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

Directorate of Higher Education Reviews

Programme Follow-Up Visit Report

Bachelor in Interior Design

College of Architecture Engineering and Design

Kingdom University

Kingdom of Bahrain

First Follow-up Visit Date: 9-10 April 2018
Review Date: 30 November - 2 December 2015
HC071-C2-F016

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The Programme Follow- up Visit Overview

The follow-up visit for academic programmes conducted by the Directorate of Higher Education Reviews (DHR) of the Education & Training Quality Authority (BQA) in the Kingdom of Bahrain is part of a cycle of continuing quality assurance review, reporting and improvement.

The follow-up visit applies to all programmes that have been reviewed using the Programmes-within-College Reviews Framework, and received a judgement of 'limited confidence' or 'no confidence'.

This Report provides an account of the follow-up process and findings of the follow-up panel (the Panel), whereby the Bachelor in Interior Design (BID), at the Kingdom University (KU)was revisited on 9-10 April 2018 to assess its progress in line with the published Programmes-within-College Reviews Framework and the BQA regulations.

A.   Aims of the Follow-up Visit

(i)   Assess the progress made against the recommendations highlighted in the review report (in accordance with the four BQA Indicators) of KU's BID since the programme was reviewed on 30 November - 2 December, 2015.

(ii)   Provide further information and support for the continuous improvement of academic standards and quality enhancement of higher education provision, specifically within the BID programme at KU, and for higher education provision within the Kingdom of Bahrain, as a whole.

B.   Background

The review of the BID programme at KU in the Kingdom of Bahrain was conducted by the DHR of the BQA on 30 November - 2 December 2015. The overall judgement of the review panel for the BID programme of KU was that of **'limited confidence'**. Consequently, the follow-up process incorporated the review of the evidence presented by KU to the DHR, the improvement plan submitted to BQA in February 2017, the progress report and its supporting materials, which were submitted in February 2018, and the documents submitted during the follow-up site visit and those extracted from the interview sessions.

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The external review panel's judgement on the KU's BID programme for each Indicator was as follows:

Indicator 1: The learning programme; '**satisfied**'

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

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

Indicator 4: Effectiveness of quality management and assurance **'satisfied'**

The follow-up visit was conducted by a panel consisting of two members. This follow-up visit focused on assessing how the institution addressed the recommendations of the report of the review conducted on 30 November - 2 December 2015. For each recommendation given under the four Indicators, the Panel judged whether the recommendation is 'fully addressed', 'partially addressed', or 'not addressed' using the rubric in Appendix 1. An overall judgement of 'good progress', 'adequate progress' or 'inadequate progress' is given based on the rubric provided in Appendix 2.

C.   Overview of the Bachelor in Interior Design

The College of Architecture Engineering and Design first offered the BID programme in the academic year 2008-2009 and graduated its first batch, comprising one student, in 2011-2012. The BID programme is offered through the Department of Interior Design, which is planning to apply for accreditation from the Council for Interior Design Accreditation. There were 41 registered students, seven full-time and two part-time academic staff contributing to the programme during the first site visit. According to the statistics provided by the institution during the follow-up visit, 18 students have graduated since the commencement of the BID programme and currently, there are 23 registered students, 13 full-time and two part-time academic staff members who contribute to the delivery of the two programmes offered by the College.

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1.   Indicator 1: The learning programme

This section evaluates the extent to which the BID programme of KU, has addressed the recommendations outlined in the programme review report of December 2015, under Indicator 1: The learning programme; and as a consequence, provides a judgment regarding the level of implementation of each recommendation for this Indicator as outlined in Appendix 1 of this Report.

Recommendation 1.1: *Revise the scale and context of projects within the curriculum to ensure that there is sufficient emphasis on the detail of projects, materiality and applied theory.*

Judgement: *Partially Addressed*

As per the progress report, several course descriptions including design courses were reviewed and updated based on the Council for Interior Design Accreditation (CIDA) Standards and to ensure proper balance between project scale and requirements in terms of details and applied theory. An example of the implemented changes in 'INTD 311 Interior Design Studio III' course specification is the rescheduling of the submission timelines to put more focus on the technical details rather than the layout plan. The 'INTD 313 Furniture Design Studio' course has also been revised to focus on bigger projects and to ensure that the allocated period for the project fits its size. Furthermore, the size of the project assigned within 'INTD 312 Design studio IV' course and the submission requirements were reduced to put more emphasis on technical installation. The Panel notes the emphasis on technical matters over layout/space planning is part of the expression of difference. Moreover, an overlay analysis of the curriculum progression of courses domains among the four levels of the curriculum was conducted to ensure the integration between theoretical courses and design studio courses. A matrix was also developed to show the link between project-based courses and theoretical courses, which was discussed and approved by the Interior Design (ID) Department Council. In addition, the programme specification was updated and reviewed as part of the periodic programme review. The revised programme specification was also approved by both the Department and College Councils

Based on the enhanced Programme Specification, minutes of the department council meetings, further evidence provided during site visit, and interviews with senior management, students and faculty, it is clear that significant adjustments have been made to the scale of projects. This was visible in the collection of work on show within the University. It was also evident that there has been a distinct shift in the BID emphasis, particularly relative to the scale of work, the detail of exploration and the

integration of both theoretical and practical aspects of broader programme content, specifically in the design projects.

It was useful to hear of existing examples of very small-scale work, such as the kiosk project, which has the additional benefit of being live, as discussed during interviews with faculty members. The matter is clearly a priority for staff and it is recorded formally in the evidence provided and manifested in the work being produced and the evident ownership by the interviewed student. The programme mapping to CIDA Standards and the learning outcome domains-sequencing map has the additional benefit of being lateral and cross-level, which further enable students to gauge progress and destination. Although, the Panel appreciates the details contained in these supports for learning, and the enhanced profile of the BID offer, nonetheless, the Panel recommends that the Department continue reviewing project scale and complexity that may be offered in other ways across levels/stories, or through other 'pathways' under development in scenography and transformation design. Therefore, the Panel is of the view that this is an area for continuing development and agrees that the recommendation is partially addressed.

Recommendation 1.2: *Revisit the placement portfolio of offers in some detail, with input from industry partners and increase the training period so as to give students greater opportunity for work-based learning and to ensure a balanced and appropriate level of experience.*

Judgement: *fully Addressed*

As per the progress report, the Department conducted an informal web-based benchmarking with 10 local, regional and international universities in the academic year 2014-2015 to compare the professional practices including internships. Three universities namely Ahlia University, Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) and the University of Derby have been consulted to formally benchmark the practical training period, as per the interviews with senior management and faculty members. The University Council approved the college and the department's recommendations to increase the practical training period from 200 hours to 240 training hours in 2015-2016, and to 300 training hours in 2016-2017. Revision to the duration of the practical training period is either commensurate with or exceeds the duration of the period offered by other programmes cited in the benchmarking report and the level of the training course is found to be compatible with similar courses offered by other universities.

From meetings with students and faculty, there was a consistency of response to questions of parity with the mentor and supervisor in close contact at key points throughout the process. Balance of experience for students is maintained through planning, outlined in the Practical Training Procedure; supervision, learning and

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assessment methods and onsite meetings with students, faculty and senior staff and through cross-checking against 'Students Practical Training Form'. The learning and assessment methods are aligned to all the course intended learning outcomes, which include the development of interior design proposals for different types of buildings that are assessed by final jury. Overall, the increase from 200–300 hours for training period is positive and the Panel is of the view that the actions taken fully address the recommendation.

Recommendation 1.3: *Develop appropriate mechanism to ensure consistency of student experience within diverse courses by developing mechanisms such as staff/student forums where general awareness of course content can be monitored and discussed.*

Judgement: *Partially Addressed*

According the progress report and evidence provided, the Department organized the first staff and student forum on 26 March 2017 to discuss the aims, objectives and the expected learning outcomes of the programme as well as the content of different courses, graduate attributes and professional standards of CIDA. This facilitated students meeting with their peers, instructors, the Chairperson of the Department and the Dean. Some suggestions were raised in the first forum to improve the content and delivery of some subjects such as textile and accessories. Faculty members also agreed to facilitate collaboration between students. In the second forum that was conducted in November 2017, suggestions were made to reduce the amount of student load in design studios, practically the users' survey in 'INTD 211 Interior Design Studio I' and design consideration in 'INTD 212 Interior Design Studio II'. Although, the staff and student forum offered some interesting details such as the parallel exploration of nano-technology and traditional textile production, the Panel advises the College to be cautious regarding the perception that ID graduates might act as technicians for Architects.

The frequency and scope of the staff and student forum will be increasingly relevant when the transition to the new building concludes. This development of the campus offers opportunities for students and staff to agree to a revised approach to the use of studio space, and to reconsider where 'Studio' activities might occur. The programme continues to offer induction and course surveys that also contribute to this dialogue. The Panel concludes that this is an area for continuing development and agrees that the recommendation is partially addressed.

Recommendation 1.4: *Develop and enhance feedback mechanisms to include more opportunities for the students to receive written feedback on both summative and formative assessment.*

Judgement: *Fully Addressed*

Evidence provided indicate that KU's Accreditation and Quality Assurance Office (AQAO) revised the assessment forms and included a dedicated field for faculty members to write their feedback, in addition to the written comments that are written on the students' submitted papers. Design Juries' guidelines and forms were also revised to include a section for written feedback and clear instructions on this matter. These documents require jury members to discuss, criticize, evaluate the project and write-down their feedback, rather than rely on verbal feedback alone. The faculty provided evidence that these documents are already in use within the programme. The documentation provided also offers evidence of students' progress between pre-jury and final jury. Moreover, the written feedback facility of the Leaning Management System (LMS) was enhanced to enable instructors to upload their comments as feedback files for each student and to apply digital comment tools on the files submitted by students. There are opportunities for more detailed feedback/feed forward that is provided by the LMS and students expressed enthusiasm for this method of communicating with them about their work and how to improve it. They also indicated that the feedback provided is used as a reference point in tutorial meetings, where they are able to scaffold the discussion with the content of the written feedback. In light of the evidence and the feedback of the students, the Panel concludes that the recommendation is fully met.

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2. Indicator 2: Efficiency of the programme

This section evaluates the extent to which the BID programme of KU, has addressed the recommendations outlined in the programme review report of December 2015, under Indicator 2: Efficiency of the programme; and as a consequence, provides a judgment regarding the level of implementation of each recommendation for this Indicator as outlined in Appendix 1 of this Report.

Recommendation 2.1: *Revisit the BID programme ethos and clarify how the programme sets itself up as a distinctive and separate offer from the Architecture programme.*

Judgement: *Fully Addressed*

The Panel notes the substantial changes that have taken place within the programme team (additional ID qualified staff); within the programme ethos, which is distinctive from architecture but has sought to capitalise on proximities to that subject where beneficial for students; through estates development – relocated and more substantial workshop, expanded campus and finally through closer integration of programme content – courses work in relation to each other. According to the progress report, the Programme Specification was reviewed and updated to reflect the programme's revised aims and philosophy and to ensure the distinctiveness between the BID and the Bachelor of Science in Architecture Engineering (BSAE) programmes. The descriptions of common courses were also modified to emphasize the difference between the two disciplines particularly in terms of the coursework and projects assigned to students. During the interviews with senior management and students, they confirmed that the two programmes are overlapping in several fundamental and elective courses particularly those related to history and theories of architecture, design and art. Students in particular saw this overlap as one of the strong features that distinguish the BID programme offered by KU compared with other private universities in Bahrain and as an opportunity for them for sharing ideas and collaborating productively with Architecture Engineering (AE) students.

As per the Revised Programme Specification, the BID programme has a distinctive focus particularly with respect to demolitions and rehabilitation of interior spaces as well as the influences of the environmental and sustainability factors on the design of built environments and products. Interior Design graduates are also expected to specialize in built-environment spaces and theatre design, focusing on lighting, acoustics designs and transformation design, which was corroborated during the interviews with senior management. The Panel is of the view that Interior Design, Theatre/Set (Scenography) and Transformation Design are two areas that could develop positive employment channels for graduates. The Panel also agrees that the

pathways system is a positive approach to establishing a distinct offer, which the College seeks to achieve and concludes that this recommendation is fully addressed.

Recommendation 2.2: *Develop and implement a recruitment plan to balance the ratio of ID specialist qualified staff delivering the BID programme.*

Judgement: *Partially Addressed*

The recommendation of the 2015 BQA review report was taken into consideration in the Department of Interior Design Manpower Plan of 2016-2017. The Chairperson of the Department filled a Vacancy Specification document, which highlighted the department's need to hire more staff to teach several areas such as history and theories of art, design and architecture, professional practice and entrepreneurship, interior construction and rehabilitation, computer applications and technical services. Based on KU's formal recruitment procedures, received CVs have been shortlisted and the Department has conducted interviews with the selected candidates of whom three candidates were selected. Two candidates joined KU in the second semester of the academic year 2017-2018. The third candidate apologized due to the long time that was needed for obtaining the approval of the Higher Education Council (HEC). Currently, there are two associate professors, one assistant professor and one lecturer in the ID Department that contribute in the delivery of the two programmes offered by the College on full-time basis (72.55% teaching in the BID and 27.45% in the AE programmes). The nine full-time faculty members of the AE Department contribute by 5.6% in the teaching of the BID programme. The Department is planning to higher one more faculty member specialized in codes and retail design & branded environments as indicated in the Manpower Plan of 2017-2018.

Overall, there is clearly a challenge surrounding recruitment and retention in particular, as indicated in the statistics provided by the College during the follow-up visit. The staff turnover rate decreased from 16.6% in 2012-2013 to 0% in 2013-2014 and increased again from 9% in 2014-2015 to 45% in 2015-2016. In 2016-2017, the staff turnover rate was 10%. Weak retention of faculty members is identified as a risk element by senior management and suggestions were made to introduce long-term contracting and increase salary scale, allowances and benefits. Interviews with senior management indicates that the College seeks to increase its intake of students and hence hiring more faculty. The staff to student ratio is currently 1:18 for the BSAE programme and 1:6 for the BID programme. The Panel also notes that the number of students enrolled in the BID programme decreased from 35 in 2015-2016 to 23 in 2017-2018 due to the stopping of admission by the HEC, which is likely to have a negative impact on the efforts to attract and retain high quality additional faculty members, if it continues. Hence, the Panel acknowledges the efforts of the College in addressing this recommendation and recommends that the College should continue with the

implementation of its Manpower Plan and develop a mechanism to mitigate the risk of low staff retention rate amongst the College's faculty.

Recommendation 2.3: *Develop and implement a risk management plan for the BID programme to identify and mitigate different risks.*

Judgement: *Partially Addressed*

In November 2017, KU developed a centralized plan to deal with emergencies, disasters and rain. KU Planning and Development Unit prepared and developed the Risk Management Policy and a procedure that were reviewed by the University Policy Review Committee (UPRC) in 2016-2017. The Policy captures the institutional commitment to ensure a timely response to emergent and changing risk landscape. It identifies obligations on senior management and staff to notify the University Risk Management Committee (URMC) of risk related activities. The Risk Management Procedure indicates that each department is required to prepare and submit a risk response plan to the URMC for approval. Each department should also communicates its risks status regularly to the URMC and updates the intranet risk register as per the applied procedures. As per the progress report and interviews with senior management, the College of Architecture Engineering and Design (CAED) prepared its risk response plan based on a wide range of scenarios for potential academic and administrative risks that were identified by the Dean and the Chairpersons of the Departments. These scenarios include high and medium probability risks such the weak retention of faculty members, where several suggestions were put in place but there is no evidence of implementation. Losing hard copy of student records and administrative documents were identified as potential low probability risks and several actions are already in place to minimize the risk.

The Panel notes that the action plan of the College is limited to stopping admission, which is classified as high in terms of probability and impact on business continuity. The Panel notes that less attention is given to risks associated with the loss of students' records and the accuracy of results. As per the 2015 BQA review report, it is recommended that the BID programme prepare a risk management plan 'to set out the coordinated and cost-effective application of resources to minimize, monitor, and control the probability or impact of undesired events, specifically those related to the loss of records or the corruption of results' accuracy'. Therefore, the Panel concludes that the College did not take sufficient actions to fully address this recommendation, which was mainly raised concerning the security of students' records and accuracy of results and agrees that this recommendation is partially addressed.

Recommendation 2.4: *Regularly update the Library stocks to include critical texts and reading lists.*

Judgement: *Partially Addressed*

As per the progress report, the existing reading list was revised and updated as a part of the continuous annual revision of reference books to ensure that at least three different updated textbooks are available for each course. The Department also developed a gap analysis report, according to which requests were made to purchase books and 56 updated titles have been purchased in the academic year 2016-2017. The Panel notes that the list of publications is predominantly practical/applied and light on theoretical/critical texts. The programme ethos should influence the critical framework and by extension the choice of associated literature. These areas of continuing improvement evidence why the Panel identified that the recommendation is partially met.

Recommendation 2.5: *Engage fully with the university's campus redevelopment plans and involve a broad base of stakeholders, in particular, students and alumni to ensure that studios, workshops and computer laboratories (both making and IT) are fit for purpose.*

Judgement: *Partially Addressed*

During the site visit, a tour of the physical premises of the CAED and the new building where KU planned to accommodate five new design studios was conducted. The Panel was informed that each studio has an area ranging from 55.6 to 60.3 square meters and will be equipped with a retractable drawing board (ergonomic design) and different storage solutions for each student to store boards, rolls and drawing stationary. The Panel was also informed that students will move to the new building following the inspection and approval of the relevant regulatory bodies. The evidence that was presented to the Panel includes KU existing building drawing, new building drawing and the specification of drawing tables and lockers.

In addition to the five new studios, KU campus currently includes four drawing studios with total capacity of 75 drawing tables and two computer laboratories with 40 workstation sets that are utilised by CAED students. The Panel, however, notes that the four studios were not renovated and as noted in the 2015 BQA review report, the current physical studios are not fit for purpose in terms of the available technology and the College did not allocate an adequate design space with a suitable size drawing table for each BID student individually for the entire time of the teaching semester. There is also a model making workshop, which contains drawing tables. As per the progress report, students currently share this space for informal learning of design and developing their designs by either moulding or drawing.

According to the progress report and the evidence provided, the ID Department benchmarked the workshops and computer laboratories with the University of Derby and VCU in Qatar through their cooperative agreements. Based on the benchmarking analysis and the recommendations of an HEC consultant, the model making workshop was equipped with 10 machines, glass workstation and gypsum work tools. Specifications of the recommended equipment have been identified to ensure suitability to the environment and local standards. During the tour of the physical premises, the Panel was informed that some equipment have been purchased such as Interlock glass works tools, Gypsum works tools, and Environmental laboratory tools. Computer laboratories were also supplied with new software. Overall, the Panel is of the view that the recommendation is partially met. The Panel also recommends that the College should further improve the status of the utilized studios and the model making workshop to meet the needs of staff and students and provide them with samples/material library, and to include spaces for social learning. These spaces would include areas in the library and spaces adjacent to the studios, which could double up as break-out areas and the corridors themselves as excellent spaces to display work in progress or work from invited external contributors.

Recommendation 2.6: *Develop and implement comprehensive policy and procedure to address the special needs of both students and staff.*

Judgement: *Fully Addressed*

The AQAO, the Student Support & Counselling Unit and the Human Resources Department developed a new policy and procedures that clearly describe the arrangements and the support that can be provided to students with learning difficulties and/or mobility or dexterity limitations or difficulties. The policy confirms KU compliance with the law and regulatory bodies' requirements as well as its commitment to ensure equal access, fairness and equivalent learning experience for prospective and registered students. The provided arrangements include priority registration/enrolment, note takers, interpreters and readers for examinations, and training for assistive technology. The procedures describe the role and the responsibilities of the Student Support & Counselling Unit, University Admission Committee, College Deans and the Chairpersons of the Departments.

The Policy and procedures were reviewed by the University Programme Review & Development Committee and approved by the University Council. The employee Handbook includes a section for individuals with special needs that has been recently added, as indicated during the interview with members from the Planning and Development Unit, the Human Resources Department and the Student Support and Counselling Unit. The Handbook asserts KU's compliance to regulatory requirements particularly in terms of the accessibility of its facilities for employees and visitors with

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special needs and medical conditions. Interviewees seem to be aware of their roles and responsibilities as depicted in the related policy and procedures. Moreover, evidence provided confirms that they were provided with guidance/training in relation to dealing with students with learning difficulties. Overall, the Panel is of the view that the recommendation is fully addressed.

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3.   Indicator 3: Academic standards of the graduates

This section evaluates the extent to which the BID programme of KU, has addressed the recommendations outlined in the programme review report of December 2015, under Indicator 3: Academic standards of the graduates; and as a consequence, provides a judgment regarding the level of implementation of each recommendation for this Indicator as outlined in Appendix 1 of this Report.

Recommendation 3.1: *Formally benchmark the programme against professional body criteria and leading ID programmes on a regular basis, and expand the benchmarking activities to include the teaching and learning methods, learning resources and students' standards.*

Judgement: *Partially Addressed*

As per KU's newly developed benchmarking procedure, the ID Department sent request letters to several regional and international universities to initiate a formal agreement for benchmarking. Some universities namely the University of Derby in UK, VCU in Qatar, and Ahlia University in Bahrain welcomed the initiative and responded positively to signing a formal agreement. As per the Annual Programme Review Procedure, the Department benchmarked the BID programme to CIDA, which is evidenced in the PILO-CIDA Standard Mapping document and developed matrices in order to help instructors design and prepare teaching and learning materials to meet the mapped standards. The ID Department currently has cooperation agreements with VCU and Ahlia University to share information on programme aims and objectives, curriculum structure, course specifications, design studios, workshops and computer laboratories. A benchmarking study has also been conducted to compare teaching methods, assessment methods and resources with two other universities. Several gaps were identified and some actions were proposed to address these gaps, which included initiatives to establish design competition and encourage the students to create their portfolios.

The Panel observes that the benchmarking process while clearly valued would benefit from being implemented systematically and periodically with a specified interval. It draws primarily on national and regional institutions and could be much broader in its scope. It is also important to consider how the process may be of mutual benefit to the partners, as this will help clarify the particular strength and learning approaches of KU. Furthermore, the contracts should identify a time-period for the reciprocal agreement, perhaps aligned with the BID periodic review. This will allow on-going improvements of the programme to be more effectively and efficiently monitored over time. These areas of continuing improvement evidence why the Panel identifies that the recommendation is partially met.

Recommendation 3.2: *Consistently implement and monitor the assessment policies and procedures and ensure that assessment criteria for all forms of assessment are detailed and clear.*

Judgement: *Partially Addressed*

The College Teaching, Learning and Assessment Committee (CTLAC) revised the assessment criteria for theoretical and design courses as well as the procedures for pre-juries and final juries of design courses, as per the progress report and provided evidence. These revisions were conducted in response to the 2015 BQA review report, which indicated that BID students were not provided with sufficient feedback and the criteria for assessment are unclear for some courses, which further lessen the value of the given feedback. Furthermore, as mentioned in recommendation 1.4 of this Report, the AQAO revised the assessment forms and included a dedicated field for faculty members to write their feedback, in addition to the written comments provided on the students' submitted papers. The AQAO also conducts an internal audit at the end of each semester to oversee the implementation of the revised assessment procedures.

Meetings with students and faculty during the follow-up visit indicated a holistic approach to assessment with a keen sense of integrated thinking evident in some of the faculty. The Panel notes with appreciation the fact that students were positive about how their assessments were conducted and the transparency of the process. The Panel also finds the revised assessment criteria detailed and clear. Nonetheless, the Panel is of the view that consideration should be given to further enhance this situation, for example, *via* staff development supported by the University Teaching Learning and Assessment Committee (UTLAC), and folding in some of the strengths offered by the growing use of the LMS in providing more detailed feedback. In light of the need for these continuing improvements, the Panel concurs that this recommendation is partially addressed.

Recommendation 3.3: *Strengthen the internal moderation system and develop mechanism to evaluate the effectiveness of this system and use the outcome to improve upon it.*

Judgement: *Partially Addressed*

KU revised the Assessment Moderation Procedure in response to the 2015 BQA review report, which indicated that the internal moderation processes do not deal sufficiently with design-based examinations. It also revealed that in some courses, the assessment structures and weights were not appropriate. As per the progress report and the provided evidence, the design examinations have been included in the internal pre-moderation process since the first semester of the academic year 2017-2018. The internal pre-assessment moderation process includes all the offered courses and all the

grading rubrics and assessment criteria prepared for pre- and final juries are currently reviewed by the CTLAC. Moreover, the outputs of the pre-assessment moderation process are compiled in one report, which is subsequently discussed in the College Council for further actions and improvements. The internal post-assessment moderation is conducted by UTLAC that reviews the marking of 15% of students' answer booklets. To ensure the effectiveness of the internal post-assessment moderation, external moderators are currently required to verify the same samples of students' works and answer scripts, which were internally moderated. This is considered as 'a double check on marking of course assessment' as per the progress report. In addition, the AQAO conducts an internal audit at the end of each semester to oversee the implementation of the assessment and moderation procedures and the ID Department is required to implement the AQAO recommendations.

Overall, the Panel is of the view that the reporting mechanisms and checks are commensurate with other institutions, with relevant committees responsible for continuous development. During the follow-up visit, ownership over assessment and moderation processes was clear in the meetings with faculty, partly as a result of faculty membership of committees such as UTLAC. The Panel position is to consolidate the progress made *via* staff development workshops and induction. The Department should also continue to evaluate the effectiveness of the revised Assessment Moderation Procedure and regularly improve on it. In balance, the Panel agrees that this recommendation is partially met.

Recommendation 3.4: *Reconsider the list of external moderators and follow the formal selection procedure for external moderators.*

Judgement: *Fully Addressed*

The ID Department communicated with two international, two regional and two local candidates seeking their initial approval to be external moderators for the BID programme. The academicians who accepted the offer were added to the list of external moderators that was discussed with the academic staff in the Department Council and was raised to the College Dean for approval, as per KU's formal procedure. During the meeting with the moderators, they confirmed that they have an agreement in principle with KU, but no contract. The Panel was provided with evidence of the correspondences with external moderators (in effect, email agreements), the CV's of senior and international external moderators, and documents confirming that the members of the Department were collectively involved in running a formal selection process in order to appoint the moderators. In addition to this, samples of external moderators' reports demonstrate that the moderators are already active in offering useful feedback to the programme. Comments from the external moderators highlight the need for a clearer connection between recommended texts

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and their utility in teaching. This document also captures the advice given to the programme by the external moderators within a matrix, allowing for clear comparison, and delineates an action plan for implementation.

While the Panel acknowledges that currently the Department follows the formal procedure in selecting the external moderators, the Panel is of the view that the procedure needs to be revised to ensure that the moderators agree to a specific period of engagement that is long enough in order to become commensurate with other ID programmes and to avoid the risks associated with constantly changing moderators offering contradictory or conflicting advice regarding programme changes. Moreover, during the meeting with moderators, the Panel was informed that they were unaware as to how their advice was being implemented. The Panel, therefore, also suggests that the College inform moderators of how their advice is being implemented. In balance, the Panel agrees that this recommendation has been fully met.

Recommendation 3.5: *Revise the moderation procedures for design courses to require independent external moderation of the assessments decided by design juries.*

Judgement: *Fully Addressed*

The CTLAC revised the design jury procedures to include independent marking by both internal and external jurors, and a 'drawings verification' mark given by the instructor. As per the progress report, the revised procedures were approved by the University Policy and Procedures Review Committee (UPPRC) and were added as a separate section in the University Assessment procedure. Moreover, design courses were included in the post-assessment external moderation process. According to the progress report, external moderators verify about 25% of the offered courses each academic year and since 2016-2017, four to five design courses per semester were sent for post-assessment external moderation. The sent course files included course specifications, CILOs/PILOs mapping, design briefs, samples of students' submissions, the filled jury assessment forms and the final grade breakdown structure. The external moderators' evaluation reports were discussed in the College Council and an action/improvement plan was prepared to address their comments, which refers to some areas for improvement such as considering users with special needs, contextual design and indication of the material used in the projects. The CTLAC also required design juries to engage in external sampling, marking and ratification, which has been approved by the UPPRC. In light of the evidence presented, the Panel is of the view that the recommendation is fully addressed.

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Recommendation 3.6: *Revise the programme's capstone project delivery and assessment mechanisms to ensure that the level of graduate achievement is adequate for the programme type and level.*

Judgement: *Partially Addressed*

The Department revised the capstone project delivery and assessment mechanisms to address the recommendations of the 2015 BQA review report and the suggestions made by the external examiners and jurors for the graduation project. The CTLAC developed a checklist of minimum requirements for students' graduation projects to ensure that students prepare a comprehensive documentation for submission as a Graduation Project that includes clear elaboration of the design process. As per the progress report, the 'Graduation Project' course aims and learning outcomes were revised in order to incorporate different design aspects in the knowledge and understanding skills, subject-specific skills and intellectual skills that are expected to be demonstrated through the course. Furthermore, comprehensive guidelines for the graduation project were developed by the CTLAC that include graduation project objectives, general procedures, submission stages, minimum requirements, detailed assessment criteria and guide ethics. A customized rubric based on the revised learning outcomes was also developed for each pre-jury and final jury assessment.

The Panel notes the key adjustments that are established now and recognizes that it takes time for these adjustments to manifest in the quality of material produced. Providing the previously highlighted recruitment challenges are addressed, the Panel considers that this trickle-up quality enhancement will emerge more fully once it has been given time to fully embed itself. In addition, the Panel notes the limited range of references students are using in the written work of their projects. The faculty is therefore urged to make continuing improvements in this area. A continuing commitment to increasing synthesis between theory and practice and encouraging the students to develop/demonstrate critical thinking is also highly recommended, in order to advance the students' visual and textual outputs significantly. In view of these continuing improvements, the Panel concludes that this recommendation is partially met.

4. Indicator 4: Effectiveness of quality management and assurance

This section evaluates the extent to which the BID programme of KU, has addressed the recommendations outlined in the programme review report of December 2015, under Indicator 4: Effectiveness of quality management and assurance; and as a consequence, provides a judgment regarding the level of implementation of each recommendation for this Indicator as outlined in Appendix 1 of this Report.

Recommendation 4.1: *Review the college improvement plans as these pertain to BID for detailed/analysis, evaluation and implementation*

Judgement: *Partially Addressed*

In response to the recommendation, the College reviewed the improvement plan to include three new columns that incorporate the AQAO's remarks and indicate whether the proposed actions are fully, partially or not implemented. The progress report provides detailed description of the annual programme review process and its significance in ensuring the academic standards of the programme and the quality of learning. As per KU's Performance Measurement and Effectiveness Policy, the Chairperson of the Department is responsible for preparing the programme annual review report and the improvement plan by addressing all the areas covered in the annual programme review template. These areas include students' course and instructor evaluations, the results of students' satisfaction surveys related to the programme organization and management, CILOs and PILOs' attainment reports, annual student cohort analysis and the comments of external moderators. The College Programme Review & Development Committee reviews the improvement plans and the College Quality Assurance Committee (CQAC), in conjunction with the AQAO, monitor and review the implementation of the improvement plan through regular periodical internal audits.

The evidence provided includes the annual programme review report of 2016-2017, the BID improvement plan of 2016-2017 and minutes of meetings of the CQAC (31 October 2017), the AQAO (26 September 2017) and the University Quality Assurance Committee (22 October 2017). The Panel notes, however, that the improvement plan template does not have clear measurable key performance indicators for evaluation and definable target dates in some cases. The remarks raised by the AQAO were also minimal and do not offer detailed analysis. Nevertheless, the Panel notes that several proposed actions were implemented as per the expected date of completion and the status on the progress of the action plan is based on the submitted evidence by the Chairperson of the Department. The cycle continues until the action item is closed out. Overall, the Panel is of the view that the improvement plan requires further refinement

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to fully address the recommendation. Hence, the recommendation is partially addressed.

Recommendation 4.2: *Develop a mechanism to utilize the outcome of the stakeholder surveys in improving the programme and its outcomes.*

Judgement: *Partially Addressed*

The progress report states that, in accordance with Section 5.1.2 of the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Policy, KU's system and processes are based on evidence whereby outcomes and feedback from various stakeholders namely students, staff, alumni, employers, external assessors and Industry Advisory Council provide the basis for analysis and conclusions on which improvements are formulated across its programmes, courses and activities. Section 5.8 of the same policy affirms and ensures that all stakeholders' feedback is periodically sought regarding the academic programmes and reacts positively to their expectations. Similarly, this is supported by KU's Performance Measurement and Effectiveness Policy in which the University, through its Institutional Measurement Unit (IMU) provides periodical analyses of the different surveys to relevant colleges, departments and support/administrative offices. These surveys include an annual student satisfaction survey, a biannual alumni survey, and an employer/market survey, which is conducted every three years.

The Performance Measurement and Effectiveness Procedure was approved by the University Council in November 2017. The evidence provided include the IMU Annual Report of 2016-2017, which includes the outcomes of all stakeholders' surveys as one consolidated report that serves as a major input in the annual programme review cycle and improvement plan as well as the periodic reviews. The Panel was also provided with samples of relevant minutes of meetings. The Panel notes that the implementation of the procedure is at an early stage and urges the College to ensure its systematic implementation. In light of the above, the Panel concludes that the recommendation is partially addressed.

Recommendation 4.3: *Formally scope industry needs and conduct this process in a rigorous manner, cognisant of national, regional and international opportunities and developments.*

Judgement: *Not Addressed*

To scope the market needs, KU revised the Performance Measurement and Effectiveness Policy and Procedure to include provisions for the development of customized employer surveys. As per the revised policy and procedure, a customized Existing Employer Survey for the BID programme was developed by faculty members to assess the satisfaction levels of employers of the acquired skills and competencies

of KU ID graduates. They also developed a Potential Employer Questionnaire, as corroborated during the interviews with senior management at institutional and college levels, to gather information related to the competency expectations for KU ID graduates from local, regional and international firms. Evidence provided includes empty templates of the Existing Employer Survey and the Potential Employer Questionnaire. It was revealed to the Panel during the follow-up visit that KU has recently contracted a private company to conduct the surveys and analyse the results. The analysis of results of the existing and potential employer surveys for the graduates of the two programmes (BSID and BID) offered by CAED were consolidated in one report. The Panel is of the view that results of the two surveys should have been analysed separately and for each programme individually. The company also provided KU with an Exploratory Research Report that was circulated to the Dean and the Department Chairpersons. The Exploratory Research Report is incomplete and does not provide sufficient information that recommendations can be drawn on. It only identifies anticipated construction sector expansion in the near future, requiring an increase in qualified graduates from the region. Hence, the Panel recommends that CAED should revise the mechanism used to scope the market needs to ensure more robust and relevant responses that pertain for each programme separately. Thus, the Panel concludes that weaknesses persist in relation to this recommendation and consequently agrees that this recommendation remains unaddressed.

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5. Conclusion

Taking into account the institution's own progress report, the evidence gathered from the interviews and documentation made available during the follow-up visit, the Panel draws the following conclusion in accordance with the DHR/BQA Follow-up Visits of Academic Programme Reviews Procedure:

The Bachelor in Interior Design programme offered by Kingdom University has made adequate progress.

Appendix 1:   Judgement per recommendation.

Judgement	Standard
Fully Addressed	The institution has demonstrated marked progress in addressing the recommendation. The actions taken by the programme team have led to significant improvements in the identified aspect and, as a consequence, in meeting the Indicator's requirements.
Partially Addressed	The institution has taken positive actions to address the recommendation. There is evidence that these actions have produced improvements and that these improvements are sustainable. The actions taken are having a positive, yet limited impact on the ability of the programme to meet the Indicator's requirements.
Not Addressed	The institution has not taken appropriate actions to address the recommendation and/or actions taken have little or no impact on the quality of the programme delivery and the academic standards. Weaknesses persist in relation to this recommendation.

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Appendix 2:   Overall Judgement.

Overall Judgement	Standard
Good progress	The institution has fully addressed the majority of the recommendations contained in the review report, and/or previous follow-up report, these include recommendations that have most impact on the quality of the programme, its delivery and academic standards. The remaining recommendations are partially addressed. **No further follow-up visit is required.**
Adequate progress	The institution has at least partially addressed most of the recommendations contained in the review report and/or previous follow-up report, including those that have major impact on the quality of the programme, its delivery and academic standards. There is a number of recommendations that have been fully addressed and there is evidence that the institution can maintain the progress achieved. **No further follow-up visit is required.**
Inadequate progress	The institution has made little or no progress in addressing a significant number of the recommendations contained in the review report and/or previous follow-up report, especially those that have main impact on the quality of the programme, its delivery and academic standards. For first follow-up visits, a second follow-up visit is required,