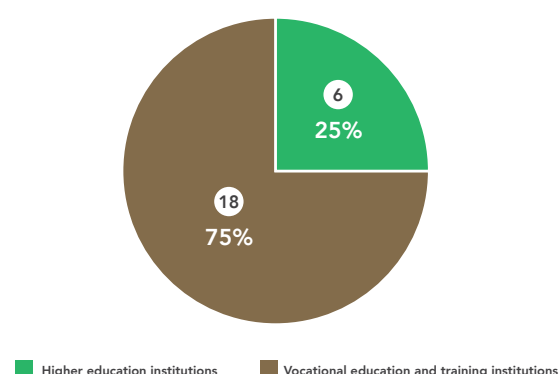
Figure E11: Total number of foreign qualifications aligned on the NQF up to the end of the academic year 2019-2020

- ● Higher education institutions
- ● Vocational education and training institutions

When reviewing the academic year 2019-2020 foreign alignment applications, the alignment process indicates the development of quality assurance mechanisms for foreign qualifications offered in the Kingdom of Bahrain and are monitored by the foreign awarding bodies that are familiar with the principles and standards of international qualifications frameworks. It is apparent that the alignment of the Bahrain's NQF to the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) has a significant impact on facilitating the process of comparing foreign qualifications offered in the Kingdom and aligning them on the NQF. On the other hand, education and training institutions are keen to align their foreign qualifications, comply with alignment requirements, and encourage the foreign awarding bodies outside the Kingdom of Bahrain to align their qualification on the NQF. This is evident from the efforts made by a number of prestigious foreign awarding bodies to align their foreign qualification offered in the Kingdom of Bahrain on the NQF; for example, the Chartered Institute of Personal and Development (CIPD) and the Association of Accounting Technicians (AAT).

Regarding the areas for further development, there is still a need to establish a list of all foreign qualifications offered in the Kingdom of Bahrain to identify them, determine the extent of their need, and plan to align them on the NQF.

2. Regional and International Relationships

Within the framework of the promotion of continued cooperation between the NQF and other regional and international qualifications frameworks, the Education and Training Quality Authority (BQA) has renewed the memoranda of understanding with the UAE's National Qualifications Authority, Malaysian Qualifications Agency (MQA) and the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework Partnership (SCQFP). These memoranda aim to exchange good practice in the areas of structure, design and management of qualifications frameworks and the exchange of publications issued in areas of common interest. It is worth noting that during the academic year 2019-2020 communications were made with the Malaysian Qualifications Agency and the UAE's National Qualifications Authority for referencing of the NQF to its Malaysian counterpart and comparing its levels with the UAE's NQF levels.

3. Informal learning and non-formal learning during crises and exceptional circumstances

As part of the Authority's Precautionary Plan and in response to national efforts to deal with and combat the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, all site visits to education and training institutions to evaluate the institutional listing and qualifications placement have been postponed since March 2020. However, the Directorate has ensured that national capacity building programmes are sustainable in relation to the requirements of the institutional listing of education and training institutions, the placement of national qualifications on the NQF, and alignment of foreign qualifications to the NQF levels, through the use of the virtual meeting (Microsoft Teams) by remote work teams. The same platform is also used to communicate with evaluation panels, and to continue to evaluate applications. Urgent developments have drawn the attention of education and training system officials across countries to the importance of integrating formal, informal, and non-formal

learning patterns. Successive changes in communication and technological progress are a powerful drive for the development of education systems to be more flexible, comprehensive and responsive, especially during crises and exceptional circumstances, to achieve sustainable education and training processes. This is also in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2030 targeting to 'ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.'

Recognition of qualifications obtained through distance education methods is one of the qualification frameworks' goals. In such cases it is possible to obtain qualifications that are not binding on the education place by providing learners with opportunities to gain qualifications according to the NQF levels on the basis of the qualification's intended learning outcomes and the learner's fulfilment of the core knowledge, skills and competencies. This process would provide equal opportunities for learners, providing that it is governed by quality assurance standards and is clearly implemented based on transparent evaluation.

Recognition of this form of education enhances the concept of lifelong learning and recognises the value and importance of experiences and acquired capabilities. However, arrangements should be made by the relevant authorities in the Kingdom in terms of governing legislations, supporting policies, and certain arrangements and assessments within education and training institutions.

The NQF focuses not only on recognising all forms of learning but also on improving the quality of learning, assessment procedures, certification, and authentication. It also helps to build the capacity of staff involved in the education and training sectors since it provides a new understanding of qualifications, in terms of focus on competencies, learning outcomes and qualification design based on professional standards (whenever available) and the requirements and needs of the labour market.

The effective implementation of the NQF goals, particularly with regard to qualifications gained through distance education, requires coordination and cooperation among all education and training stakeholders as well as employers. Cooperation with the private sector institutions is important. The significance of the role of quality assurance is not overlooked in enhancing confidence in the acquired qualifications and the impact it has on their levels and adequacy. Overall, implementation may require time, as the capacity of education and training institutions with regard to the frameworks' principles, processes and requirements must be built.
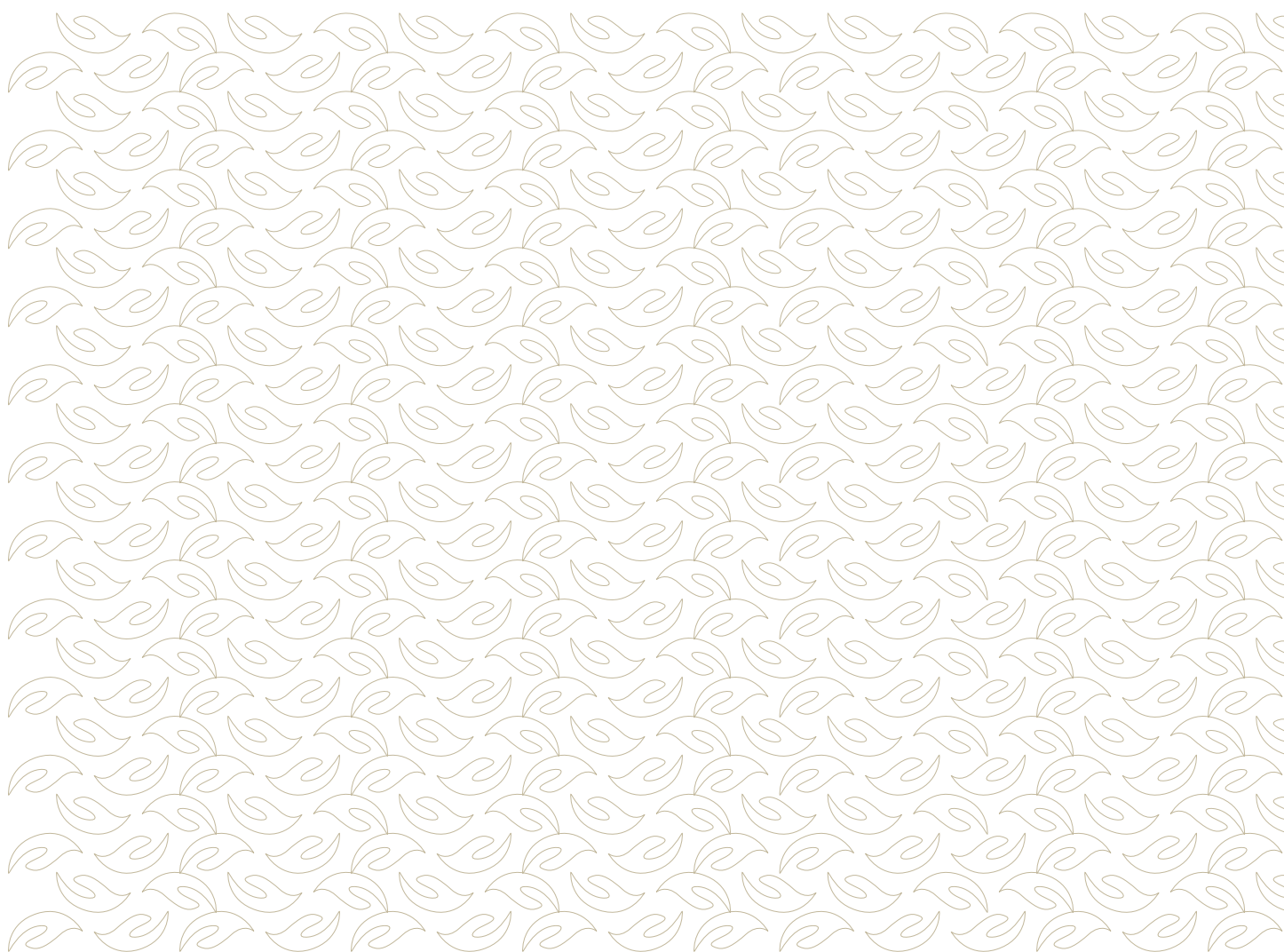
The Education and Training Quality Authority (BQA), represented by the Directorate of National Examinations (DNE), completed all the necessary preparations for the 2020 national examinations. This includes preparations for both the twelfth session of Grade 6 in the four core subjects Arabic, English, Mathematics and Science and for the eighth session of Grade 12 in Arabic, English and problem solving.

In view of the exceptional circumstances caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the study was suspended in the schools of the Kingdom of Bahrain. This delayed the 2020 national examinations for Grades 6 and 12, which were postponed to 2021. The BQA, through the DNE, has accordingly prepared this section of the Authority's Annual Report on regional and international educational assessments of the completion of the secondary stage and pre-university education.

Great attention was given to the education system in all developed and developing countries, and the educational process needs high quality and effective practices to guide its output and meet the changing demands of life and labour markets. In an effort to develop and improve the effectiveness of its education system the Kingdom of Bahrain has approved the Edict No. (05-2379), which states: 'The Council of Ministers has approved the plan for a Unified National Examinations System to be implemented gradually and completed by 2020, supervised by the BQA, as recommended by the Supreme Council for the Development of Education and Training included in His Highness the Deputy Prime Minister and Chairman of the Supreme Council for the Development of Education and Training Memorandum No. 001/036/2016'. The Supreme Council for the Development of Education and Training also approved an ambitious plan for the development of education. One of this plan's items reads as follows: 'To implement Grade 12 Unified National Examinations to be conducted gradually and calculate their scores for the secondary school graduates as being a requirement for the university admission'. This drives the DNE to research into international practices of the use of educational assessments, particularly those carried out at the completion of secondary school and pre-university education.

This report seeks to introduce the regional and international practices relating to graduation requirements of school students and university enrolments to establish a vision of the future of Grade 12 National Examinations, particularly since the beginning of G12 National Examinations in 2013, in light of the latest international developments in the field of educational assessment.

To this end, the data and information of educational assessments of a number of countries and education institutions have been investigated to identify them through their titles, the implementing agency, their goals, session periods, and the method of marking, by collecting, verifying and reviewing the data from their official websites, leading to the following conclusions:

1. Educational assessments at the completion of the secondary stage:

This assessment is based primarily on the assessment of students' performance at the end of formal school education, where the student typically completes 12 years of schooling. These examinations aim to award the students a certificate evidencing that they have completed the school education requirements, and the student can use this certificate to move directly to the labour market, vocational education, or enrol in a university according to the grades obtained. It was noted that some of the implementing bodies of these assessments evaluate students' performance through the conduct of Grade 12 final examinations to be issued with a graduation certificate; the result of the knowledge, competencies and skills gained in the last academic year representing the

level of performance of the student. Other implementing bodies of assessments evaluate students' performance through the cumulative results of a series of courses and subjects at the secondary stage, and these cumulative results are the level of the secondary education certificate awarded to them.

The Ministries of Education in some Arab countries carry out the certificate of graduation examinations at the completion of secondary education. These include Kuwait, Sultanate of Oman, Egypt and Tunisia, where the student is awarded the secondary school certificate, public education diploma or baccalaureate to move to the university education or directly to the labour market. Students in these countries can choose their own appropriate learning track (stream) from a category of professional (vocational) tracks or theoretical, scientific and literary streams or others, to drive their pathways into the labour market or university education according to their abilities, skills, and knowledge.

These assessments are also implemented by a range of other countries and are carried out by specialised education institutions, for example:

- Finland: Finnish Matriculation Examination:

The Matriculation Examination Board conducts the general secondary school examinations for Grade 12 students to identify how well students have gained the intended knowledge and skills of secondary school curricula, and whether they have achieved sufficient mastery in line with the objectives of general secondary education. This examination is held twice a year, in spring and autumn, and is automatically marked.
This examination is used for admission to a university and consists of at least four tests; one, in the mother tongue, is mandatory for all candidates, and a student additionally chooses three of the following tests: second national language test, a foreign language test, mathematics test, and one in the humanities and natural sciences subjects.

- Netherlands: National Examinations and Diploma:

The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science holds national examinations for students at the end of the last year of the secondary education system for each track. The system consists of three tracks: the first leads to a profession (vocational education), the second, entry to public education, and the third to the pre-university track. Upon completing each track the student receives the diploma certificate. A student in the professional track can move to the public education, and a student in the public education can move to the pre-university track.

A student who obtains a diploma certificate from the professional and public tracks can also study in applied universities, and a student who obtains a diploma certificate from the pre-university track can study in applied or research universities.

- South Africa: National Senior Certificate – NSC:

The Department of Basic Education implements the Grade 12 National Senior Certificate (NSC). It is a school completion graduation certificate and a university admission requirement, sat from October to December each year, and is manually marked.

Students study at least seven subjects, including two formal mandatory languages, mathematics or mathematical literacy, life preparation, and three elective subjects.

- Hong Kong: Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education – HKDSE:

The Hong Kong Examination & Assessment Authority carries out HKDSE for all Grade 12 students at the end of the three-year secondary school stage in order to obtain the students' graduation certificate, which allows them to enrol in university education. These examinations are held annually in April and May and are marked electronically.
The curriculum is assessed against a set of learning outcomes to identify the level of knowledge and the skills related to postgraduate studies and the labour market. Scores are awarded so that the relevant stakeholders, universities and others can understand the level of knowledge and skills students gain in a particular subject.

The HKDSE curriculum comprises four main subjects: Chinese, English, Mathematics and Liberal Studies, plus a student is required to choose two to four elective subjects from a total of 20 fields of study, as well as a number of other learning experiences.

- New Zealand: The National Certificate of Educational Achievement – NCEA:

The requirements of this certificate are implemented by the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) for high school students (Grades 11-13), with the aim of accessing the labour market or universities, both within and outside New Zealand. The examinations are held from November to December each year, and are marked manually and electronically.

Each year, students study a number of subjects. Knowledge and skills gained in each subject are evaluated against a number of criteria, divided into three levels depending on the difficulty of the criteria to be met. At each level, the student must achieve a certain number of approved credit hours to obtain the NCEA certificate, and the approved credit hours can be calculated over a period of more than a year.

2. Educational assessments at the completion of secondary stage plus the university entrance examination:

These educational assessments are based on evaluating the performance of secondary stage students. They aim to award the student the secondary school certificate and indicate the level of knowledge, skills and competencies students gain according to their professional options in the labour market or university education. This is in addition to implementing other assessments where the results of their performance indicators are used for university admission, but some universities that require this certificate use their results as well. Among the countries that apply this assessment system are the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and the United States of America:

- Kingdom of Saudi Arabia:

General secondary education in Saudi Arabia lasts for three years and is based on two systems: the semester system which includes three tracks, scientific, literary and administrative (management); and the course system which includes two tracks, natural sciences and humanities.

In the first system the student receives a comprehensive secondary school certificate, and in the second system a developed secondary school certificate.

- General Aptitude Test – GAT:

The General Aptitude Test (GAT), which is carried out by the Education and Training Evaluation Commission (ETEC) - Qiyas Center - in Saudi Arabia, is a university admission test. The student can sit for this Test at the end of secondary school or the preceding year. The GAT is divided into two parts: verbal and quantitative, which aim to measure the students' analytical and inferential abilities and identify their aptitude for learning.

This Test is carried out for future students enrolling in university education in Saudi Arabia. It is held twice a year and students' responses are electronically marked, with results also being sent to universities and relevant parties electronically.

- United Arab Emirates:

The UAE's Ministry of Education carries out central examinations for all Ministry of Education schools, with secondary education lasting for three years of study. The first year is a joint study, while in the second year a student can choose to join one of four streams: the general stream, the professional stream (the vocational stream (specialist)), the advanced stream and elite stream (advanced sciences and mathematics). Students in the advanced track will receive more in-depth instruction in mathematics and sciences than those in the general track. This enables the student to choose applied disciplines in the university stage and acquire many skills in higher education.

- Emirates Standardized Test - EmSAT

This test is implemented by the UAE's Ministry of Education. It is a standardised electronic test that measures the knowledge and skills of Grade 12 students after completing their

public education and moving to university education. These tests give decision-makers information that is useful for the university's registration stage.

The tests are carried out and marked electronically and include questions of various styles: essay, multiple choice, fill-in the blank, drag-and-drop.

- United States of America:

The USA's secondary education stage is four years, and each student must complete a number of approved credit hours to obtain a high school diploma. There is no standardised final examination for all schools.

- The SAT Test:

The SAT Test is conducted by the USA College Board and is an undergraduate admission test to American colleges and universities. The test is based on multiple choice questions, the purpose of which is to measure the readiness of a secondary graduate to enrol in a university while providing universities with results that can be used to compare the performance of all applicants.

The SAT consists of two sections, the evidence-based reading and writing section, and the mathematics section. The evidence-based reading and writing section consists of two tests, with one focusing on reading and the other on writing and language. The mathematics section also consists of one test with two components: a part without a calculator and a part with the use of a calculator. The SAT Test also includes an optional essay that some universities may require.

- Kingdom of Bahrain:

The Ministry of Education carries out the general secondary examinations as a tool to measure the learning outcomes at the end of secondary education. This education stage is complementary to the basic education stage and is a new stage for the student. It lasts for 3 years of study and is divided into six semesters of three levels.

The credit-hours system (standardisation of tracks) is applied in this level that provides common tracks to all students and provides broad choices of subjects and courses. It permits students to tailor programmes that suit their future goals. Under this system the student is free to choose to study in one of the following categories: Science and Mathematics, Languages and Human Sciences, Business, Industry or Vocational Education. The Central Manual Marking system is used to mark the secondary school examination by the Ministry of Education.

- National Examinations:

The Education and Training Quality Authority (BQA), through the Directorate of National Examinations (DNE), conducts Grade 12 national examinations. These are designed to be used for university admission and measure the students' knowledge, competencies, higher order thinking and problem-solving skills after completing 12 years of education in the Kingdom of Bahrain.

These examinations are in Arabic, English and Problem Solving. The national examinations match international standards and are benchmarked against international qualifications – Arabic and Problem Solving against the UK International (AS) Level, and English against the Level B2 of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). Some universities in the Kingdom of Bahrain also hold other entrance examinations for students.

3. Other educational assessments:

Other educational assessments are designed by educational organisations and institutions, and are used by a number of countries. They measure the knowledge, skills, and competencies a student gains toward pursuing university study, such as A Levels and IB Diploma:

- Advanced Level A Levels

Before a student obtains the A Levels qualification, he/she must obtain the General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE) qualification, previously called the O Levels. Both are conducted by Cambridge Assessment International Education, UK. Each of these qualifications comprises specific curricula that a student is studying

and offers examinations to measure his/her learning and acquisition of the knowledge, skills and competencies included in these curricula. Examinations are held for qualified students twice a year, during June and November, and is manually and electronically marked.

In the IGCSE qualification, which is sat twice a year during June and November, the assessment includes written, oral, and practical assessments offering students with opportunities to prove their learning, especially if their first language is not English. This provides an opportunity to measure a broad range of competencies by being tested in key or extended curricula that include 6-12 subjects inclusive of English and mathematics. There is a choice of 70 subjects, and the student can choose the subjects he/she desires to study. Examinations are manually and electronically marked.

If a student obtains the IGCSE qualification and wishes to complete university study, he/she must study an additional year to obtain the AS Level qualification, for students aged 16-17, and once obtained a student will be accepted in some universities. The other option to entering a university is to study for two years to obtain A Level qualification, for students aged 17-18 years, and this qualification makes the student acceptable to a large number of universities. He/she can choose from 3 to 4 subjects out of 80 subjects available for AS Levels and A Levels.

It is worth mentioning that the Singapore Advanced Level (GCE A-Level) educational evaluation system is the same as that of the United Kingdom, where a student in Singapore studies from four to five years for GCE O-Level, and can then move to a professional (vocational) education once this certificate is obtained. If a student wishes to continue studies in a university a GCE A-Level certificate must be obtained.

- International Baccalaureate Diploma Program - IB Diploma:

The International Baccalaureate Diploma Program - IB Diploma – is a challenging and balanced academic programme that includes final examinations for students aged 16-19 and is offered to students who wish to join university education. This certificate prepares students for success in university and in life.

IB Foundation Office, Switzerland, is the organisation that established and designed this qualification.

IB Diploma students should choose one subject consisting of six modules. Diploma Programme subjects can be studied at the high or regular levels, and students may choose three subjects from the higher level and three from the regular level. There are also other requirements that are compulsory, such as lengthy essays, knowledge theory, activity, creativity, and service.

Students have written examinations at the end of the Diploma Programme, which are marked by external markers of the International Baccalaureate. Students also complete their assessment tasks at school, initially marked by internal markers then by external verifiers, or sent directly to external markers. Marking is manual and electronic, and examinations are held in May each year.

In conclusion, the interest of countries and education institutions in developing assessments surveys and promoting assessment practices has become a characteristic of educational development. Yet, with this diversity in educational assessment systems, it has been noted that each country has adopted an assessment that is commensurate with the nature of its educational system, educational objectives and future aspirations. These assessments all share the basic objectives, foremost of which is assessing students' performance in a manner that helps determine their future pathways upon completing their school education, whether by involvement in the labour market or taking university pathways in proportion to their abilities and competencies.

	Resources
Kuwait	• Official Portal website - State of Kuwait: Regulations, examination and student affairs systems for all education stages and kindergartens https://www.e.gov.kw/sites/kgoarabic/Forms/MOELawehWaNothom.pdf
Sultanate of Oman	• Official Website of HEAC of Sultanate of Oman http://www.heac.gov.om/index.php
Finland	• Matriculation Examination Board Website, Finland https://www.ylioppilastutkinto.fi/en/matriculation-examination
Netherlands	• Government of Netherlands Official Website https://www.government.nl/topics/secondary-education/secondary-school-leaving-examination https://www.government.nl/topics/secondary-education/senior-general-secondary-education-havo-and-pre-university-education-vwo • Center on International Education Benchmarking Official Website http://ncee.org/netherlands-learning-systems/
South Africa	• Department: Basic Education Official Website https://www.education.gov.za/Curriculum/NationalSeniorCertificate(NSC)Examinations/tabid/338/Default.aspx • Northern Cape Town of Department of Education Official Website http://ncdoe.ncpg.gov.za/index.php/teacher/national-senior-certificate
Hong Kong	• Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority Official Website http://www.hkeaa.edu.hk/en/recognition/develop_hk_pub_exam/hkcee/
New Zealand	• NZQA Official Website https://www.nzqa.govt.nz/ncea/understanding-ncea/how-ncea-works/
Kingdom of Saudi Arabia	• Education and Training Evaluation Commission Official Website, Saudi Arabia https://www.etec.gov.sa/ar/productsandservices/Qiyas/Education/generalabilities/Pages/default.aspx • Ministry of Education Official Website - General Administration of Examinations and Admission – A Directory of equations for undergraduate certificates https://www.moe.gov.sa/ar/Docs1/CEGuide.pdf

United Arab Emirates	• UAE's EMSAT Official Website http://emsat.moe.gov.ae/emsat/emsat_achieve_ar.aspx • UAE'S OFFICIAL PORTAL – SCHOOL CYCLES AND EDUCATIONAL STREAMS PAGE https://u.ae/ar-ae/information-and-services/education/school-education-k-12/joining-k-12-education/stages-and-streams-of-school-education • Ministry of Education Official Website – UAE education system (2015-2017) https://www.moe.gov.ae/En/Documents/The%20FInal%20MOE%20Book%20(1).pdf
United States of America	• Princeton Review Website https://www.princetonreview.com/college/sat-information • University of Minnesota Education Guide https://isss.umn.edu/publications/USEducation/2.pdf
Kingdom of Bahrain	• Kingdom of Bahrain Official Website https://www.bahrain.bh/
Singapore	• Official Website of the Singapore Examination and Evaluation Board https://www.seab.gov.sg/home/examinations/gce-a-level https://www.seab.gov.sg/home/examinations/gce-o-level
A Levels	• Cambridge Assessment International Education Official Website https://www.cambridgeinternational.org/programmes-and-qualifications/cambridge-upper-secondary/cambridge-igcse/ https://www.cambridgeinternational.org/programmes-and-qualifications/cambridge-advanced/cambridge-international-as-and-a-levels/
IB (International Baccalaureate)	• IB (International Baccalaureate) Diploma Programme Official Website https://www.ibo.org/programmes/diploma-programme/

Introduction:

Societies have undergone many changes, including social and economic globalisation and technological developments, up to the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR). Education has consistently contributed to shaping the social, cultural and economic situations of countries, but it has also been greatly affected by these changes which education has originally caused them. When societies respond to globalisation, education has played a prominent role in raising local citizens with a global vision, driving education and training professionals around the world to take advantage of technological development to varying degrees, particularly regarding the availability of distance education platforms and provision of a non-traditional learning environment that transcends time and space and better fits the nature and needs of learners.

The Kingdom of Bahrain, like other countries, has responded to technological changes. The education and training sectors have witnessed significant transformation in the learning environment, with a number of institutions introducing smart boards into the classroom as well as the use of interactive projectors. Additionally, learning management systems (LMS) have provided some institutions with greater opportunities to interact with learners. However, upon monitoring these rapid changes it is noted that these facilities have not been widely utilised as it means shifting the teaching and learning strategies to meet the challenges of the 21st Century. A number of education and training institutions preferred the adoption of the traditional patterns which they are more familiar with. Meanwhile, distance education and the adoption of technology, with all its characteristics in education and training, remained an option that is cautiously and carefully approached. However, the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic imposed a new normal. In most cases, technology adoption in education and training would be the only option to ensure that the educational and training processes would be carried out in light of social distancing and suspension of classroom education and training.

It is worth mentioning that the Kingdom of Bahrain has faced the COVID-19 pandemic with an integrated approach, issuing a set of decisions and procedures covering all aspects of life through the decisions of the Government Executive Committee chaired by His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister. One of the Committee's decisions issued on 17 March 2020 states that 'it was decided to suspend the study in government and private schools, government and private higher education institutions and kindergartens until further notice. It was also decided that the education and administrative bodies within government and private institutions shall continue to function while encouraging remote working when possible. The Ministry of Education has been directed to take all the necessary measures to mitigate the impact on the education process in coordination with the concerned authorities.' All concerned parties of education and training systems across the Kingdom of Bahrain, such as the Education and Training Quality Authority (BQA), the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Labour and Social Development and various education and training institutions, both governmental and private, have taken the necessary procedures and measures to implement these directives to ensure that the provision of education and training expertise is not interrupted for both students and learners.

The initial results of the evaluation of distance education in the Kingdom of Bahrain, conducted by the Education and Training Quality Authority (BQA) from March to July 2020, show that there is adequate infrastructure and effective manpower

capable of learning and adapting rapidly to emergency and exceptional circumstances. At a time like this, this special report emphasises the need to draw on the results of this experience to consider the importance of adopting the desired changes in education and learning, whether those we can implement and plan or those that surprise us out of nowhere.

This report focuses on key themes that must be identified so that the outcomes of the education and training institutions operating in the Kingdom of Bahrain are appropriate and meet the needs of this changing world, in terms of providing education that produces citizens who appreciates their national culture and understand local needs, while being open to different cultures and global developments. This is done by recognising 21st Century skills, the importance of instilling them in the young generation and understanding the role of globalisation and its impact on education. The report also addresses new learning domains, the impact of technology on education and its resources, the need to further energise education outside conventional classrooms, establish policies and laws for recognising informal and non-formal learning and draw up mechanisms for evaluating students' achievement. The report highlights the roles of teaching and training staff, the changes they have been subject to and the new cognitive, educational and technological skills that a teacher or trainer should acquire so that they can implement their tasks effectively and appropriately. The report also describes the need to review the assessment process in a different and more comprehensive manner. Education and training institutions are expected to assess broad learning outcomes that include human and moral outcomes and characteristics as well as the specialised knowledge and skills that learners are expected to acquire through the teaching and learning processes. Finally, the report concludes with a review of the opportunities and challenges facing the educational process in the Kingdom of Bahrain, based on the results of the initial evaluation carried out by the BQA to evaluate distance education practices.

1. Education for a local citizen with a global vision

There is an increasing focus on the perspectives and interpretations of the 21st Century skills in view of the growing interdependence between nations, the shrinking concept of geographical boundaries, the easy movement of labour across continents and countries and the increasing trend toward the unification of values in work and society. This calls for the need to balance between the two identities, national and global. Planning for education and reforms implementation face various challenges in terms of having a balance between maintaining the national identity and openness to the values and principles of other systems.

Examples of the direct effects of globalisation on education and training include the extent to which educational and training systems across the globe respond to crises, the current example being the implications of the COVID-19 pandemic. While countries have taken the most appropriate decisions and measures from their own viewpoint, everyone has greatly learned and benefited from the response of other countries to the pandemic. This has led to significant changes, most notably being the apparent shift in the view of distance education politics and practices. Therefore, it is essential to determine how well learners have been able to acquire multiple skills such as critical thinking, analysis and linguistic proficiency in more than one language. Learners' empowerment also enables them to assume responsibility for their learning by activating technology such as educational platforms, various international and cross-border technology tools such as Microsoft Teams, Zoom, Google Classrooms, TV and YouTube channels. They must be able to draw conclusions competitively while maintaining both the national and global identities.

Technological advancement has also greatly affected education and has taken on broad dimensions in shaping the learner's personality and values as well as raising the equity of education. Global approaches

seek to draw attention to the importance of providing open resources, so that the learner can have access to different educational platforms to learn and improve. This directly contributes to bridging the global gap between nations and provides various educational services to those who are not able to access them otherwise, such as for reasons of poverty, geographical challenges and so on. The COVID-19 pandemic has played a prominent role in expanding the space available for learning and learners through providing free access to many educational and training services provided by leading education and training bodies or institutions. This provides greater opportunities for change and development and is easily adapted to the unexpected exceptional circumstances which have resulted from the absence of conventional educational.

Another example that illustrates the impact of globalisation on education is the importance of learning outcomes, classification tables and international benchmarks such as (TIMSS and PIRLS) considering them as primary evaluation to push for changes or support proposed educational development initiatives around the world. They have an important role in measuring competition and achieving global success, being internal performance indicators to judge the success or struggling systems.

The Kingdom of Bahrain is constantly developing its practices through constructive reflection. The Kingdom carefully examines and reviews any international practices ahead to avoid the risk of implementing practices that are not compatible with the Bahraini culture, traditions and values. In the field of education, the Kingdom continuously uses benchmarks which are at the international level in all aspects of education and training to ensure that the best services are provided to the students and learners, who have local values with global vision and skills. One of the most notable examples in this field, and in light of the ongoing changes at the local and global societies, is the integration of 21st Century skills by the BQA in the Schools Review Framework. This recognises the importance of identifying the skills that are essential to enable learners to manage their post-graduation stages, either to pursue higher education or engage in the local, regional, or global labour market, which in turn requires enhancing the importance of lifelong learning. Evaluating 21st Century skills focuses on measuring the effectiveness of school practices to develop these among students. These skills include communication and teamwork, entrepreneurship and initiative, critical thinking, creativity and problem solving, technological literacy, language empowerment and local and global citizenship. The review frameworks for vocational and training institutions and higher education also focus on the role of the education and training process in developing higher-order thinking skills, the ability to learn independently and the need for lifelong learning which are emphasised within the National Qualifications Framework (NQF). These skills are required by the learner to encounter any circumstances that directly or indirectly affect the education process, such as the current implications of the COVID-19 pandemic.

2. New Learning Areas

Education systems rely on many approaches to improve teaching and learning processes by developing the learner's thinking skills. Modern approaches are focused on technology which contributes to providing learners with knowledge, skills and competencies in inexpensive and easy-to-use ways. Notably, it is essential that whatever the educational approach being adopted, that it goes through several stages including preparation, presentation, monitoring and evaluation.

With the rapid changes occurring in information technology, education is no longer limited to the conventional methods within education and training institutions. With the learner receiving information from multiple sources regardless of location or time, it is necessary to respond to these variables and rely on the latest technology. The use of technology in education is based on several main components: teaching/

training institution staff, learning content and resources which include devices and interactive environment. The role of teaching and training staff in developing processes is indispensable, since teaching and training processes also depend on moral traits to build the learner's personality. It is essential that the teacher/trainer be familiar with the appropriate communication and pedagogical skills, and the use of modern technology in education and training.

In response to the rapid technological changes, education and training institutions across the Kingdom of Bahrain have introduced changes in the learning environment with the use of smart boards in classrooms, interactive projectors and learning management systems (LMS). These systems have provided institutions with opportunities to offer better services and a distance education environment; however, they were merely used to upload and download teaching materials and student assignments and homework.

The sudden emerging circumstances caused by the spread of COVID-19 has had a major impact on education systems around the world. This has caused education and training institutions in the Kingdom of Bahrain, as in other countries, to seek and adopt distance education to ensure continuity of education.

The most apparent manifestation of this pandemic crisis was the activation of technology such as educational platforms and various international and cross-border technology tools such as: Microsoft Teams, Zoom, Google Classrooms, TV and YouTube channels by various education and training institutions in the Kingdom of Bahrain. For instance, the Ministry of Education have used TV and YouTube channels as an educational tool during the COVID-19 pandemic crisis to ensure continuity of education and increase students' access to learning services. The Ministry also centralised the handling of distance classrooms for Grade 9 to Grade 12 in core subjects, offering them through the Microsoft Teams programme in a quick response to ensure that the students' learning experience is not interrupted. Private schools

have adopted a different approach, relying on various distance education platforms to ensure greater interaction between students and their teachers. A number of vocational education and training institutions have also offered blended online courses by activating their virtual platforms more effectively, especially in disciplines where training can continue to be provided remotely. This was initially confined to a limited number of institutes which had the potential and resources for that form of education and learning prior to the pandemic. However, given the continuing threat of the pandemic, the number of such institutions increased to include those that had not adopted such platforms before the pandemic. This enables a smooth movement to e-training through the provision of appropriate support and guidance, and combines efforts between different authorities. Higher education institutions have further adopted education management systems (LMS) to ensure continuity of education. They have also conducted comprehensive training for their academics to deliver their subjects through the available distance education platforms and have reviewed some assessment policies to suit the needs of this time. A limited number of e-assessments have been implemented through the use of intelligent software, ensuring the rigour and integrity of assessments.

As the crisis subsides in the coming future, these institutions, particularly the higher education institutions, need to consider distance education as part of education for the foreseeable future and give greater emphasis to blended learning; thus, developing long-term response frameworks that go beyond immediate measures. For example, the need to re-conceptualise the content of courses/teaching materials to be offered remotely, and decide on the content which can be transferred directly without a significant loss of its essence. Institutions will need to re-conceptualise lectures, learning and training sessions and improve methods suitable to distance teaching and training. Moreover, there is a need to establish appropriate mechanisms for assessing achievement and benefit from

their results in drawing the improvement and development processes. This should be done alongside establishing a stronger infrastructure, and developing the needed competencies and teaching and training staff in a manner that is consistent with the need to achieve the standard of development and quality required to accomplish the desired objectives smoothly and professionally.

Blended learning will probably speed up reconsideration of the importance of integrating formal, informal and non-formal learning formats. Rapid changes in communication and technological advancement are a powerful incentive for the improvement of education systems to be more flexible, inclusive and responsive in crisis in order to sustain the teaching and learning process. Qualifications frameworks are means of recognising qualifications gained out of the formal education and training system based on acquired knowledge, skills and competencies related to learning outcomes. The relevant stakeholders need to coordinate to review the legislation and regulations in place to recognise different learning patterns, while establishing appropriate assessment mechanisms for each pattern.

3. Roles of Teachers

The era in which we live is witnessing an information revolution and technological advancement in various aspects and knowledge. Crises often contribute to identifying multiple challenges and opportunities. The Covid-19 pandemic has perhaps been one of the historic moments that have strongly reemphasised the approach of preparing the teaching/training staff and reconsidering the roles assigned to them to keep them abreast of urgent changes. Given the recent circumstances, the decision makers have to reconsider ways of supporting teaching and training staff. This is to enable them to face changes and acquire new skills that help them assume their renewed roles and responsibilities imposed by education in the digital era. This will enable them to offer quality education/ training that addresses the needs of this age

as a key element of the teaching and learning processes, be a positive guide for learners in dealing with changes in modern technology and be effective monitors and assessors of the educational process through the use of these new technologies.

For instance, developed countries focus on empowering teaching and training staff with the required 21st century skills. They focus as well on developing values including establishing systematically the need to focus on the learners, ways to meet their needs, commitment to develop their potential and the absolute belief that every person can learn. It also concentrates on the skills required by the education/ training staff, including self-management and learners' management skills as well as professional development through reflection on practices, technological empowerment and other practices. Additionally, there is constant monitoring of teachers' knowledge, especially relating to the learner and community, and pedagogy essentials and strategies, as well as their subject-knowledge mastery. All parties involved in developing the teaching and training staff work consistently during the current stage to meet these requirements. There is still a need for greater effort to enable more teaching and training staff to take advantage of the available technology, thereby ensuring an effective learning experience for the learner.

In the light of the fast-paced and rapid technological advancements in the digital era, there should be a shift to new roles that are appropriate to the changes created by this time rather than the conventional roles of teaching and training staff that mainly depend on rote teaching and consider it as the main source of information. The quality of education and training depends on the performance of the teacher/trainer, who is an important element for the success of the learning process and the basis upon which the learners are assisted to pursue their life- long learning and achieve distinction in their studies; thereby, obtaining a distinct qualitative education. The teacher/trainer is no longer the only source of knowledge, as knowledge sources are numerous and

accessible. The teaching and training staff become mediators and facilitators between learners and sources of knowledge, being more of a mentor and guide than a lecturer or instructor and the main source of knowledge.

The age of digital knowledge witnessed the emergence of electronic education and training institutions, virtual classrooms and distance education, which is reliant on the use of new technologies in teaching processes. This requires that teaching and training staff keep pace with these developments by acquiring skills that enable them to deal and interact with these modern techniques and technologies. Perhaps one of the most important skills which teaching and training staff should acquire in the 21st century, is the ability to criticise and develop practices through reflection. Modern theory states that teachers/trainers are to self-initiate their own professional development through their own identification of their development needs. The ability of a teacher/trainer to teach students must also begin with an absolute belief in students' right and ability to learn. This will help – as a teacher/trainer – to focus all his/her practices on supporting students to accomplish their desired outcomes, make teaching and training processes student-centred, with the teacher/trainer being a facilitator, together with developing the learners' higher-order thinking skills, challenging their abilities and further linking their learning experience to life.

In the current era, the most notable skills that should be gained by teachers and trainers are technological empowerment skills, with a change in view toward this being a basic skill of all aspects of the teaching process and not just a secondary skill. Nowadays, the teacher/trainer has to choose the best from a vast amount of information available from electronic sources and resources, and increase the attractiveness of the learning materials using the appropriate technology for learners of the current generation. Additionally, consideration should be given to assessments and marking processes, and providing feedback in varied and multiple electronic methods to raise the learners' achievement.

The experience of evaluating the education and training institutions' distance education practices conducted by the BQA has shown variance in the academics' technological skills activation. While many have obviously activated teaching strategies through different technological tools, some institutions have faced considerable challenges in achieving a suitable outcome. This is due to the limited training and retraining times, since the timeline between the shift from traditional methods to total reliance on education technology was very tight, and the level of requirements sometimes exceeded the available capacities.

Therefore, it is no secret to decision makers and educationalists that developing the teaching and training staff should primarily begin at the stage of their preparation for teaching/training practice. Academics' teaching materials, skills and competencies that should be acquired during their preparation period must be reviewed, to match the requirements of education and training institutions of the 21st century.

4. Evaluation of broad learning outcomes

Identification and evaluation of learning outcomes is a key and essential element of the quality of the entire teaching and training processes. Learning outcomes reflect the levels of knowledge, skills and characteristics that a student/learner should acquire on admission to education and training institutions which design their teaching and training programmes based on such outcomes.

In identifying learning outcomes, external standards and benchmarking are used to help compare education and training programmes with their counterparts. This makes it easier to equate the credit hours of similar programmes and recognise prior learning experience. On the other hand, national and regional qualifications frameworks also consider the design and the formulation of learning outcomes. This facilitates the process of mobility of learners and manpower across different countries and

establishes the principle of lifelong learning in all its forms, whether formal, informal or non-formal. The national qualifications frameworks, through the verification of the quality assurance of learning outcomes in particular, aim to ensure that national qualifications are appropriate to economic, social and technical needs. They also ensure that they are consistent with the current fast-paced and successive changes in the labour market across the world under the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR), as jobs for unskilled workers or manpower are replaced by machines. 4IR relies on several pillars, namely artificial intelligence, virtual reality, Big Data processing, information security, smart cities, renewable energy and the digital economy. This requires providing the learner and trainer with the highly specialised skills required in current and future-developed jobs through continuous improvement and regular review of learning outcomes.

Some recent studies demonstrate the importance of enhancing technical training and eliminating digital illiteracy, alongside the need to develop basic skills in sciences, technology and mathematics, as well as human and ethical traits that include honesty, loyalty, assuming responsibility, self-learning and teamwork.

Accordingly, all education and training institutions must, on the one hand, develop their learning outcomes to include knowledge and specialised and technical skills, as well as broad human and ethical traits to meet social, cultural and economic needs. On the other hand, they must establish appropriate mechanisms to ensure that the learner/trainer is able to demonstrate cognitive ideas and perform cognitive tasks, and tasks relating to ICT, communication and numeracy skills. Additionally, they should be able to use knowledge, skills, social and personal abilities during study or work, and to develop personally and professionally. These abilities are clearly identified in the NQF Level Descriptors in the Kingdom of Bahrain, and are graded according to their level of difficulty and complexity across various stages of education.

Overall, different education systems continue to rely mainly on accumulative tests that measure students' familiarity of theoretical content and their ability to understand and analyse it at the completion of the secondary stage in preparation for postgraduate studies. The results of these examinations are also used to set development plans that help improve the performance of these systems in preparing learners for later stages of education and the labour market. Under the exceptional circumstances that prevail around the globe due to the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Kingdom of Bahrain has been at the forefront of countries that have suspended conventional education in all education and training institutions in order to save lives and prevent the spread of the pandemic. As a result, the 2020 National Examinations of the Kingdom of Bahrain, which measure the students' skills in Arabic, English and Problem Solving, were cancelled. At the regional level, several countries such as the UAE have suspended their standardised examinations.

International examinations scheduled for May and June in all countries, including the International Baccalaureate examinations, the Cambridge General Certificate Secondary Education (IGCSE), O Levels, AS Levels, A Levels and SAT General and Special Tests, have also been cancelled. This requires changes in the methods of assessment to deal with the pandemic crisis that the world is now experiencing and may last for a long time through reconsidering what is being assessed and how it is assessed.

A number of guidelines on evaluating learning outcomes have been provided to education and training institutions in the Kingdom of Bahrain. These include formative assessment techniques, appropriate to distance education requirements and to which a higher proportion of the marks are allocated. The assessment techniques included as well summative assessments methods to which the lower proportion of the marks are allocated. In general, formative assessment techniques help measure many of the intended learning outcomes effectively. Some education and training institutions have also developed a number of internal guidelines and procedures to ensure that the educational process runs

with the same standard of efficiency and quality. Success depends on several factors, including the quality of linking between learning outcomes, teaching methods and assessment techniques, based on which the students' or learners' acquisition of the intended learning outcomes can be verified. On its part, the BQA is currently evaluating how education and training institutions in the Kingdom of Bahrain are dealing with the current status. This is done to identify the most significant strengths and challenges these institutions face and acknowledge the procedures adopted by these institutions to spread best practice in raising the quality of performance and services of the education and training system across the Kingdom of Bahrain.

5. Conclusion

The COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated the interconnection of the globe and how it is affected by changes in all aspects of life, including education and training. Education is considered as the main drive for change in communities, and it is also clearly affected by changes in societies, particularly during sudden and exceptional ones. The current situation clearly demonstrates the role of technology in overcoming spatial barriers, and the need for thinking about solutions that go beyond space and time as well as benefiting from the available global solutions to find local solutions.

The Kingdom of Bahrain has faced the COVID-19 pandemic with an integrated methodology of decisions and measures covering all aspects of life, including education, learning and training. All bodies concerned in the education system, such as the Education and Training Quality Authority, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Labour and Social Development and various education and training institutions, both government and private, took the necessary procedures and measures to implement these guidelines, ensuring that the provision of learning experience to both learners and students is not interrupted.
Education and training institutions in the Kingdom of Bahrain, like those in other countries, have also sought to adopt distance education to ensure the continuity of the educational process. The initial assessments conducted by the BQA to evaluate the distance education practices of the Kingdom's education and training institutions have identified a range of opportunities and challenges for achieving the ongoing improvement the Kingdom aspires to. Some of these opportunities can be summed up as follows:

- There is adequate infrastructure and effective manpower capable of adapting and learning quickly.

- Many academics have excelled in using teaching strategies by using various technological tools.

- Rapid activation of technology such as learning platforms and various international and cross-border technology tools such as Microsoft Teams, Zoom, Google Classrooms, TV and YouTube channels are being used by various education and training institutions in the Kingdom of Bahrain.

- Some education and training institutions have adopted various distance education platforms, ensuring greater interaction between students and their teachers.

- Some education and training institutions have managed to move smoothly to distance education, even though none of these platforms were adopted in their operations prior to the pandemic.

The most notable challenges are summed up as follows:

- The need to enhance learners' acquisition of 21st century skills to develop citizens who are capable of addressing the different demands and changes of life.

- Identifying learners who do not have the required infrastructure and seeking to address this issue.

- The need to monitor and follow up students at basic school stages when using distance education platforms, owing to their young age.

- Variance in teachers' technological skills

as some of them are facing significant challenges in reaching an adequate level.

- Varied availability of appropriate distance education materials.

- The unsuitability of the distance education to some of the practical disciplines and training programmes.

In conclusion, the response of the Kingdom of Bahrain to the implications of the COVID-19 pandemic through the adoption of distance education, and the rapid and effective community response to the new situation under the pandemic, indicated that the international community had to move forward with urgency in responding to the latest developments. It has also called for the importance of using this experience in preparing future generations, and taking the necessary steps to establish the appropriate learning environments and recognising all forms of learning. Today, the concept of 'education' has changed from its previous notion. Education in a changing world is facing many challenges and opportunities, which requires a conscious community to successfully take advantage of and move education to the 21st century and beyond.

'BQA' wins first place in the 6th Edition of HRH Princess Sabeeka Bint Ibrahim Al Khalifa Award for Bahraini Women Advancement

Dr. Jawaher Shaheen Al Mudhahki, Chief Executive of the Education and Training Quality Authority (BQA), expressed her great pride at the BQA winning the Bahraini Women Advancement Award of Her Royal Highness Princess Sabeeka Bint Ibrahim Al Khalifa, wife of His Majesty King Hamad and President of the Supreme Council for Women (SCW). The BQA clinched the first place in the 6th Edition of Her Royal Highness Princess Sabeeka Bint Ibrahim Al Khalifa Award for Bahraini Women Advancement in the public institutions category and was honoured at the gala ceremony held on 5 February 2020. Dr. Al Mudhahki expressed her sincere thanks and gratitude to HRH Princess Sabeeka Bint Ibrahim Al Khalifa for nominating the BQA among the most effective government authorities in terms of the empowerment, involvement and advancement of Bahraini women.

Commenting on this occasion, the BQA Chief Executive said: 'By God's grace and bounty, the BQA continues to accomplish further milestones that enhance its national role, mandate and goals that it has achieved during the past period. The BQA won the 'Customer Service Excellence Award for Customer Support' category for the second consecutive year at the Government Forum 2019 and obtained the Advanced-Level Certificate in Information Security in the Theqah Programme. The Authority has been ranked in the Bahrain First National Report among the top five institutions for reducing the gender gap in terms of measuring the 'Bahrain Index' in gender equality in the public sector, issued by the Supreme Council for Women and endorsed by the Cabinet. Dr. Al Mudhahki emphasised that all these accomplishments and milestones achieved by the Authority and other national institutions were due to our wise leadership directives and the support provided by Her Royal Highness Princess Sabeeka Bint Ibrahim Al Khalifa, who is credited with creating this competitive environment among government and

private authorities, institutions and ministries to institutionalise the rights of Bahraini women and continue to step up their efforts to achieve further national accomplishments and access high ranking positions. Dr. Al Mudhahki further stressed that the Authority's winning of this Award confirms its implementation and application of all the goals of the national plan for the empowerment of Bahraini women, in partnership with the Supreme Council for Women.

Dr. Al Mudhahki congratulated all the BQA's employees for the continued success in serving our beloved nation, and praised their role and efforts in developing and promoting the education and training system in the Kingdom of Bahrain, as well as assuring the quality of the performance of education and training institutions to achieve all the goals for the empowerment of Bahraini women. She wished everyone all the best in serving our beloved Kingdom and in strengthening and promoting its position in all fields.

Customer Service Excellence Award "Tawasul" at the Government Forum 2019

BQA wins the Customer Service Excellence Award "Tawasul" for the second consecutive year

Dr. Jawaher Shaheen Al Mudhahki, Chief Executive of the Education and Training Quality Authority (BQA), stressed that the attention, interest, care and guidance given by His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, King of the Kingdom of Bahrain, for the nation and its people as well as residents and expatriates living on its territory, has been and continues to be the source of security and protection for all.

The BQA Chief Executive expressed her sincere thanks and gratitude to the estimable Government of the Kingdom of Bahrain, notably His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, for their kind attention and rigorous follow-up by all the bodies, institutions and government authorities, as well as their appreciation of the tireless efforts made by government employees to improve business activities across all government authorities, clearly reflected in holding the annual government forum and showing their concern and care. The Chief Executive also paid tribute and praised the virtues of the absent-present, His Royal Highness Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa, the late Prime Minister, may God bless his soul and reward him for his invaluable directives that had the

most impact on the prosperity of our country at all levels and in all international forums.

'Winning the Customer Service Excellence Award "Tawasul" for the second consecutive year at the Government Forum confirms that our wise government's interest in communicating and interacting with customer complaints and suggestions and addressing the needs of citizens is a priority of the Government Action Plan', Dr. Al Mudhahki said. 'It also shows the BQA's keenness to implement the government's directions in terms of continuously responding to customer inquiries and resolving all complaints received from students and their parents in order to achieve the key goals within the Government Action Plan and the Kingdom of Bahrain's Economic Vision 2030 to improve quality services and overall performance,' she added. The BQA Chief Executive also appreciated that the authority was honoured on October 6, 2019 for winning the Excellence Award at the Government Forum, for the second year in a row, for the 'Customer Service Excellence Award for Customer Support' category.

Dr. Al Mudhahki stressed her pride, and that of BQA's employees, in achieving this award, which places the BQA among the best interactive government authorities in the national system of suggestions and complaints (Tawasul). At the same time, Dr. Al Mudhahki also congratulated His Highness

Shaikh Mohammed bin Mubarak Al Khalifa, Deputy Prime Minister and Chairman of the Supreme Council for the Development of Education and Training, His Excellency Mr. Ayman Bin Tawfiq, Minister of Youth and Sport Affairs, BQA Chairman, respected board members and BQA's employees for this significant achievement.

Directorate of Government Schools Reviews & Directorate of Private Schools and Kindergarten Reviews (DSR)

First: Forums

The Education and Training Quality Authority (BQA) and in a strategic partnership with the Labour Fund 'Tamkeen', organised the Directorate of Government Schools Reviews & Directorate of Private Schools and Kindergarten Reviews (DSR) Sixth Forum under the title: 'Enhancing Quality Practices in School Work through Action Research' on Thursday 30 January 2020.

The Forum targeted teachers and middle and senior leaders in government and private schools. The Forum provided opportunities for dialogue between the Ministry of Education officials and the government and private school community in general. This was done through tackling various themes, including enhancing quality practices in school work in the Kingdom of Bahrain through action research, enhancing professional partnership among those concerned with improving the quality of school performance, identifying action research mechanisms, implementation and incentives in education, and challenges facing the implementation. These themes were covered through the keynote speaker's paper and workshop titled 'Action Research Mechanisms and Implementation'. This focused primarily on training participants on the use of action research mechanisms in some areas of school work. The Forum also included a panel discussion during which a group of government and private school staff in the Kingdom of Bahrain presented and reviewed their successful experiences and implementation of action research mechanisms. This is done to raise participants' awareness of the role of action research in the development and improvement of the quality of performance and reflect on current educational practices.

The Forum was attended by 100 specialists from various education institutions, including middle and senior leadership from government and private schools. The attendees also included consultants, educators, school performance improvement experts, education quality assurance experts and researchers in action research. This provided the platform for exchanging experiences and collecting feedback from different personals in education.

The Forum's topics and themes were:
- Enhancing quality through Action research.
- Identifying action research mechanisms and implementation in the education sector.
- Reviewing successful models of action research implementation in some government and private schools in the Kingdom of Bahrain.

Recommendations:

The following recommendations can be summarised from the Forum:

- Raise teacher's awareness and motivation by instilling the concept of evidence-based change and develop their roles as founders of the approach of structured inductive thinking and knowledge generators.
- School leadership to embrace a culture of action research and provide an organised research-stimulating school climate.
- Encourage the establishment of internal school teams to conduct action research and spread action research to include all members and levels of the school community.

- Follow up teachers' professional development programmes and train them on the skills of conducting action research and ensure that university courses include a focus on action research.
- Seek to issue a refereed journal comprising teachers' action research papers to disseminate and learn from successful practices, with appropriate motivation for participants.
- Develop procedures to take into account teachers' action research productions as part of their professional development hours.
- Invest the results of various elements of action research, both individual and collaborative, in investigating school problems and relying on them to devise appropriate solutions and adequate remedial plans.

Second: Capacity Building

As part of their efforts to raise the quality of performance and capacity building activities, both DGS and DPS provided a wide range of training programmes and activities for their employees. Internally, a series of intensive training events were conducted to train review specialists and external reviewers. These included 22 different events ranging from workshops, lectures, discussion sessions, and site-based training. Both DGS and DPS implemented distance training through open learning platforms such as Microsoft Teams to conduct e-training, team discussions and training sessions, especially in the period that coincided with the decision to work from home as part of national efforts to combat and prevent the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Moreover, both Directorates registered their reviewers in a number of Bahrain Institute of Public Administration (BIPA) training programmes such as Bennaa and Takween as part of the capacity building efforts, in addition to participating in some international conferences such as the Australian International Education Conference (AIEC)' held in Perth, Australia

in October 2019, and the Arctic Education Forum held in the Finnish City of Oulu from 18 to 20 February 2020.

Externally, the DGS took part in building the national capacity of government schools, with a number of the Directorate's members taking part in the Ministry of Education's Training Programme 'Makaseb'. The programme was an opportunity to brief the participants on the roles of the Authority and the quality assurance criteria and processes. They also participated in the two training workshops organised by the Ministry of Education to train government schools on completing the Self-Evaluation Form (SEF). Similar workshops were held by the DPS for private schools. Additionally, three training workshops were organised for government and private schools to raise their readiness for monitoring visits. The Director of the Directorate of Government Schools Reviews also participated in a seminar about the Finnish education system which covered the reasons for its distinction, its strengths, areas for improvement, challenges and future aspirations. The seminar also covered the most notable changes in the Finnish education system in the light of the latest reform trends.

Directorate of Vocational Reviews

The Directorate of Vocational Reviews (DVR) continued its internal capacity building initiatives for its employees through holding training workshops, sessions and professional meetings. This is to raise the reviewers' readiness for the implementation of reviews and exchanging of experiences and good practices.

The DVR conducted online training sessions through open learning platforms such as "Microsoft Teams". These platforms were used in implementing discussions sessions and reviewers' training workshops to raise their readiness for assessing distance education practices, especially in the period that coincided with the decision to work from home as part of the national efforts to combat and prevent the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The DVR continued to build the capacity of vocational education and training institutions in relation to the Reviews Framework, by holding two training workshops on the requirements of the Cycle 4 Reviews Framework and criteria of each review aspect, self-evaluation mechanisms and good practices and completing the Self-Evaluation Form (SEF). These workshops were attended by 41 participants representing 19 training providers. One of these workshops was attended by four representatives of the Judicial and Legal Studies Institute to benefit from and learn about good practices related to self-evaluation and quality assurance requirements.

As part of the BQA role in disseminating the culture of quality at the national level in the Kingdom of Bahrain and building national capabilities, the Directorate held a training workshop for seven external reviewers and consultants on mechanisms for reviewing the performance of vocational education and training institutions according to the requirements of Cycle 4 Reviews Framework and BQA's policies and procedures; to qualify them to contribute to the DVR's reviews. In this workshop, all matters related to the role of reviewers, external reviewers and consultants in the various review processes were reviewed and discussed, including the pre-review, during and post review visit up to the publication of the review report. The policies and procedures related to the code of conduct and confidentiality of information were also discussed.

Emphasising the importance of knowledge sharing among various national institutions, the DVR conducted a workshop in the academic year 2019-2020, attended by representatives from the Council of Representatives of Bahrain on the Reviews Framework of vocational education and training institutions and the quality assurance criteria.

The Directorate of Higher Education Reviews

In conjunction with the Kingdom of Bahrain's celebration of the Bahraini Women's Day,

the Sixth Forum of the Directorate of Higher Education Reviews (DHR) was held on 28 November 2019, under the title: 'The Role of Bahraini Women in Higher Education and Future Sciences'. The theme of the Forum came in response to the directives of Her Royal Highness Princess Sabeeka bint Ibrahim Al Khalifa, wife of HM the King and President of the Supreme Council for Women (SCW), to dedicate the Bahraini Women's Day 2019 to highlighting the Bahraini women's contributions in the field of higher education and the future sciences.

In preparation for the BQA-DHR Forum, a group of female students representing public and private higher education institutions were invited on the 6th of November, 2019 to participate in a round-table panel discussion that was held at the BQA premises.

The panel discussion aimed at identifying the students' perceptions and insights in relation to the role of Bahraini women in higher education and the future sciences, the extent of support received and the students' vision of how the role of women in applied fields and future sciences can be enhanced. Extracts from the panel discussion were videotaped and included in the Forum programme. From the panel discussion, it was concluded that varying degrees of support are currently being provided to encourage Bahraini women in higher education institutions to engage in future sciences, with some institutions paying greater attention to supporting women's involvement in these disciplines and in more innovative ways.

In addition to the panel discussion, a series of questions were sent to higher education institutions to survey their views on how to design curricula and allocate teaching and learning methods that can effectively meet the needs of the internal and external labour market, and take full advantage of the new opportunities offered by the recent technological advances in education and learning. The survey also sought to identify the most notable new programmes offered by these institutions in the promising areas of future sciences, as well as to identify

various initiatives/efforts that aim to develop both technical and non-technical skills of female students and faculty members such as creativity, social intelligence, and communication.

Based on the results of the survey, the presentations and discussion, the Forum concluded by giving a number of recommendations, the most important of which are:

- Disseminate and raise awareness about the importance of future sciences, which are expected to have a significant impact on human life, including artificial intelligence, astrobiology, quantitative computation, stem-cell research, cloning, and the human genome chain. It is also expected that these sciences will affect other disciplines.
- Establish policies and legislation, and draw up related up-to-date strategies, targeting the scientific and technological empowerment of young people in general, and women in particular.
- Enhance the quality of academic programmes offered by higher education institutions and link them to the current and future needs of the labour market, to address the risks associated with the Fourth Industrial Revolution, which has been described as 'shaping the future of education', and which requires accelerating the reformation of the skills of the workforce'.
- Drive higher education institutions to be incubators of lifelong learning principles through addressing challenges and obstacles and institutionalising their application.
- Support comprehensive scientific research, particularly cross-disciplinary research, with more attention being given to human and social sciences, and enhance programmes related to those sciences in order to support future jobs and careers.

Second: Workshops and Capacity Building

As part of its keenness to promote national capacity building and promote communication with the related stakeholders, the DHR held three workshops to introduce the updated Programme Reviews Framework (Cycle 2) and train participants on the review and self-evaluation processes. Representatives of government and private higher education institutions which will be subject to review during the year 2020-2021 participated in these workshops. The workshops also covered a number of themes addressing all standards of the updated Programme Reviews Framework, evidence-building, and conduct of self-evaluations processes.

Through its training workshops the BQA aims to brief universities on the importance of self-evaluation in identifying their strengths and areas for improvement, playing an effective role in enhancing the learning outcomes of their academic programmes, linking them to the needs of the labour market and promoting the performance of the institutions. It also aims to collect feedback from them and benefit from their results as higher education institutions are a key partner in the review process.

Directorate of National Framework Operations (DFO)

On 23 January 2020, and in strategic partnership with the Labour Fund 'Tamkeen', the Education and Training Quality Authority (BQA) held a Forum titled 'The Role of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) in Achieving Education for Sustainable Development'. The Forum attracted 100 specialists in the field of education and training and national qualifications frameworks in the Kingdom of Bahrain.

The aim of the Forum was to highlight the most important achievements of the Kingdom of Bahrain in education for sustainable development, identify the most notable regional and international practices in education for sustainable development, and define the role of the Education and Training Quality Authority, represented by the National Qualification Framework, in accomplishing Goal 4 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This is 'quality

education' targeting to 'ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all by 2030.' It also aims to identify the role of education and training institutions in ensuring the quality of education and training, emphasising the importance of combined efforts to achieve this goal, as well as enhancing the importance of incorporating twenty-first century skills as part of study plans and as part of their transfer to supportive plans for sustainable development goals.

The Forum's agenda comprised many themes, work papers, and presentations delivered by the keynote speakers, in addition to a workshop and a presentation that reviewed 'The NQF: Five Years of Achievements and Coming Years'. A paper on 'The importance of inclusion of social skills as part of a school plan' was delivered. Another working paper titled 'Aspirations for lifelong learning: Recognition of prior learning (RPL)' was presented and tackled the need for cognitive diversity, lifelong learning, and recognition of forms of prior learning, both institutional and individual or gained from overall life experience.

The Forum also included panel discussions on education under the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) agenda with a number of relevant stakeholders including representatives of the Office of the First Deputy Prime Minister, the National Qualifications Framework Advisory Committee, and education and training institutions in the Kingdom of Bahrain, as well as a number of members of the qualifications' validation panels. In addition, a workshop under the title 'The Role of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) in Achieving Education for Sustainable Development' was held.

At the end of the Forum, a number of recommendations were shared, most notably:
- Develop education and training institutions internal policies that align with Bahrain's sustainable development agenda.

- Implement regional and international good practice relating to education for sustainable development.
- Enhance the role of education and training institutions in achieving Goal 4 of the SDGs by adhering to the NQF standards, which assure the quality of education and ensure that inclusive and equitable quality education is provided.
- Promote lifelong learning opportunities, develop curricula, and transfer them to supportive plans for SDGs.

Workshops and Capacity Building

In the context of workshops and capacity building the Education and Training Quality Authority (BQA), represented by the Directorate of National Framework Operations, delivered six training workshops for the staff of higher education institutions and vocational training institutions that were scheduled to submit their institutional listings, qualification placements and alignment applications. Out of these six workshops, two addressed the requirements of the institutional listing process and were attended by 32 participants, two were on meeting the requirements of the qualification placement process, in which 72 took part, and two addressed the requirements of alignment of foreign qualification on the NQF and were attended by 44 participants.
As part of national efforts to combat and prevent the spread of COVID-19, the Education and Training Quality Authority has ensured the continuity of workshops and capacity building of education and training institutions through the use of the virtual meeting platform 'Microsoft Teams' by remote work teams. These workshops were followed by consultative support meetings with the education and training institutions to assess their general readiness for submitting their applications and the level of familiarity with the requirements of the NQF.
The Directorate also held a training workshop for people who specialise in various fields and work on institutional listing evaluation committees and qualifications validation committees, to expand the trained panel members database of local

educationalists, academics, trainers and experienced professionals on evaluating the NQF requirements. This contributes to the sustainability of the exchange of experiences between education and training institutions regarding institutional listing and qualification placement requirements. As an initiative to promote good practice, the Authority placed a list of experts who worked with it as members of the institutional listing evaluation committees and qualifications validation committees on the BQA website with a brief curricula vita.

With the aim of spreading the quality assurance culture as an integral part of the NQF, the Authority held three awareness workshops with 38 participants from a number of stakeholders to familiarise them with the NQF as a tool to develop the Kingdome's education and training sectors, explain its goals and operations, and the role it plays in linking learning outcomes to labour market needs.

Directorate of National Examinations

In terms of national capacity building, the Directorate of National Examinations' staff attended a number of training workshops organised by the BQA to improve their efficiency in acquiring new experiences or supporting concepts of quality assessment. Also, some of the Directorate's staff attended online training courses to support the employees' personal and professional development.
The Directorate also took part in the International Committee for the development of the framework for systems and procedures of recognition of international evaluation and examination agencies of the International Association for Educational Assessment (IAEA). This is aimed at finalising the preparation of the framework document for presentation to the members of the IAEA Conference as a preliminary stage for its adoption at the next IAEA Conference to be held in October 2020.

Furthermore, the Directorate held a series of training workshops for relevant education institutions. These workshops were mainly focusing on 'Grade 12 Test Specification for National Examinations 2020, which were targeting in particular all government secondary schools. The workshops were attended by representatives from the Ministry of Education and government secondary schools. The Arabic language workshops attracted 51 participants, 52 in the English language workshops and 67 in the problem solving ones. These workshops were part of the efforts to train the relevant stakeholders on the updated test specifications and implementation mechanisms of the National Examinations 2020.

The workshops emphasised the importance of National Examinations for Grade 12 students at government schools in the Kingdom of Bahrain, introduced the most notable skills, techniques and methods on which the national examinations are based, and familiarised participants with the methods to induct their students to sit for the national examinations.

BQA Webinar
'Education in the Kingdom of Bahrain With and Beyond COVID-19 Pandemic'

The Education and Training Quality Authority's webinar titled: 'Education in the Kingdom of Bahrain With and Beyond COVID-19 Pandemic', has been held through a remote communication platform to highlight the efforts of education and training institutions in the Kingdom of Bahrain during the current period and since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. Approximately 700 specialists, concerned parties and related stakeholders of the education and training sectors were registered and took part in this forum, which was held on Wednesday, 24 June 2020.

Keynote speakers from the Kingdom's education and quality-related bodies, authorities and institutions delivered their presentations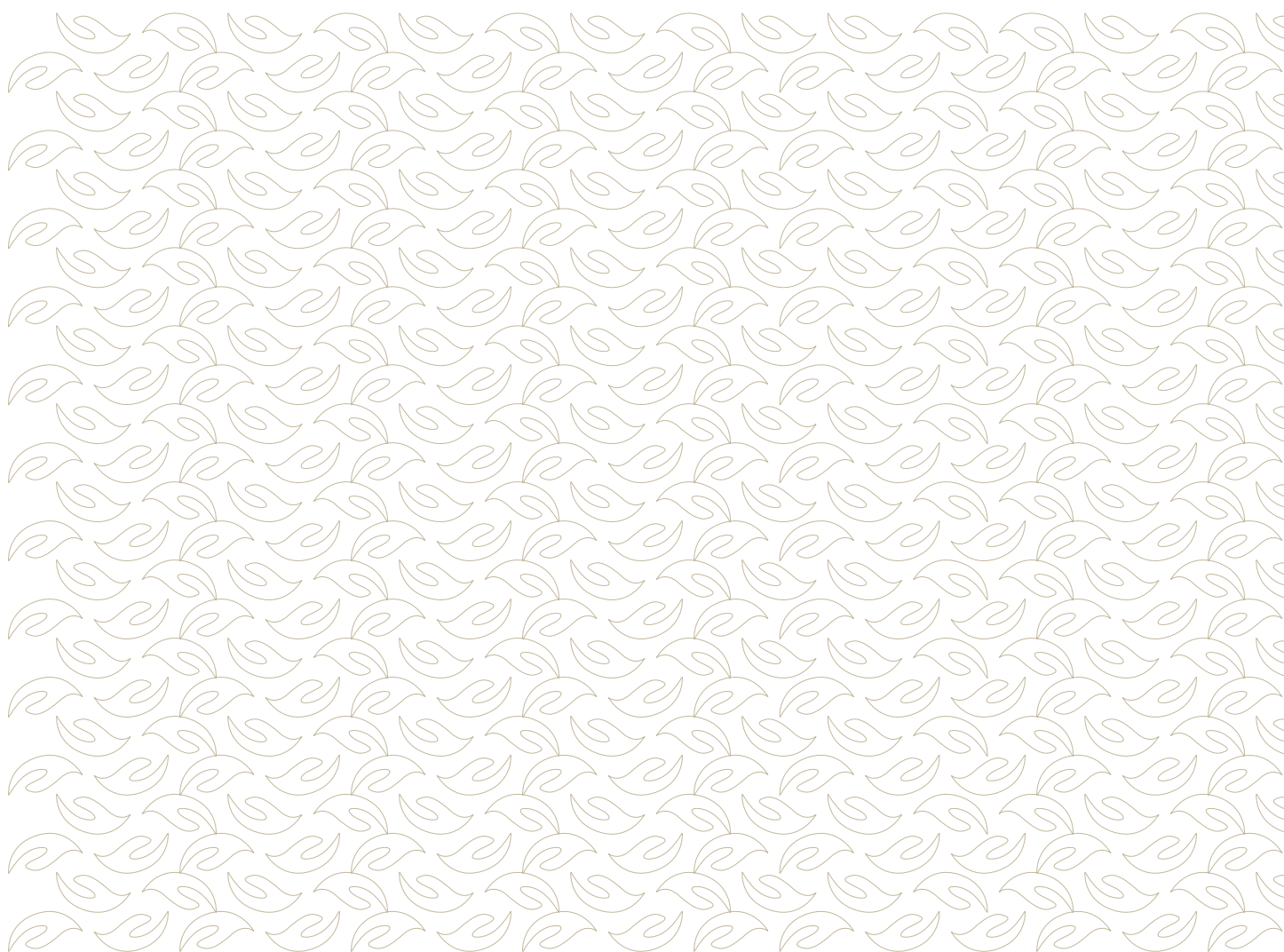 in the forum. They were H.E. Prof Riyad Hamzah, President of the University of Bahrain, H.E. Dr. Mohammed Mubarak Juma'a, Assistant Undersecretary for Resources and Services at the Ministry of Education, Dr. Shaikha Mai Al Otaibi, Chairperson of the Board of Directors of The Bahrain Bayan School, and Dr. Maitham Aloraibi, Senior Manager of Quality Assurance at the Bahrain Institute of Banking and Financial Studies (BIBF).

The Forum sessions were facilitated by Dr. Tariq Al-Sindi, General Director of the National Qualifications Framework and National Examinations at BQA.

In her opening speech, Dr. Jawaher Shaheen Al Mudhahki, Chief Executive of the Education and Training Quality Authority (BQA), welcomed the participants in the BQA forum, expressed her appreciation to the keynote speakers and commended the contributions of the education and training bodies and institutions. She wished all to benefit from the fruitful discussions, enrich the education and training institutions with the debates and recommendations of the forum and continue to promote and develop the quality of the education, learning, knowledge, skills and competencies that our students are offered in a lasting and effective manner, under any circumstances and at any time, whether the education, learning and training are directly within an institution or through various educational and electronic media.

Dr. Jawaher stressed in her speech that the Kingdom of Bahrain, praise be to God, and under the auspices and invaluable directives of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, and the sensible leadership and rigorous follow-up by His Royal Highness Prince Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, with the unlimited guidance and support by His Royal Highness Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa, the late Prime Minister, may his soul rest in eternal peace and may God make his abode in His spacious gardens, have taken firm steps during this pandemic through the wise decisions taken to protect and safeguard our children, both citizens and residents.

During her speech, the BQA Chief Executive praised the decision to suspend education and training and to move to distance education, which was timely in safeguarding our children. She explained that the distance education process was applied as an emergency, with new mechanisms at all levels of education in all higher education institutions worldwide. However, distance education is a suitable mechanism for achieving future lifelong learning, to accomplish Goal 4 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), namely, the 'quality education' which we seek to achieve at the BQA, being an initiative of the development of education and training in the Kingdom under the guidance of His Highness Shaikh Mohammed bin Mubarak Al Khalifa, Deputy Prime Minister and Chairman of the Supreme Council for the Development of Education and Training; the National Qualifications Framework was established under the umbrella of the Authority in 2012, since the NQF is supportive of lifelong learning.

"The Authority has, under its mandate set forth by the Royal Decree with respect to the Organisation of the BQA, implemented the directives issued by the Government of the Kingdom of Bahrain, and has evaluated the distance education practices established by the Kingdom's education and training institutions during the current period. The evaluation aims to document the efforts made during the current period to identify the quality of provision offered by education and training institutions, in order to disseminate good practice and make recommendations for the development of distance education systems while ensuring that the quality of education is sustainable if this mechanism is widely adopted in the forthcoming phase. Furthermore, the Authority developed the review framework, procedures and mechanisms. The current period has shown the need to establish a distance education strategy in the Kingdom of Bahrain, while reviewing the amendment of laws and regulations to recognise its learning outcomes based on clear regulations and procedures", the Chief Executive added.

In his presentation, Prof Riyad Hamzah, President of the University of Bahrain, addressed the digital transformation timeline at the University of Bahrain and the technical support for students and faculty members, by recording scientific experiments through virtual laboratories and the challenges that the University has faced in training. Of particular note are practical training in companies and institutions being replaced by focusing on the skills students must acquire, whether technical or cognitive ones, enabling them to use infrastructure, and strengthening quality assurance requirements in higher education institutions. Prof Riyadh also referred to the evaluation and marking mechanisms followed by the university, emphasising the necessity of seriously reviewing the distance education mechanisms after this pandemic.

Dr. Mohammed Mubarak Juma'a, Assistant Undersecretary for Resources and Services at the Ministry of Education, presented a paper titled 'Virtual Classrooms'. Through this, he highlighted the experience of the Kingdom of Bahrain, represented by the Ministry of Education, in developing the education system under the present situation and in a manner, that meets the requirements of the exceptional circumstances presented by COVID-19, by establishing virtual classrooms to ensure the continuity of the education process, with outstanding teachers to manage these classes.

In a paper titled 'Experience of the Bahrain Bayan School within COVID-19 Pandemic and Beyond', Dr. Shaikha Mai Al Otaibi, Chairperson of the Board of Directors of The Bahrain Bayan School, highlighted the precautionary measures taken by Bahrain Bayan School under the present situation, especially with the closure of schools as part of the precautionary measures and the decisions of the distinguished Government of the Kingdom of Bahrain. Dr. Al Otaibi outlined the efforts made by the Bahrain Bayan School to continue the education process through remote communication platforms and the new assessment strategies it developed, in addition to the challenges encountered and ways of solving them and, finally, the recommendations that were drawn up to overcome the difficulties and to continue to deal with the current situation and beyond.

On his part, Dr. Maitham Aloraibi, Senior Manager of Quality Assurance at the Bahrain Institute of Banking and Financial Studies (BIBF), presented a working paper on the Institute's distance education experience. He stressed that this experience gave the BIBF's officials confidence in their steps towards distance education, already started before the COVID-19 pandemic, enabling the Institute to launch a sophisticated project offering a number of options for learners. Dr. Aloraibi also emphasised that the Institute depended on a prior distance education platform for e-training, where the decision to fully move to this platform in line with present current developments in view of the current situation was taken.

The keynote speakers addressed a number of important and different themes, namely the review and discussion of current practices of distance education, identification of opportunities and challenges facing the education and training sectors during the current period under exceptional circumstances and in the light of the procedures adopted by the Kingdom of Bahrain to combat the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as the need to identify the most important lessons of the current crisis

and utilise the Forum's suggestions and recommendations that can be implemented on the ground, with a special focus on the current and post COVID-19 situation.

This year's Report, in its twelfth edition 'Education in a Changing World', provides an analytical overview of the performance of education and training institutions in the Kingdom of Bahrain, and the education and training institutions that have been listed and the qualifications that have been placed and aligned to the National Qualifications Framework. Also described are the lessons learned from these findings and the future plans proposed by the Education and Training Quality Authority (BQA), represented by its relevant directorates, to support and develop the quality of education and training in the Kingdom. As the education and training institutions move to distance education due to the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Authority sought to monitor the efforts made by these institutions and assess their effectiveness through the collection of data and information on distance education, evaluation of virtual sessions offered, and collection and analysis of feedback from students, learners, teaching staff and trainers. The Authority also surveyed the views of the school students' parents.

The Directorate of Government School Reviews (DGS) continued to implement the fourth review cycle by reviewing the performance of 37 government schools in the academic year 2019-2020. The reports of these reviews, submitted to schools, highlighted all details and the most notable strengths and areas for improvement.

Overall, the results of the reviews of the 37 government schools were below expectations, with approximately 50% of government schools being judged 'Inadequate', while the percentage of 'Outstanding' and 'Good' grades was 33%. These percentages are very influential in the overall performance of the education system in the Kingdom of Bahrain. Reasons for the decline in the results of many schools are that the BQA's previous review report recommendations have not been taken seriously. Therefore, many of these

recommendations have been repeated as they have not been built on since the last review visit or their fulfillment has been delayed until the subsequent review visit. This is exacerbated by poor procedural plans, even though these are based on the recommendations. The trend of girls' schools outperforming boys' schools, and the instability of administrative and teaching staff continues in the results of this year's reviews.

The high-performing schools were mainly characterised by clear leadership insights, which contributed to raising teachers' professional competencies and developing their performance, with a focus on classroom practices and regular follow up. This showed in the students receiving outstanding support, which directly helped them overcome any academic and personal problems during their learning period. Meanwhile, the cumulative percentage of 'Inadequate' schools indicates that the quality of provision is ineffective in raising the low academic standards of students. This is consistent with the ineffective use of teaching strategies in these schools, with the poor, inappropriate and inaccurate evaluation of academic progress.

The Directorate also sought to identify the effectiveness of distance education practices in government schools, particularly considering the ongoing efforts of schools, and under the auspices of the Ministry of Education in response to the implications of COVID-19 pandemic. This aim was to document the efforts made, monitor the quality of provision provided in the government schools during this period, disseminate positive practices, and provide recommendations for the development of distance education school practices. Moreover, it is essential to ensure the sustainability of good education if the schools continue to widely adopt this form of education in the coming period.

The Directorate's efforts included a survey of parents' views through e-questionnaires, collection of data and feedback from schools, communication with relevant bodies at the Ministry of Education, and evaluation of virtual sessions offered during this period. The Directorate of Government School Reviews will continue to review the performance of government school in the 2020-2021 academic year and conduct monitoring visits to schools that were judged 'Inadequate', as well as conducting special reviews for schools that received an 'Outstanding' judgment following the amended operational plan for the fourth cycle of reviews. The Directorate will also complete distance education evaluation processes and submit the final recommendations to the concerned parties. Based on the evaluation findings, the school reviews frameworks and procedures across the Kingdom of Bahrain will be further developed.

The Directorate of Private Schools and Kindergartens Reviews (DPS) continued its third cycle of private school's reviews by reviewing 12 private schools in the academic year 2019-2020. However, the cumulative results of the private schools raise concerns with the high percentage of schools which received an 'Inadequate' judgement which represents a challenge towards fulfilling the Kingdom's private education development aspirations. The most notable strengths and areas for improvement are included in the review reports of schools.

Clear discrepancies are noted in the overall performance of schools, with the most effective schools being characterised by a conscious focus on the quality of main processes due to their importance in achieving high learning outcomes. The challenges facing the less effective schools result from their focus on temporary measures that do not address these challenges significantly and have insignificant impact on learning outcomes. There is a lack of awareness of improvement priorities, especially those related to teaching, learning and assessment practices.

Some private schools still face challenges relating to human and financial resources, as well as security, safety and maintenance aspects. Therefore, in order to improve their performance, there is a requirement to provide support to these schools, particularly to their leaderships. This is to enable them to work in accordance with development priorities and benefit from review reports to improve their overall performance in order to ensure a positive and direct impact on students' academic achievement.

The Directorate also sought to evaluate the efforts made by the private schools and their effectiveness in terms of distance education practices in response to the implications of the COVID-19 pandemic. This was conducted through the collection of parents' views using e-questionnaires, collection of data from schools and evaluation of a sample of virtual sessions. In the academic year 2020-2021, DPS will continue to review the performance of private schools in accordance with the schedule set for completing the third review cycle, in addition to conducting monitoring visits to private schools that received an 'Inadequate' judgement.

In February 2019 the BQA commenced Cycle four of reviews in line with the approved **Directorate of Vocational Reviews (DVR)** reviews plan thus commencing Phase 1 of Cycle 4 of reviews of vocational education and training institutions (VET). In the academic year 2019-2020, the BQA completed the review of thirteen VET institutions, twelve of them licensed by the Ministry of Labour and Social Development (MLSD) and one licensed by the Ministry of Education (MoE).

The analysis of the reviews' outcomes of the thirteen institutions portrays a positive picture. All institutions have been judged 'Satisfactory' or better for their overall effectiveness, of which one received an 'Outstanding' judgement, five rated 'Good', and seven graded 'Satisfactory. It is worth noting that four of the thirteen institutions that were reviewed in the 2019-2020 academic year are newly-established, being reviewed for the first time. Of these four, one was rated 'Good', while the remaining

three were judged 'Satisfactory' for overall effectiveness. These results show that these institutions have a clear vision focusing on improving learners' achievement levels and enhancing their learning experience, being translated into strategic plans based on comprehensive knowledge of labour market and learners' needs.

To determine the effectiveness of distance education practices implemented by vocational education and training institutions in response to the exceptional circumstances imposed by the Covid-19 pandemic, the Directorate has communicated with VETs, analysed the data collected from them, assessed the virtual training sessions offered, and surveyed the views of trainers and learners. The performance of two institutions has been evaluated in detail. The Directorate will submit its final recommendations to the concerned parties and will continue to develop frameworks and procedures for reviewing the performance of VETs in accordance with the evaluation outcomes. In the 2020-2021 academic year, the DVR will continue to review the performance of these institutions in accordance with the schedule set for completing the Cycle 4 reviews, in addition to conducting monitoring visits to institutions that received an 'Inadequate' judgement.

In 2019-2020 academic year, the BQA, represented by the **Directorate of Higher Education Reviews (DHR)**, continued the follow-up review visits to all academic programmes that were reviewed in phase 2 of Cycle 1 of the academic programme reviews. The BQA published five follow-ups visit reports for programmes offered by four private Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) and one government HEI, in which one programme received a 'Good Progress' judgment, three 'Adequate Progress' and one 'Inadequate Progress'.

In January 2020, the BQA completed the second cycle of HEIs reviews, which had commenced in October 2018. The second cycle reviews covered 11 HEIs, for which the BQA issued comprehensive review reports including a set of Appreciations highlighting the most notable institutional strengths, and Recommendations identified by the Authority as areas for improvement. Overall, the best performance of HEIs was in Standard 5, 'Student Support Services', as it was addressed by all the HEIs reviewed. The lowest performance was in Standard 8, 'Community Engagement', which was not addressed by two institutions. It is noted that all the HEIs that underwent reviews underperformed in Standard 8.

In general, the second cycle of institutional reviews documents the status of HEIs in the Kingdom of Bahrain during the review period from October 2018 to January 2020. Analysis of the overall findings of institutional reviews showed 105 Appreciations and 276 Recommendations. In context, the content of the Recommendations covered broader aspects than the content of the Appreciations. The BQA is planning to conduct follow-up visits, scheduled for 2021-2022, to follow up on the improvement plans developed by HEIs to address the Recommendations, and particular attention will be paid to those institutions that have not met the quality requirements.

In the academic year 2019-2020 the Education and Training Quality Authority, represented by the **Directorate of National Framework Operations**, listed four vocational training institutions in the NQF Register. This brings the total number of listed education and training institutions to 28. It also placed 23 qualifications on the NQF Register, including 13 higher education qualifications and ten vocational training qualifications, bringing the total number placed on the National Qualifications Framework to 136. Seven qualifications, all of which are bachelor degree qualifications, have been re-validated to ensure that they continue to fulfill the minimum validation requirements. Also, the Directorate aligned six foreign qualifications to the NQF, being two qualifications from the higher education sector and four from awarding bodies providing foreign qualifications in vocational education and training institutions in the Kingdom of Bahrain. This brings the total number of foreign qualifications aligned on the NQF to 24.

Through the processes of the national qualification framework, noticeable improvement was observed in the quality of applications, the vast majority of education and training institutions now being familiar with the key requirements of the National Qualification Framework. Some areas for further improvement were determined, most notably the need to establish national statistics that show labour market needs. There is still a need to build the capacity of employees in some vocational education and training institutions in relation to the formulation of learning outcomes for qualifications and development of a mechanism to measure the extent to which such learning outcomes are achieved. There is a need for coordination and cooperation among all education and training stakeholders in relation to the development of education and training systems to be more flexible, comprehensive and responsive, especially during crises and exceptional circumstances, and seeking to develop legislations and mechanisms for the qualifications gained through distance education approaches.

During the 2019-2020 academic year, the BQA, through the **Directorate of National Examinations (DNE)**, produced a report on regional and international practices in relation to educational assessments of learning outcomes. These are a performance indicator of the quality of the education system, measured by data and information of teaching and learning outcomes, as well as being used to measure students' ability to engage in the labour market or university admission. It is therefore very important that the quality of these assessments be given high attention.

Education assessment literature also suggests the importance of raising the quality of assessment tools, being the examinations carried out at the end of school education. Therefore, the focus of countries and education institutions on executing evaluation tools and promoting evaluation practices has become one of education's development characteristics.

It was established that educational assessments include those that are implemented at the end of the secondary stage, and others as secondary stage tests plus university admission tests. Each country has adopted an assessment that is commensurate with the nature of its education system, educational goals, and future aspirations.

In response to the Kingdom of Bahrain Economic Vision, BQA seeks to keep abreast of the latest global developments in educational evaluation as per the National Plan approved by the Supreme Council for the Development of Education and Training. This consists of the conduct of unified national examinations for Grade 12 and include their scores within the secondary school graduates results and use them as basis for university admission.

In order to achieve the desired improvement consistent with the latest global updates in the educational assessment, these examinations should be developed based on the goals and standards of the development of education in the Kingdom of Bahrain. They also should take into account the 21st Century skills and guided by the latest findings of the international educational institutions and organisations in this aspect.

Directorate of Government Schools Reviews*

#	ختم الجودة	Government schools reviewed	Overall judgements Cycle 3	Overall judgements 4 Cycle
1		Aminah Bint Wahab Primary Girls School	1: Outstanding	1: Outstanding
2		Al-Sanabis Primary Girls School	1: Outstanding	1: Outstanding
3		Al-Sehlah Primary Girls School	1: Outstanding	1: Outstanding
4		Mariam Bint Omran Primary Girls School	1: Outstanding	1: Outstanding
5		Um Ayman Primary Girls School	1: Outstanding	1: Outstanding
6		Khawlah Secondary Girls School	1: Outstanding	1: Outstanding
7		West Rifaa Primary Girls School	2: Good	1: Outstanding
8		Hassan Bin Thabit Primary Boys School	2: Good	1: Outstanding
9		Khadija Al-Kubra Intermediate Girls School	3: Satisfactory	1: Outstanding
10		Al-Orouba Primary Girls School	1: Outstanding	
11		Hajer Primary Girls School	1: Outstanding	
12		Rabia'a Al-Adaweyia Primary Girls School	1: Outstanding	
13		Al-Rawdha Primary Girls School	1: Outstanding	
14		Ain Jaloot Primary Girls School	1: Outstanding	
15		Karrana Primary Girls School	1: Outstanding	
16		Al-Khawarizmi Primary Boys School	1: Outstanding	
17		Sumayia Primary Girls School	1: Outstanding	
18		Al-Muharraq Primary Girls School	1: Outstanding	
19		Al-Qadsiah Primary Girls School	1: Outstanding	
20		Saar Primary Girls School	1: Outstanding	
21		Sar Secondary Girls School	1: Outstanding	
22		Al-Belad Al-Qadeem Primary Girls School	1: Outstanding	
23		Zubaidah Primary Girls School	1: Outstanding	
24		Arad Primary Girls School	1: Outstanding	
25		Fatima Bint Asad Primary Girls School	1: Outstanding	

*Reports are published on BQA website www.bqa.gov.bh

26		Jidhafs Secondary Girls School	1: Outstanding	
27		Sakeena Bint Al-Hussain Primary Girls School	1: Outstanding	
28		Abufiras Alhamadani Primary Boys School	1: Outstanding	
29		Aisha Um Al Moamneen Primary Girls School	1: Outstanding	
30		Al-Hidd Intermediate Girls School	1: Outstanding	
31		Shahrakan Primary Girls School	1: Outstanding	
32		Almustaqbal Primary Girls School	1: Outstanding	
33		Hitteen Primary Boys School	1: Outstanding	2: Good
34		Al-Hunaineya Primary Girls School	2: Good	2: Good
35		Salmabad Primary Girls School	2: Good	2: Good
36		Buri Primary Girls School	2: Good	2: Good
37		Al-Noor Secondary Girls School	2: Good	2: Good
38		Zannoobia Intermediate Girls School	2: Good	2: Good
39		Balqees Primary Girls School	3: Satisfactory	2: Good
40		Al-Manhal Primary Girls School	3: Satisfactory	2: Good
41		Zainab Intermediate Girls School	3: Satisfactory	2: Good
42		Al-Alaa Alhadhrami Primary Boys School	3: Satisfactory	2: Good
43		Bait Al-Hekmah Primary Girls School	3: Satisfactory	2: Good
44		East Rifaa Primary Girls School	3: Satisfactory	2: Good
45		Saba' Primary Girls School	3: Satisfactory	2: Good
46		Ruqaya Primary Girls School	3: Satisfactory	2: Good
47		Uqba Bin Nafe'a Primary Boys School	4: Inadequate	2: Good
48		Um Salama Intermediate Girls School	2: Good	
49		Tubli Primary Girls School	2: Good	
50		Al-Jazeera Primary Boys School	2: Good	
51		Hafsa Um Almoumineen Primary Girls School	2: Good	
52		Al-Daih Primary Intermediate Girls School	2: Good	
53		Al-Nabeeh Saleh Primary Girls School	2: Good	
54		Qurtoba Intermediate Girls School	2: Good	
55		Sanad Primary Girls School	2: Good	
56		*Asma That Alnetaqain Primary Girls School	2: Good	
57		Sitra Primary Girls School	2: Good	

*Reports are published on BQA website www.bqa.gov.bh

58		Al-Qudes Primary Girls School	2: Good	
59		Sh. Mohamed Bin Isa Al-Khalifa Primary Boys School	2: Good	
60		Omayma Bint Al-Noaman Secondary Girls School	2: Good	
61		Al-Duraz Intermediate Girls School	2: Good	
62		Sitra Intermediate Girls School	2: Good	
63		Sitra Secondary Girls School	2: Good	
64		Hamad Town Primary Girls School	2: Good	
65		Al-Duraz Primary Girls School	2: Good	
66		Abu Alaala Almaari Primary Boys School	2: Good	
67		Al-Muharraq Secondary Girls School	2: Good	
68		Tulaitela Primary Girls School	2: Good	
69		Al-Hoora Secondary Girls School	2: Good	
70		Al-Busaiteen Primary Girls School	2: Good	
71		A'ali Primary Girls School	2: Good	
72		Al-Dair Primary Intermediate Girls School	2: Good	
73		Al-Esteqlal Secondary Girls School	2: Good	
74		Al-Salam Primary Girls School	2: Good	
75		Primary Religious Institute	2: Good	
76		Al-Safa Primary Girls School	1: Outstanding	3: Satisfactory
77		Gharnata Primary Girls School	2: Good	3: Satisfactory
78		Al-Busaiteen Intermediate Girls School	2: Good	3: Satisfactory
79		Al-Noaim Secondary Boys School	2: Good	3: Satisfactory
80		Ibn Al-Nafees Primary Boys School	2: Good	3: Satisfactory
81		Al-Dair Primary Boys School	3: Satisfactory	3: Satisfactory
82		Hamad Town Secondary Girls School	3: Satisfactory	3: Satisfactory
83		Arad Primary Boys School	3: Satisfactory	3: Satisfactory
84		Hamad Town Primary Boys School	3: Satisfactory	3: Satisfactory
85		Um Al-Qura Primary Intermediate Girls School	3: Satisfactory	3: Satisfactory
86		Al Wadi Primary Boys School	3: Satisfactory	3: Satisfactory
87		Tubli Primary Boys School	3: Satisfactory	3: Satisfactory
88		Halima Al-Sa'adeyya Intermediate Girls School	3: Satisfactory	3: Satisfactory
89		Bahrain Vocational Secondary Boys School	3: Satisfactory	
90		Al-Nowaidrat Primary Girls School	3: Satisfactory	
91		Al-Shorooq Secondary Girls School	3: Satisfactory	
92		Ghazi Al-Qosaibi Secondary Girls School	3: Satisfactory	
93		Al-Hidd Primary Boys School	3: Satisfactory	

*Reports are published on BQA website www.bqa.gov.bh

94		(Nasser Vocational Training Centre (NVTC	3: Satisfactory	
95		*******Al-Khaleej Al-Arabi Primary Intermediate Girls School	3: Satisfactory	
96		Al-Budaiyya Primary Intermediate Girls School	3: Satisfactory	
97		Um Kalthoom Intermediate Girls School	3: Satisfactory	
98		Fatima Bint Alkhattab Primary Girls School	3: Satisfactory	
99		**Al-Hidd Secondary Girls School	3: Satisfactory	
100		Al-Zallaq Primary Intermediate Girls School	3: Satisfactory	
101		Al-Mutanabbi Primary Boys School	3: Satisfactory	
102		Ibn Sina Primary Boys School	3: Satisfactory	
103		Abu Bakr Al-Siddeeq Primary Boys School	3: Satisfactory	
104		Buri Primary Boys School	3: Satisfactory	
105		Al-Sanabis Intermediate Girls School	3: Satisfactory	
106		West Rifa'a Primary Boys School	3: Satisfactory	
107		Isa Town Secondary Girls School	3: Satisfactory	
108		Al-Ma'refa Secondary Girls School	3: Satisfactory	
109		Al-Khansa Primary Girls School	3: Satisfactory	
110		Khalid Bin Alwaleed Primary Boys School	3: Satisfactory	
111		***Safeyia Bint Abdulmuttalib Primary Girls School	3: Satisfactory	
112		Jidhafs Primary Boys School	3: Satisfactory	
113		A'ali Intermediate Girls School	3: Satisfactory	
114		Nasiba Bint Ka'ab Primary Girls School	3: Satisfactory	
115		Omar Bin Abdul Aziz Primary Boys School	3: Satisfactory	
116		Jaw Primary Intermediate Girls School	3: Satisfactory	
117		Al-Qayrawan Intermediate Girls School	3: Satisfactory	
118		Jidhafs Secondary Technical School	3: Satisfactory	
119		****Al-Wafa'a Secondary Girls School	3: Satisfactory	
120		Sh. Isa Bin Ali Al-Khalifa Secondary Boys School	3: Satisfactory	
121		Al-Hedayah Al-Khalifia Secondary Boys School	3: Satisfactory	
122		Al-Ja'afari Religious Institute	3: Satisfactory	
123		Al-Nuzha Primary Girls School	3: Satisfactory	
124		Isa Town Secondary Boys School	3: Satisfactory	
125		Salahuddeen Alayyoubi Primary Boys School	3: Satisfactory	
126		West Rifaa Secondary Girls School	3: Satisfactory	
127		Sar Primary Boys School	3: Satisfactory	
128		Ahmad Al-Umran Secondary Boys School	3: Satisfactory	
129		Yathreb Intermediate Girls School	3: Satisfactory	
130		Qalali Primary Boys School	3: Satisfactory	
131		Al-Rawdha Primary Boys School	3: Satisfactory	
132		Sa'ad Bin Abi-Waqqas Primary Boys School	3: Satisfactory	
133		Al-Muharraq Secondary Boys School	3: Satisfactory	
134		Al-Andalus Primary Girls School	3: Satisfactory	

*Reports are published on BQA website www.bqa.gov.bh

135		Al-Rasheed Primary Boys School	3: Satisfactory	4: Inadequate
136		Alahd Alzaher Secondary Girls School	3: Satisfactory	4: Inadequate
137		A'ali Primary Boys School	3: Satisfactory	4: Inadequate
138		Al-Busaiteen Primary Boys School	3: Satisfactory	4: Inadequate
139		Al-Sanabis Primary Boys School	3: Satisfactory	4: Inadequate
140		Barbar Primary Boys School	3: Satisfactory	4: Inadequate
141		Al-Dheya Primary Boys School	3: Satisfactory	4: Inadequate
142		Al-Yarmook Primary Boys School	4: Inadequate	4: Inadequate
143		**********Aali Primary Intermediate Boys School	4: Inadequate	4: Inadequate
144		Sh. Abdul Aziz Bin Mohd Al Khalifa Secondary Boys School	4: Inadequate	4: Inadequate
145		Sh. Mohd Bin Khalifa Al-Khalifa Primary Intermediate Boys School	4: Inadequate	4: Inadequate
146		Al-Jasra Primary Boys School	4: Inadequate	4: Inadequate
147		Ammar Bin Yaser Primary Boys School	4: Inadequate	4: Inadequate
148		Othman Bin Affan Intermediate Boys School	4: Inadequate	4: Inadequate
149		Ahmad Al-Fateh Primary Intermediate Boys School	4: Inadequate	4: Inadequate
150		East Rifaa Primary Boys School	4: Inadequate	4: Inadequate
151		********Hamad Town Intermediate Girls School	4: Inadequate	4: Inadequate
152		Al-Rifaa Intermediate Boys School	4: Inadequate	4: Inadequate
153		Ibn Rushd Intermediate Boys School	4: Inadequate	4: Inadequate
154		Alzallaq Primary Intermediate Boys School	4: Inadequate	4: Inadequate
155		*********Isa Town Primary Intermediate Boys School	4: Inadequate	
156		Um Alhassam Primary Boys School	4: Inadequate	
157		Askar Primary Intermediate Boys School	4: Inadequate	
158		East Rifaa Intermediate Girls School	4: Inadequate	
159		Omar Bin Al-Khattab Primary Intermediate Boys School	4: Inadequate	
160		Arad Intermediate Girls School	4: Inadequate	
161		West Riffa Intermediate Girls School	4: Inadequate	
162		Al-Imam Ali Primary Intermediate Boys School	4: Inadequate	
163		Al-Razi Primary Boys School	4: Inadequate	
164		Badr Al-Kobra Primary Boys School	4: Inadequate	
165		Al-Salmaniyia Intermediate Boys School	4: Inadequate	
166		Alta'awon Secondary Boys School	4: Inadequate	
167		Jaber Bin Hayian Primary Boys School	4: Inadequate	
168		Isa Town Intermediate Girls School	4: Inadequate	
169		*****Abdul Rahman Al-Nassir Intermediate Boys School	4: Inadequate	
170		Safrah Primary Intermediate Girls School	4: Inadequate	
171		******Al-Qudaibia Primary Intermediate Boys School	4: Inadequate	
172		Al-Jabiriyia Secondary Technical School	4: Inadequate	
173		Al-Belad Al-Qadeem Intermediate Boys School	4: Inadequate	
174		Jidhafs Intermediate Boys School	4: Inadequate	
175		Religious Intermediate Secondary Institute	4: Inadequate	

*Reports are published on BQA website www.bqa.gov.bh

176		Safra Primary Intermediate Boys School	4: Inadequate	
177		Isa Town Intermediate Boys School	4: Inadequate	
178		Osama Bin Zaid Primary Boys School	4: Inadequate	
179		Al-Imam Al-Ghazali Intermediate Boys School	4: Inadequate	
180		Arad Primary Intermediate Boys School	4: Inadequate	
181		Al-Budaiya Primary Boys School	4: Inadequate	
182		Hamad Town Intermediate Boys School	4: Inadequate	
183		Hamad Town Secondary Boys School	4: Inadequate	
184		Karzakan Primary Boys School	4: Inadequate	
185		Sh. Kalifa Bin Salman Institute Of Technology	4: Inadequate	
186		Al-Monthir Bin Sawa Al-Tamimi Primary Boys School	4: Inadequate	
187		Abusaiba Primary Boys School	4: Inadequate	
188		Al-Imam Al-Tabary Primary Boys School	4: Inadequate	
189		Al-Hidd Primary Intermediate Boys School	4: Inadequate	
190		Ibn Tufail Primary Boys School	4: Inadequate	
191		Al-Farabi Intermediate Boys School	4: Inadequate	
192		Al Maamoon Primary Boys School	4: Inadequate	
193		Sanad Primary Boys School	4: Inadequate	
194		Abdul Rahman Al-Dakhel Intermediate Boys School	4: Inadequate	
195		East Rifaa Secondary Boys School	4: Inadequate	
196		Samaheej Primary Intermediate Boys School	4: Inadequate	
197		Al-Tadamon Secondary Girls School	4: Inadequate	
198		Al-Duraz Intermediate Boys School	4: Inadequate	
199		Al-Khalil Bin Ahmad Intermediate Boys School	4: Inadequate	
200		Al-Khamis Primary Boys School	4: Inadequate	
201		Sitra Primary Boys School	4: Inadequate	
202		Tareq Bin Ziyad Intermediate Boys School	4: Inadequate	
203		Sh. Abdulla Bin Isa Al-Khalifa Secondary Technical School	4: Inadequate	
204		Al-Sehlah Primary Intermediate Boys School	4: Inadequate	
205		Awal Intermediate Boys School	4: Inadequate	
206		Al-Imam Malik Bin Anas Primary Boys School	4: Inadequate	
207		Wadi Alsail Primary Intermediate Boys School	4: Inadequate	

*Asma That Alnetaqain Primary Intermediate Girls School Previously
**Al-Hidd Intermediate Secondary Girls School Previously
***Safeyia Bint Abdulmuttalib Primary Intermediate Girls School in Cycle 2
****Isa Town Secondary Commercial Girls School Previously
*****Abdul Rahman Al-Nassir Primary Intermediate Boys School in Cycle 2
******Al-Qudaibia Intermediate Boys School in Cycle 2
*******Al-Khaleej Al-Arabi Intermediate Girls School Previously
********Hamad Town Intermediate Secondary Girls School Previously
*********Isa Town Primary Intermediate Boys School Previously
**********Aali Intermediate Boys School Previously

*Reports are published on BQA website www.bqa.gov.bh

Monitoring visits to government schools judged 'inadequate' in Cycle 3*

#	Government schools receiving monitoring visits 2019 - 2020	Monitoring visit 1**	Monitoring visit 2
1	East Rifaa Intermediate Girls School	In progress	Sufficient Progress
2	Um Alhassam Primary Boys School	In progress	In progress
3	Safra Primary Intermediate Boys School	In progress	In progress
4	Al-Sehlah Primary Intermediate Boys School	In progress	
5	Wadi Alsail Primary Intermediate Boys School	Insufficient Progress	

Directorate of Private Schools & Kindergartens Reviews

#		Private schools reviewed	Stage	Overall judgements Cycle 2	Overall judgements Cycle 3
1	Q	Nadeen School	Grade 1 to 6	1: Outstanding	1: Outstanding
2	Q	St Christopher's School	Grade 1 to 13	1: Outstanding	
3	Q	The British School Of Bahrain	Grade 1 to 13	1: Outstanding	
4	Q	Ibn Khuldoon National School	Grade 1 to 12	1: Outstanding	
5	Q	Riffa Views International School	Grade 1 to 12	1: Outstanding	
6	Q	The Bahrain Bayan School	Grade 1 to 12	1: Outstanding	
7	Q	Arabian Pearl Gulf School	Grade 1 to 12	2: Good	2: Good
8	Q	Sacred Heart School	Grade 1 to 10	3: Satisfactory	2: Good
9	Q	The French School	Grade 1 to 12	2: Good	
10	Q	New Millennium School	Grade 1 to 12	2: Good	
11	Q	Creativity Private School	Grade 1 to 12	2: Good	
12	Q	Al-Iman Schools – Girls Section	Grade 1 to 12	2: Good	
13	Q	Naseem International School	Grade 1 to 12	2: Good	
14	Q	Shaikha Hessa Girls' School	Grade 1 to 12	2: Good	
15		Modern Knowledge Schools	Grade 1 to 12	3: Satisfactory	3: Satisfactory
16		Al Hekma International School	Grade 1 to 12	3: Satisfactory	3: Satisfactory
17		Palms Primary School	Grade 1 to 6	3: Satisfactory	3: Satisfactory
18		Tylos Private School	Grade 1 to 12	3: Satisfactory	3: Satisfactory
19		Al Rawabi Private School	Grade 1 to 12	3: Satisfactory	3: Satisfactory
20		International School of Choueifat	Grade 1 to 12	3: Satisfactory	3: Satisfactory
21		Talent International and the Infant School – Manama Branch	Grade 1 to 12	3: Satisfactory	3: Satisfactory

*Reports are published on BQA website www.bqa.gov.bh

22		Al-Maaly Gate School	Grade 1 to 6	3: Satisfactory	3: Satisfactory
23		Al Falah Private Schools – Boys Section - Muharraq Branch	Grade 1 to 12	3: Satisfactory	3: Satisfactory
24		Quality Education School – Magabah Branch	Grade 1 to12	4: Inadequate	3: Satisfactory
25		Al Noor International School	Grade 1 to 12	3: Satisfactory	
26		Alia School	Grade 1 to 10	3: Satisfactory	
27		Asian School	Grade 1 to 10	3: Satisfactory	
28		Al Raja School	Grade 1 to 12	3: Satisfactory	
29		Al-Iman Schools - Boys Section	Grade 1 to 12	3: Satisfactory	
30		The Indian School	Grade 1 to 12	3: Satisfactory	
31		Abdul Rahman Kanoo International School	Grade 1 to 12	3: Satisfactory	
32		Al Mahd Day Boarding School – Saar Branch	Grade 1 to 10	3: Satisfactory	
33		Hawar International School	Grade 1 to 12	3: Satisfactory	
34		Ebenezer Private School	Grade 1 to 6	3: Satisfactory	
35		Pakistan School – Manama Branch	Grade 1 to 5	3: Satisfactory	
36		Al Mahd Day Boarding School – Riffa Branch	Grade 1 to 6	3: Satisfactory	
37		Ahlia School	Grade 1 to 9	3: Satisfactory	
38		Quality Education School-Manama Branch	Grade 1 to 3	3: Satisfactory	
39		Capital School	Grade 1 to 6	3: Satisfactory	
40		Bahrain Indian School	Grade 1 to 8	3: Satisfactory	
41		Multinational School – Bahrain	Grade 1 to 10	3: Satisfactory	
42		Middle East Educational Schools	Grade 1 to 12	3: Satisfactory	4: Inadequate
43		Al-Wisam School	Grade 1 to 12	3: Satisfactory	4: Inadequate
44		Al Majd Private School	Grade 1 to 6	4: Inadequate	4: Inadequate
45		AMA International School	Grade 1 to 12	4: Inadequate	4: Inadequate
46		Talent International and Infant School – Riffa Branch	Grade 1 to 9	4: Inadequate	4: Inadequate
47		New Vision School	Grade 1 to 12	4: Inadequate	
48		Al Salam School	Grade 1 to 11	4: Inadequate	
49		The New Indian School	Grade 1 to 12	4: Inadequate	
50		Ibn Al-Haytham Islamic School	Grade 1 to 12	4: Inadequate	
51		Bangladesh School Bahrain	Grade 1 to 10	4: Inadequate	
52		Pakistan School - Isa Town Branch	Grade 1 to 12	4: Inadequate	
53		Pakistan Urdu School	Grade 1 to 12	4: Inadequate	
54		City International School	Grade 1 to 10	4: Inadequate	
55		Al Mahd Day Boarding School – Samaheej Branch	Grade 1 to 8	4: Inadequate	
56		The New Horizon School – Janusan Branch	Grade 1 to 6	4: Inadequate	
57		Al Manar Private School	Grade 1 to 9	4: Inadequate	
58		Al Falah Private Schools – Boys Section - A'ali Branch	Grade 1 to 12	4: Inadequate	

*Reports are published on BQA website www.bqa.gov.bh

59		Al Falah Private Schools - Girls Section -A'ali Branch	Grade 1 to 12	4: Inadequate	
60		Al Sharqyia School	Grade 1 to 12	4: Inadequate	
61		New Generation Private School	Grade 1 to 6	4: Inadequate	
62		Al Fajer Private School	Grade 1 to 5	4: Inadequate	

Monitoring visits to private schools judged 'inadequate' in Cycle 2

#	Government schools receiving monitoring visits 2019 - 2020	Monitoring visit 1**	Monitoring visit 2
1	Pakistan School - Isa Town Branch	In progress	In progress
2	Pakistan Urdu School	In progress	In progress
3	Al-Fajer Private School	In progress	
4	Al Sharqyia School	In progress	

Directorate of Vocational Reviews*

#		Institutions reviewed	Cycle 3 Review Grade	Cycle 4 Review Grade
1	Q	Kumon Bahrain	1: Outstanding	1: Outstanding
2	Q	British Language Centre	1: Outstanding	
3	Q	Capital Institute	1: Outstanding	
4	Q	Gulf Aviation Academy	1: Outstanding	
5	Q	EMIC Training	1: Outstanding	
6	Q	Berlitz Training Centre	1: Outstanding	
7	Q	The American Cultural & Educational Centre	1: Outstanding	
8	Q	Origin Training Centre	1: Outstanding	
9	Q	Kunooz Allugha Centre	1: Outstanding	
10	Q	Delmon Academy for Computer and Managerial Science	2: Good	1: Outstanding
11	Q	New Generation Network (NGN) Training Center		2: Good
12	Q	ILC Training	2: Good	2: Good
13	Q	Victory Training & Development Institute	2: Good	2: Good
14	Q	Al Mashreq Training	2: Good	2: Good
15	Q	Al Moalem Institute	2: Good	2: Good
16	Q	Safety Training & Consultants Centre (STC)	2: Good	2: Good

*Reports are published on BQA website www.bqa.gov.bh

17		Human Performance Improvement (HPI)	2: Good	2: Good
18		Horizons for Human Resource Development	2: Good	2: Good
19		The Training Centre of the Bahrain Society of Engineers	2: Good	2: Good
20		ETS Excellence Training Solutions	3: Satisfactory	2: Good
21		Golden Trust Training & Consultancy	3: Satisfactory	2: Good
22		Genetech Training & Development	2: Good	
23		Bahrain Institute for Banking and Finance (BIBF)	2: Good	
24		Institute of Finance	2: Good	
25		RRC Middle East (Closed)	2: Good	
26		Taylos Human Development	2: Good	
27		Neo vartis Training Centre (Closed)	2: Good	
28		Logic Institute for Training & Human resource Development	2: Good	
29		Yellow Hat Training	2: Good	
30		London Training Centre	2: Good	
31		Sylvan Learning Bahrain	2: Good	
32		Harvest Training Centre (Closed)	2: Good	
33		AlGadh Training Institute	2: Good	
34		Dar al Ma'rifa Language Centre	2: Good	
35		RICI Training Centre	2: Good	
36		Bahrain International Retail Development Center (BIRD) (Closed)	2: Good	
37		Aptech Institute	2: Good	
38		Bait Al Taleem Institute	2: Good	
39		Leaders Institute for Training & Development	2: Good	
40		Training Plus Institute	2: Good	
41		Talal Abu-Ghazaleh Training Group	2: Good	
42		Score Training Institute	2: Good	
43		BAS Aircraft Maintenance Training	2: Good	
44		Procloud Training Centre	2: Good	
45		Business Avenue Training Center	2: Good	3: Satisfactory
46		Micro Training Centre (MTC)		3: Satisfactory
47		Edrak Training Centre		3: Satisfactory
48		Millennium Training Centre		3: Satisfactory

*Reports are published on BQA website www.bqa.gov.bh

49		Al Awael Learning Institute	3: Satisfactory	3: Satisfactory
50		National Institute of Technology (NIT)	3: Satisfactory	3: Satisfactory
51		Success Training Centre (STC)	3: Satisfactory	3: Satisfactory
52		Industrial Petroleum Training Services	3: Satisfactory	3: Satisfactory
53		Bahrain Institute of Hospitality & Retail (BIHR)	3: Satisfactory	
54		Al-Wasat Training and Development institution (Closed)	3: Satisfactory	
55		Ernst & Young Training Center	3: Satisfactory	
56		Thinksmart for development & Training	3: Satisfactory	
57		National Institute for Industrial Training	3: Satisfactory	
58		Modern Institute of Science & Computer	3: Satisfactory	
59		Deena Institute of Technology (Closed)	3: Satisfactory	
60		Al Banna Training Institute (Closed)	3: Satisfactory	
61		I Design Training centre	3: Satisfactory	
62		Al - Badeel for Training Development (Closed)	3: Satisfactory	
63		Al Jazeera Modern Institute (Closed)	3: Satisfactory	
64		Osho Training	3: Satisfactory	
65		Regal Gulf Training Centre	3: Satisfactory	
66		Inma Training and Development Centre (Closed)	3: Satisfactory	
67		Marvel Management Training Institute	3: Satisfactory	
68		Bahrain Institute of Technology (previously,Bahrain Institute for Entrepreneurship & Technology (BIET))	3: Satisfactory	
69		Global Institute for Management Science (Closed)	3: Satisfactory	
70		Al Moheet Institute	3: Satisfactory	
71		Future Institute for Training & Development	3: Satisfactory	
72		TUV Nord Training Centre	3: Satisfactory	
73		Manahel Training Centre	3: Satisfactory	
74		Seed Training Centre	3: Satisfactory	
75		Resources Training Centre	3: Satisfactory	
76		The Nine Training Centre	3: Satisfactory	
77		Masar Centre for Training and Development	3: Satisfactory	
78		Oasis Training Centre	3: Satisfactory	
79		AMA International Training Institute - Bahrain	3: Satisfactory	
80		Madar Training Centre	3: Satisfactory	
81		Invita Training Centre	3: Satisfactory	
82		Train Me Training Centre	3: Satisfactory	
83		Bahrain Training Institute	3: Satisfactory	
84		English Language Skills Centre	3: Satisfactory	4: Inadequate
85		Ibdaa Hub Training Centre		4: Inadequate
86		Beauty Face Institute	4: Inadequate	
87		Management Development Centre	4: Inadequate	

*Reports are published on BQA website www.bqa.gov.bh

88		Al Adwha Institute	4: Inadequate	
89		Al Mawred Institute	4: Inadequate	
90		Bahrain Institute	4: Inadequate	
91		Al Hayat Institute for Human Resources Development	4: Inadequate	
92		Glory Educational Centre (Closed)	4: Inadequate	
93		Takween Training Centre (Closed)	4: Inadequate	
94		Bright Future Training Centre	4: Inadequate	
95		Al Yaqeen Educational Centre	4: Inadequate	
96		Al Noor Educational Centre	4: Inadequate	

Cultural Centres

#		Institutions reviewed	Cycle 3	Cycle 4
1	Q	Bahrain Music Institute	1: Outstanding	
2	Q	Harmony Music Centre	1: Outstanding	
3	Q	Life in Music Institute	2: Good	
4		Al Madrasa for Art	3: Satisfactory	
5		Indian Institute for Performing Arts	3: Satisfactory	

Monitoring visits to institutions judged 'Inadequate'

#	Institutes receiving monitoring visits in 2019-2020	First Monitoring visit	Second Monitoring visit
1	Al Noor Educational Centre	In progress	

Institutional Reviews – Eleven Reports

#	Institution	Standards			Judgement
		Addressed	Partially Addressed	Not Addressed	
1	Royal University for Women	8			Meets quality assuranc requirements
2	Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland- Medical University of Bahrain	8			Meets quality assurance requirements
3	Kingdom University	8			Meets quality assurance requirements
4	AMA International University-Bahrain	2	5	1	Does not meet quality assurance requirements
5	Ahlia University	8			Meets quality assurance requirements
6	Bahrain Polytechnic	8			Meets quality assurance requirements
7	University of Bahrain	8			Meets quality assurance requirements
8	University College of Bahrain	1	4	3	Does not meet quality assurance requirements
9	Applied Science University	8			Meets quality assurance requirements
10	Gulf University	8			Meets quality assurance requirements
11	Arab Open University	8			Meets quality assurance requirements

Programmes-within-College Follow-up Reviews Cycle-1 (Phase 2)

Programme	Institution	College	Original Review Judgment	First Follow Up Review Judgment	Second Follow up Review Judgment
IT Field					
Bachelor of Science in Computer Science	AMA International University-Bahrain	College of Computer Studies	No confidence	Inadequate progress	Adequate Progress
B.Sc. in Information Technology	University College of Bahrain	College of Information Technology	limited confidence	Inadequate progress	Inadequate Progress
Bachelor of Science in Information Technology	Royal University for Women	College of Information Technology	No confidence	Adequate progress	Not applicable
Business Field					
Bachelor of Science in International Studies	AMA International University-Bahrain	College of Administrative and Financial Sciences	No confidence	Adequate Progress	Not applicable
Bachelor of Science in Business Informatics			limited confidence	Adequate Progress	Not applicable
Master of Business Administration			No confidence	Adequate Progress	Not applicable
Bachelor of Science in Business Administration	University College of Bahrain	College of Business Administration	limited confidence	Inadequate progress	Adequate Progress
Master of Business Administration			No confidence	Inadequate progress	Adequate Progress
Bachelor in Political Science	Applied Science University	College of Administrative Sciences	Limited Confidence	Adequate Progress	Not applicable
Bachelor in Management Information Systems			Limited Confidence	Adequate Progress	Not applicable
Master in Accounting and Finance			Limited Confidence	Adequate Progress	Not applicable
Bachelor of Communication Bachelor of) Communication and Public (Relations	Gulf University	College of Administrative and Financial Sciences	No confidence	Adequate Progress	Not applicable
Engineering Field					
Bachelor of Interior Design	Kingdom University	College of Architecture Engineering & Design	Limited Confidence	Adequate Progress	Not applicable
Bachelor of Architecture Engineering			Limited Confidence	Adequate Progress	Not applicable
Bachelor of Science in Mechatronics Engineering	AMA International University-Bahrain	College of Engineering	Limited Confidence	Adequate Progress	Not applicable
Bachelor of Science in Informatics Engineering			No confidence	Adequate Progress	Not applicable
Bachelor of Interior Design Engineering	Gulf University	College of Engineering	No confidence	Good progress	Not applicable

*Reports are published on BQA website www.bqa.gov.bh

Arts, Design, Science and Education Field					
Bachelor in Computer Science	Applied Science University	College of Arts and Science	Limited Confidence	Adequate Progress	Not applicable
Bachelor in Interior Design			Limited Confidence	Adequate Progress	Not applicable
Bachelor in Graphic Design			Limited Confidence	Adequate Progress	Not applicable
Bachelor of Arts in Communications and Multimedia	University College of Bahrain	College of Communication and Multimedia	No confidence	Inadequate progress	
Bachelor's Degree in Mass Communication and Public Relations	Ahlia University	College of Art, Science	No confidence	Adequate Progress	Not applicable
Bachelor's Degree in Interior Design			No confidence	Adequate Progress	Not applicable
Bachelor of Physical Education	University of Bahrain	College of Health and Sport Sciences	Limited Confidence	Adequate Progress	Not applicable

Appendix 1: National Qualification Framework Operations Institutional Listing

Table 2: Education and Training institutions listed on the National Qualifications Framework

#	Education / Training Institution Name	Sector
1	Ahlia University	Higher Education
2	Royal University for Women	Higher Education
3	University of Bahrain	Higher Education
4	Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland- Medical University of Bahrain	Higher Education
5	Bahrain Polytechnic	Higher Education
6	Applied Science University	Higher Education
7	Kingdom University	Higher Education
8	Gulf University	Higher Education
9	Bahrain Training Institute	Vocational Training
10	Genetech Training and Development	Vocational Training
11	Bahrain Institute for Banking and Finance	Vocational Training
12	National Institute for Industrial Training	Vocational Training
13	Safety Training and Consultants Center	Vocational Training
14	British Language Centre	Vocational Training
15	Tylos Human Development	Vocational Training
16	Horizons HRD	Vocational Training
17	Pro Cloud Training Center	Vocational Training
18	Gulf Aviation Academy	Vocational Training
19	Al Moalem Institute	Vocational Training
20	Origin Training Centre	Vocational Training
21	AlMashreq Training	Vocational Training
22	EMIC Training	Vocational Training
23	Golden Trust Training and Consultancy	Vocational Training
24	Delmon Academy for Computer and Managerial Sciences	Vocational Training
25	American Cultural and Educational Center	Vocational Training
26	Access Training Center	Vocational Training
27	The Nine Training Center	Vocational Training
28	Logic Institute for Training & Human Resource Development	Vocational Training

*Reports are published on BQA website www.bqa.gov.bh

National Qualifications Placement

Table 3: National Qualifications Placed on the various levels of the National Qualifications Framework

#	Level	Qualification Name	Institution
1	1	General English Language Course for Adults: Starter Level A Foundation Part 1	British Language Centre
2		General English Language Course for Adults: Starter Level A Foundation Part 2	British Language Centre
3		General English Language Course for Adults: Starter Level A	British Language Centre
4		General English Language Course for Adults: Starter Level B	British Language Centre
5		General English Language Course for Adults: Starter Level C Part 1	British Language Centre
6		General English Language Course for Adults: Starter Level C Part 2	British Language Centre
7	2	General English Language Courses for Adults: Elementary Level 1A	British Language Centre
8		General English Language Courses for Adults: Elementary Level 1B	British Language Centre
9		General English Language Courses for Adults: Elementary Level 1C	British Language Centre
10		General English Language Courses for Adults: Elementary Level 1D	British Language Centre
11	3	Award in Fire Safety	Safety Training and Consultants Centre
12		Award in Basic Health and Safety	Safety Training and Consultants Centre
13		General English Language Course for Adults: Pre-Intermediate Level 2A	British Language Centre
14		General English Language Course for Adults: Pre-Intermediate Level 2B	British Language Centre
15		General English Language Course for Adults: Pre-Intermediate Level 2C	British Language Centre
16		General English Language Course for Adults: Pre-Intermediate Level 2D	British Language Centre
17		General English Language Course for Adults: Intermediate Level 3A	British Language Centre
18	4	Level 4 Award in Office Management	Tylos Human Development
19		Level 4 Award in Customer Service	Tylos Human Development
20		Award in General Health and Safety	Safety Training and Consultants Centre
21		General English Language Course for Adults Intermediate Level 3B	British Language Centre

*Reports are published on BQA website www.bqa.gov.bh

22	4	General English Language Course for Adults Intermediate Level 3C	British Language Centre
23		General English Language Course for Adults Intermediate Level 3D	British Language Centre
24		Level 4 Certificate in Retail Sales	Genetech Training and Development
25	5	National Certificate in Office Management	Bahrain Training Institute
26		Advance Certificate in Retail Sales	Genetech Training and Development
27	6	Diploma in Information and Communications Technology	Bahrain Polytechnic
28		Certificate of Tertiary Teaching and Learning	Bahrain Polytechnic
29		Diploma in Business	Bahrain Polytechnic
30		Diploma in Logistics and Transport	Bahrain Polytechnic
31		Diploma in Visual Design	Bahrain Polytechnic
32		National Diploma in Human Resources Management	Bahrain Training Institute
33		National Diploma in Warehouse Management	Bahrain Training Institute
34		National Diploma in Purchasing and Supply Chain Management	Bahrain Training Institute
35		National Diploma in Supervisory Skills	Bahrain Training Institute
36		National Diploma in Medical Equipment Maintenance	Bahrain Training Institute
37		National Diploma in Islamic Banking and Finance	Bahrain Training Institute
38		National Diploma in Education and Training Practice	Bahrain Training Institute
39		National Diploma in Business (Accounting)	Bahrain Training Institute
40		National Diploma in Business (Office Management)	Bahrain Training Institute
41		National Diploma in Business (Human Resources)	Bahrain Training Institute
42		Award in Management Skills Level 6	Bahrain Institute of Banking and Finance
43		Award in Marketing Level 6	Bahrain Institute of Banking and Finance
44		National Diploma in Chemical Process and Maintenance	Bahrain Training Institute
45		National Diploma in Laboratory Management	Bahrain Training Institute

*Reports are published on BQA website www.bqa.gov.bh

46		Associate Degree in Engineering Technology (Mechanical)	Bahrain Polytechnic
47		Associate Degree in Engineering Technology (Electronics)	Bahrain Polytechnic
48		Associate Degree in Web Media	Bahrain Polytechnic
49		Associate Degree in Engineering Technology (Electrical)	Bahrain Polytechnic
50		Higher National Diploma in Business (Accounting)	Bahrain Training Institute
51	7	Higher National Diploma in Business (Management)	Bahrain Training Institute
52		Higher National Diploma in Business (Human Resources)	Bahrain Training Institute
53		Higher National Diploma in Chemical Engineering	Bahrain Training Institute
54		Professional Award in Advanced Insurance Studies - Level 7	Bahrain Institute of Banking and Finance
55		Professional Award in Digital Transformation – Level 7	Bahrain Institute of Banking and Finance
56		Professional Award in Technopreneurship – Level 7	Bahrain Institute of Banking and Finance
57		Bachelor of Science in Computer Science	University of Bahrain
58		Bachelor of Science in Nursing	University of Bahrain
59		Bachelor of Science in Information Systems	University of Bahrain
60		Bachelor of Science in Computer Engineering	University of Bahrain
61		Bachelor of Science in Biology	University of Bahrain
62		BSc in Business Management	University of Bahrain
63	8	BSc in Business Management - Minor in Accounting	University of Bahrain
64		BSc in Business Management- Minor in Economics	University of Bahrain
65		BSc in Business Management - Minor in Finance	University of Bahrain
66		BSc in Business Management - Minor in International Business	University of Bahrain
67		BSc in Business Management - Minor in Marketing	University of Bahrain
68		BSc in Banking and Finance	University of Bahrain
69		BSc in Banking and Finance – Minor in Accounting	University of Bahrain

70		BSc in Banking and Finance – Minor in Economics	University of Bahrain
71		BSc in Banking and Finance – Minor in International Business	University of Bahrain
72		BSc in Banking and Finance – Minor in Management	University of Bahrain
73		BSc in Banking and Finance – Minor in Marketing	University of Bahrain
74		BSc in Accounting	University of Bahrain
75		BSc in Accounting - Minor in Economics	University of Bahrain
76		BSc in Accounting - Minor in Finance	University of Bahrain
77		BSc in Accounting - Minor in Management	University of Bahrain
78		BSc in Accounting - Minor in International Business	University of Bahrain
79		BSc in Accounting - Minor in Marketing	University of Bahrain
80		BSc in Marketing	University of Bahrain
81		BSc in Marketing - Minor in Accounting	University of Bahrain
82	8	BSc in Marketing- Minor in Economics	University of Bahrain
83		BSc in Marketing - Minor in Finance	University of Bahrain
84		BSc in Marketing - Minor in International Business	University of Bahrain
85		BSc in Marketing - Minor in Management	University of Bahrain
86		Bachelor's Degree in Banking and Finance	Ahlia University
87		Bachelor's Degree in Management and Marketing	Ahlia University
88		Bachelor's Degree in Accounting and Finance	Ahlia University
89		Bachelor's Degree in Economics and Finance	Ahlia University
90		Bachelor's Degree in Management Information Systems	Ahlia University
91		Bachelor's Degree in Information Technology	Ahlia University
92		Bachelor's Degree in Multimedia Systems	Ahlia University
93		Bachelor's Degree in Computer and Communication Engineering	Ahlia University

*Reports are published on BQA website www.bqa.gov.bh

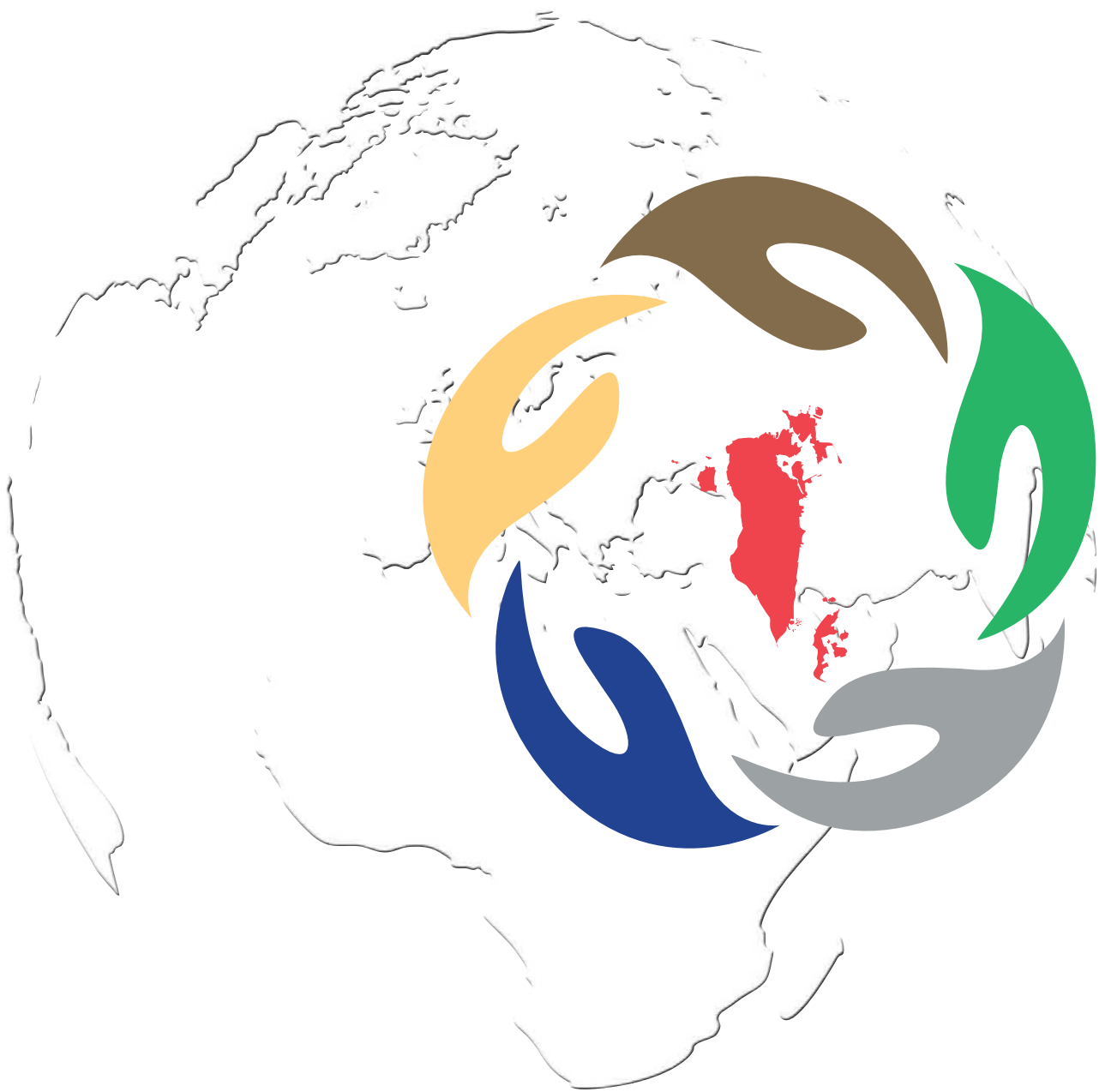|			
94		Bachelor's Degree in Mobile and Network Engineering	Ahlia University
95		Bachelor of Web Media	Bahrain Polytechnic
96		Bachelor of Information and Communications Technology (Networking Major)	Bahrain Polytechnic
97		Bachelor of Information and Communications Technology (Programming Major)	Bahrain Polytechnic
98		Bachelor of Information and Communications Technology (Database Major)	Bahrain Polytechnic
99		Bachelor of Information and Communications Technology (Management Information Systems Major)	Bahrain Polytechnic
100		Bachelor of Business (Marketing Major)	Bahrain Polytechnic
101		Bachelor of Business (Management Major)	Bahrain Polytechnic
102		Bachelor of Business (Accounting)	Bahrain Polytechnic
103		Bachelor of Business (Banking & Finance)	Bahrain Polytechnic
104		Bachelor of Engineering Technology (Electronics)	Bahrain Polytechnic
105	8	Bachelor of Business (Human Resources Management)	Bahrain Polytechnic
106		Bachelor of Engineering Technology (Mechanical)	Bahrain Polytechnic
107		Bachelor of International Logistics Management	Bahrain Polytechnic
108		Bachelor of Visual Design	Bahrain Polytechnic
109		Bachelor of Science (BSc) in Nursing	Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland-Medical University of Bahrain
110		Bachelor of Science (BSc) in Nursing –Bridging Programme	Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland-Medical University of Bahrain
111		Bachelor of Business in Banking and Finance	Royal University for Women
112		Bachelor of Business in International Business	Royal University for Women
113		Bachelor of Business in Human Resources	Royal University for Women
114		Bachelor of Law	Royal University for Women
115		Bachelor of Law	Applied Science University
116		Bachelor in Business Administration	Applied Science University
117		Bachelor in Accounting	Applied Science University

*Reports are published on BQA website www.bqa.gov.bh

118		Bachelor of Science in Business Management	Kingdom University
119		Bachelor of Arts in Fashion Design	Royal University for Women
120		Bachelor of Arts in Graphic Design	Royal University for Women
121		Bachelor of Arts in Interior Design	Royal University for Women
122		Bachelor of Engineering Technology (Electrical)	Bahrain Polytechnic
123	8	Professional Award in Insurance Management -Level 8	Bahrain Institute of Banking and Finance
124		Bachelor in Law	Kingdom University
125		Bachelor of Architecture	University of Bahrain
126		B.Sc. in Chemical Engineering	University of Bahrain
127		B.Sc. in Process Instrumentation and Control Engineering	University of Bahrain
128		BSc in Mechanical Engineering	University of Bahrain
129		Master's Degree in Information Technology and Computer Science	Ahlia University
130		Master's Degree in Business Administration	Ahlia University
131		MSc in Nursing	Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland-Medical University of Bahrain
132	9	Master in Human Resources Management	Applied Science University
133		Master in Business Administration	Applied Science University
134		Master of Fine Arts in Drawing & Painting	Royal University for Women
135		Master of Design Management	Royal University for Women
136		Advanced Diploma in Islamic Finance (Professional Award L9)	Bahrain Institute of Banking and Finance

Foreign Qualifications Alignment

Table 4: Foreign Qualifications Aligned on the National Qualifications Framework

#	Level	Qualification Name	Awarding Body	Providers in Bahrain
1		Level 2 Award in Health and Safety within the Workplace (RQF)	Highfield Awarding Body for Compliance (HABC) – United Kingdom	1. Brothers Training Development W.L.L. 2. Safety Training and Consultants Centre
2	4	Level 2 Award in Food Safety in Catering (RQF)	Highfield Awarding Body for Compliance (HABC) – United Kingdom	The Nine Training Centre
3		CII Level 2 Award for the Foundation Insurance Test	Chartered Insurance Institute (CII)-United Kingdom	1. Bahrain Institute of Banking and Finance 2. Resources Training Center
4		Foundation Certificate in Human Resource Practice	Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) – United Kingdom	1. Bahrain Institute of Banking and Finance 2. Bahrain Training Institute 3. Victory Training & Development Institute
5		Foundation Diploma in Human Resource Practice	Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) – United Kingdom	1. Bahrain Institute of Banking and Finance 2. Bahrain Training Institute 3. Victory Training & Development Institute
6		Foundation Certificate in Learning and Development	Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) – United Kingdom	1. Bahrain Institute of Banking and Finance 2. Victory Training & Development Institute
7	5	Foundation Diploma in Learning and Development	Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) – United Kingdom	1. Bahrain Institute of Banking and Finance 2. Victory Training & Development Institute
8		Level 3 Award in Health and Safety in the Workplace (RQF)	Highfield Awarding Body for Compliance (HABC) – United Kingdom	Brothers Training Development W.L.L.
9		Level 3 Award in Food Safety in Catering (RQF)	Highfield Awarding Body for Compliance (HABC) – United Kingdom	Safety Training and Consultants Centre
10		CII Level 3 Certificate in Insurance	Chartered Insurance Institute (CII)	Bahrain Institute of Banking and Finance
11	6	CII Level 4 Diploma in Insurance	Chartered Insurance Institute (CII)-United Kingdom	1. Bahrain Institute of Banking and Finance 2. Resources Training Center 3. Oasis Training Center

*Reports are published on BQA website www.bqa.gov.bh

12		Intermediate Certificate in Learning and Development	Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) – United Kingdom	1. Bahrain Institute of Banking and Finance 2. Victory Training & Development Institute
13		Intermediate Diploma in Learning and Development	Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) – United Kingdom	1. Bahrain Institute of Banking and Finance 2. Victory Training & Development Institute
14	7	Intermediate Certificate in Human Resource Management	Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) – United Kingdom	1. Bahrain Institute of Banking and Finance 2. Victory Training & Development Institute
15		Intermediate Diploma in Human Resource Management	Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) – United Kingdom	1. Bahrain Institute of Banking and Finance 2. Victory Training & Development Institute 3. Bahrain Training Institute
16		Diploma of Higher Education in Islamic Finance	Bangor University	Bahrain Institute of Banking and Finance
17		Master of Science Degree in Engineering Management	The George Washington University - United States of America	Ahlia University
18		ACCA Professional Level	The Association of Chartered Certified Accountants - United Kingdom	1. Bahrain Institute of Banking and Finance 2. Ernst & Young
19		Masters of Science in Healthcare Management	National University of Ireland	Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland -Medical University of Bahrain
20	9	Masters of Science in Quality and Safety in Healthcare Management	National University of Ireland	Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland -Medical University of Bahrain
21		Advanced Diploma in Human Resource Management	Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) – United Kingdom	Bahrain Institute of Banking and Finance
22		Advanced Diploma in Human Resource Development	Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) – United Kingdom	Bahrain Institute of Banking and Finance
23		Doctor of Philosophy (PhD-WR) in Information Systems, Computing and Mathematics and Related Fields Offered by Brunel University	Brunel University – United Kingdom	Ahlia University
24	10	Doctor of Philosophy (PhD-WR) in Management Studies, Operational Research and related fields offered by Brunel University	Brunel University – United Kingdom	Ahlia University