



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

Directorate of Vocational Reviews

Review Report

Manahel Training Centre (MTC)

Karbabad

Kingdom of Bahrain

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VO0112-C3-R037

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Introduction

The Directorate Vocational Reviews (DVR), which is a part of the Education & Training Quality Authority (BQA), conducted this review over three days, by a team of five reviewers. For this review, reviewers observed sessions and other related activities, analysed data about the courses and certificates that learners achieve, examined learners' written and other work, examined documents and the materials provided by the Centre and met learners, employers, trainers, management and support staff.

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

Grading scale

Outstanding	1	Good	2	Satisfactory	3	Inadequate	4
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Table of review judgements awarded

Main Question	Judgement
Learners' achievement	Satisfactory (3)
Quality of teaching / training and assessment	Satisfactory (3)
Quality of programmes	Satisfactory (3)
Quality of support and guidance	Satisfactory (3)
Leadership, management and governance	Inadequate (4)
Capacity to improve	Satisfactory (3)
Overall effectiveness	Satisfactory (3)

Review judgements

Overall effectiveness

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

Grade: Satisfactory (3)

The overall effectiveness for Manahel Training Centre (MTC) is satisfactory, as are all other aspects of its provision except the effectiveness of leadership and management which is judged as inadequate due to the sudden exit of the previous management team and most staff. This has negatively impacted the implementation of the Quality Assurance (QA) arrangements and the centre's continuous improvement plans. The recently appointed management and staff manage day-to-day operations to a suitable standard. However, monitoring the performance of learners and trainers remain to be ineffective.

Learners generally gain and develop useful knowledge and relevant skills, and the majority make sufficient progress considering their prior attainment. Learners are provided with adequate support and guidance which help them to improve but not necessarily to reach their full potential. Training sessions are engaging and interactive for the majority of learners, who display a positive attitude towards their learning and complete their courses in a timely manner. However, a minority of learners do not master the required skills upon courses completion and their level of attainment is low, particularly in the National Board Examination for Occupational Health and Safety (NEBOSH) and the Chartered Institute for Environmental Health (CIEH) qualifications where the pass rates are below the international pass rates. Additionally, only a few learners are sufficiently self-motivated and reflect on what they need to do to improve further.

The Centre is safe and courses are conducted in a fit-for-purpose and appropriately equipped learning environment. The majority of courses are well-structured and planned to meet the stakeholders' and learners' requirements. These courses are delivered by qualified trainers who use their professional experience to enrich training through practical real-life examples, an effective range of training methods, and good use of the available learning resources. However, during the observed sessions and in a minority of cases, trainers did not succeed in engaging passive learners.

Relevant formative and summative assessment methods are used to evaluate learners' understanding. Learners' final attainments are appropriately recorded, but insufficient records are kept throughout the courses regarding learners' ongoing performance. Sessions are well managed and learners' varying needs are suitably addressed, though the outcomes

of learners' prior and continuous assessment are insufficiently detailed in the lesson plans. Local market needs are reviewed on an *ad hoc* basis and the outcomes are adequately used to inform the provision. The externally-accredited course materials are outsourced and regularly updated; however local market needs analysis and the mechanism for designing internally-accredited courses are not sufficiently systematic.

Capacity to improve

How strong is the provider's capacity to improve the quality of learning?

Grade: Satisfactory (3)

The Centre has satisfactory capacity to improve its provision. The new management team and staff are capable and have a vision focused on improving the provision further. The Centre has a fit-for-purpose organisational structure, including access to a pool of experienced and qualified trainers. It has sufficient physical resources and is currently planning to re-structure the building layout to provide an Information Technology (IT) laboratory to accommodate upcoming courses. A few new courses are being offered and there are plans to provide more courses mainly in IT, accounting and languages. Achievement rates have recently been discussed during management and staff meetings and an action plan for NEBOSH courses has been developed. An increase in the recent batch pass rate has been noted, but it is still lower than international pass rates. Notwithstanding the above, the recent changes of management and staff have affected the implementation of quality assurance measures. QA arrangements have been improved and a useful QA manual introduced. However, the system is not fully developed in detailing relevant policies and procedures, nor effectively implemented. The Centre has a useful SWOT which has resulted in the development of generic strategic and operational plans to address the identified key areas for improvement, but the Self-Evaluation Form (SEF) submitted for this review is insufficiently detailed.

Learners' achievement

How well do learners achieve?

Grade: Satisfactory (3)

The majority of learners gain suitable knowledge and develop relevant vocational skills through attending courses offered by the Centre. This is evident from learners' contributions and their level of understanding in the sessions observed, and the available samples of their work. Most employers and learners interviewed find the training relevant to what they do at

their workplace and it enhances learners' job performance. According to analysis of the Learners' Performance Data (LPD) provided and the attainment records for the past three years, the vast majority of learners achieve their certifications and/or course objectives in a timely manner, with the majority of them scoring reasonable marks in their final results. Learners' achievement is suitably measured by formative and summative assessments; the standard of learners' work reflects an adequate level of performance. The overall success rate is high at 81%, yet a minority of learners are underachieving and the pass rates in a few courses are below the international pass rates particularly in the NEBOSH and CIEH courses. The comparison between pre- and post-course assessments reveals that the majority of learners make sufficient progress from their starting points. However, the level of attainment for a minority of learners is low and the value they obtain from the courses adds only slightly to their previous knowledge.

Learners are attentive and the majority demonstrate positive attitudes towards their learning. On the other hand, only a few learners are self-motivated and are able to reflect on their level of understanding and what they need to do to improve further, such as through questioning their trainers and sharing relevant cases from their work experience. The majority of learners are generally able to work independently to complete their in-class activities. Attendance is effectively recorded, though punctuality is not recorded in the attendance sheets. The vast majority of learners attend regularly, but from the sessions observed there are a few cases of learners who arrive late to their sessions.

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching/training and assessment in promoting learning?

Grade: Satisfactory (3)

The effectiveness of teaching, training and assessment at MTC is satisfactory overall. Trainers are highly knowledgeable and have relevant theoretical and practical command of their specialisms. They are able to respond to learners' questions, provide practical real-life examples and explanations relevant to learners' workplaces. A wide range of training methods and activities are used which are effective in engaging and motivating the majority of learners. These include lectures, discussions, in-class activities, practical exercises and role-play. Learners' levels of understanding and their abilities to complete the in-class activities are suitably assessed through a variety of practical and theoretical assessment methods including targeted and open questioning techniques, practical activities, pre- and post-course assessments and quizzes. However, the review team found a few cases where the marking of assessment was not rigorous, and the Centre lacks a clear written rubric.

Trainers regularly provide instant and useful verbal feedback to help learners improve. However, written feedback or comments are insufficient, particularly for the longer courses. Although trainers maintain records on learners' marks in their pre- and post- course assessments, the Centre has limited records of formative assessments carried throughout the course. The majority of courses have basic lesson plans, with only a few having more detailed plans which generally outline the topics covered, training methodologies and the resources to be used; however they are insufficiently informed by prior attainment or continuous assessment of learners. The vast majority of sessions are appropriately managed, with clear objectives which are shared with learners. They usually start with useful recapitulation of the previous session.

The trainers appropriately accommodate learners' varying needs through using work-related examples and giving specific explanations. However, the less-able learners are not always well supported. Trainers occasionally use training methods that encourage self-learning and stimulate learners' critical thinking; this is done, specifically in Health and Safety (H&S) courses, through the effective use of relevant case studies and real-life scenarios from well-known national and international organisations. Trainers utilise the available learning resources and materials effectively to ensure a smooth delivery of training.

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

Grade: Satisfactory (3)

MTC provides training in H&S and a variety of soft skills for the workplace. The majority of the courses are externally-accredited with a range of internally-accredited courses, which suitably meet the requirements of learners and employers. The Centre has *ad hoc* arrangements of interpreting the needs of employers and learners, but does not conduct targeted research to assess their needs. Notwithstanding the above, MTC recently introduced an IT market survey tool, the results of which persuaded management to offer IT courses.

The externally-accredited courses in H&S are expertly planned and structured, with specified content and the expected learning outcomes as required by the awarding bodies. The materials used are well designed and are reviewed and regularly updated. The soft skills courses, which represent 49% of the total enrolment over the past three years, are adequately structured and planned to meet the needs of learners and employers. However, the mechanism for designing and amending details of the internally-accredited courses is not systematic. All courses offered are suitably resourced with teaching aids and materials such as manuals, PowerPoint presentations and trainers' notes. A few courses are supported with a limited extra-curricular activities such as field trips. The courses are designed to target specific audiences identified in the course outlines. Some screening of learners' competence is

carried out to ensure they have the required knowledge, experience and skills to be enrolled on certain courses. However, there are a few cases of learners being enrolled and not having the necessary key skills to participate in the courses, particularly NEBOSH.

How well learners are supported and guided?

Grade: Satisfactory (3)

Considering that the vast majority of courses are short or very short in duration, MTC has adequate arrangements to support learners to achieve better through a fit-for-purpose support and guidance mechanism. However, the Centre has not developed a comprehensive policy and procedures for this. Trainers, management and administrative staff are friendly and approachable. Learners and stakeholders have access to informed advice and guidance about courses on offer through various means including telephone calls, emails, the Centre's website, posts on social media, and promotional brochures and booklets. Learners also receive the course outlines and handbooks in advance, with the necessary information, on request. The Centre is in the initial stage of developing its on-line services. Recently, free counselling sessions have been implemented for learners who are interested to take-up NEBOSH courses, while complementary courses are provided for previous learners, for example with the HABC level 1 course.

Learners who face difficulties during their training are supported adequately through extra sessions such as one-on-one and group support sessions. However, no further follow-up is carried out, so the academic support provided to learners who did not achieve well on courses such as NEBOSH is insufficient. The Centre communicates regularly with stakeholders through a variety of approaches. Although the Centre shares cumulative reports at the end of courses, details of individual learners' performance are insufficient.

The MTC learning environment is pleasant and sufficiently equipped with relevant learning resources and hygienic facilities. The classrooms are fit-for-purpose and equipped with the necessary learning aids and resources such as flipcharts, data show projectors and laptops. Arrangements for the delivery of courses are highly flexible, to suit the needs of learners and stakeholders. The choice of venue, date, timings and language of instruction are discussed with stakeholders; trainers provide bi-lingual instruction whenever required. Although a general written policy on reasonable adjustments to support learners with special needs is available, MTC lacks the arrangements to deal with these learners, such as initial assessment procedures to help identify their needs or facilities equipped with suitable resources.

Leadership, management and governance

How effective are leadership, management and governance in raising achievement and improving the quality of the provision?

Grade: Inadequate (4)

Apart from the day-to-day running of the Centre and reforming its operations, the impact of the recently appointed leadership and management team is not yet evident. MTC has clear vision and mission statements which are focused on the quality of training, and they are shared with staff and learners. The management team has a number of appropriate strategic objectives based on a useful SWOT analysis, it is translated to an operational plan with proper links and ownerships are assigned, but the stated actions are not always specific and the progress made in achieving the objectives is insufficiently monitored, though the action plan is occasionally discussed during meetings. MTC previous management had a useful personal development plan which was regularly monitored through monthly meetings, however this practice has discontinued. The Centre contracts a local consultancy company to develop the quality of its provision. However, the SEF submitted for this review is insufficiently detailed, and the grades overestimate the provision

Proper arrangements are in place to quality assure the provision. The available QA manual is suitable though some of the policies and procedures are insufficiently detailed, specifically those relevant to monitoring trainers' performance and learners' achievement. Moreover, the quality of the moderation and verification processes are ineffective. Learners' prior attainment is mainly measured through relevant written pre- course assessment, but their on-course achievement is insufficiently monitored with only data on their final attainments being recorded. Also, achievement trends are not monitored over time to inform decision making or be analysed for future improvement; for example, a minority of learners have been underachieving in the NEBOSH courses for two years and only recently rates were discussed during meetings, resulting in a few actions being taken to improve them. Learners' views and feedback about the provision are regularly sought, aggregated and analysed. Although the Centre maintains proper links with stakeholders, their feedback about the provision is not systematically gathered.

The current organisational structure is fit-for-purpose and meets the provider's aims and objectives. Professional trainers are recruited, suitably inducted and deployed. However, trainers' performance is ineffectively monitored; the completed internal lesson observations' forms are not critical nor informative, and only a few have been reviewed by an external consultant to identify strengths and areas for development. It is also not clear how identified issues are followed up to ensure continuous quality improvement. The Centre senior management and full-time staff are qualified and well experienced. Performance appraisals

have been recently carried out for full-time staff, linked to the provision of suitable training opportunities.

The MTC premises and the learning environment are safe and free of any obvious hazards. Essential health and safety measures are in place and learners are provided with relevant guidance. However, the expiration date for some of the first aid contents passed a few months ago.

The provider's key strengths

- The qualified trainers who utilise their professional experience to enrich the learning experience. They effectively use a variety of training methods and learning resources to engage and motivate the majority of learners.
- The well-structured, planned and regularly reviewed externally-accredited courses that match the specific needs of learners and employers.
- The fit-for-purpose learning environment which is adequately equipped.
- The highly flexible arrangements in delivering courses to accommodate the needs of learners and employers.

Recommendations

In order to improve, MTC should:

- improve the leadership and management by:
 - improving the internal quality assurance system, to effectively monitor the overall performance of trainers and the provision
 - ensuring that learners' achievement records for all courses are accurately maintained throughout the course, closely monitored and analysed to inform improved decision making
- ensure that learners develop further vocational skills and knowledge, sufficiently progress to the level set for the course, and achieve their course objectives and/or the qualifications they aim for in a timely manner
- ensure that learners are rigorously assessed with a clear rubric and better utilisation of the outcomes of assessment in lesson planning to address learners' varying needs.

Appendix

Description of the provision

Manahel Training Centre (MTC) was established in late 2013 and is licensed by the Ministry of Labour (MoL). It offers mainly Health and Safety (H&S) externally-accredited courses, with a range of short and very short, internally and externally-accredited soft skills courses. The externally-accredited courses represent 70% of the total enrolment number since the centre's inception, with the remaining being internally-accredited courses. The Centre has enrolled 976 adults' learners in different courses, composed of 375 learners in 2014, 514 in 2015 and 87 in 2016 up to the date of this review. The H&S courses make up 49% of the total enrolment number for the past three years, with the remainder being on the soft skills courses.

MTC has one centre, located in Karbabad. The Centre is managed by the general manager who recently joined MTC and who leads a full-time team comprising of an administrative coordinator, four staff in the sales and marketing department, and a caretaker. The Centre has access to a pool of local and international trainers who are utilised whenever needed, in addition to the owner who takes part in the training and who is also the head of the H&S department.