



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

Directorate of Vocational Reviews

Review Report

Safety Training & Consultants Centre (STC)
Salmabad
Kingdom of Bahrain

Date Reviewed: 11-14 March 2019

VO011-C4-R003

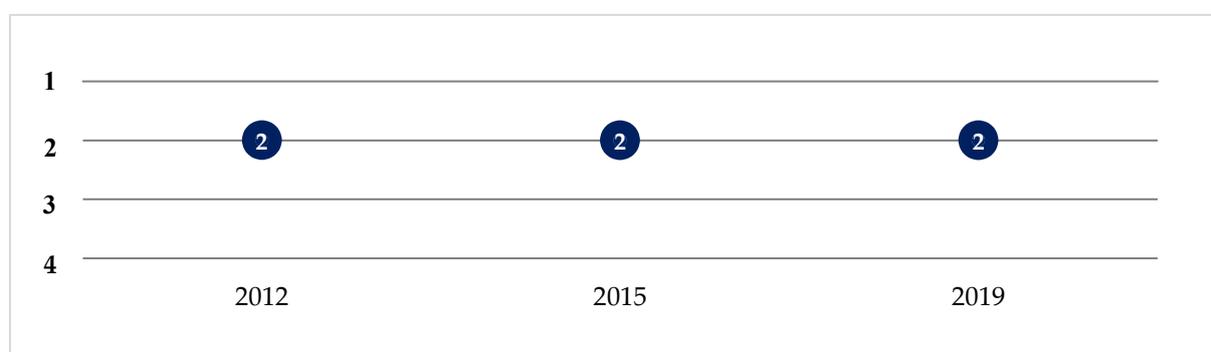
Introduction

The Directorate Vocational Reviews (DVR) of the Education & Training Quality Authority (BQA), conducted this review over four days by a team of five reviewers. For this review, reviewers observed training sessions and other related activities, analysed data about the courses and qualifications learners achieve, examined learners' written and other work, examined documents and the materials provided by the Safety Training & Consultants Centre (STC) and collected feedback from learners, employers, trainers, management and support staff.

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

Summary of review judgements		
	Aspect	Judgement
Outcomes	Learners' achievement	2
Programmes and processes	Effectiveness of teaching/training and assessment	2
	Quality of Courses/Programmes	2
	Learners' support and guidance	2
Management and governance	Effectiveness of leadership, management and governance	2
Capacity to improve		2
Overall effectiveness		2

Provider's overall effectiveness throughout the last three reviews



Outstanding

1

Good

2

Satisfactory

3

Inadequate

4

Overall effectiveness 'Good'

Judgement justifications

- All aspects of STC provision are judged 'Good' and the Centre has a clear strategic direction that maintains sustainability of business. This is translated into a strategic plan which is informed by data analysis and learners and stakeholders' needs and requirements. Though operational plans are brief, the execution of these plans is followed up and monitored sufficiently.
- Learners and staff performance are effectively monitored and the outcomes are sufficiently utilised to promote continuous quality improvement. Nevertheless, some policies and procedure pertaining to quality assurance are not detailed enough and their full implementation is yet to be seen.
- Learners gain relevant knowledge and develop effective vocational skills and competences that pertain to the field of health and safety.
- Most learners in the local achievement courses, which represent 70% of the enrolment, realise their course objectives and/or Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs). The majority of learners in the externally accredited courses achieve the qualifications they aim for in a timely manner.
- Effective training strategies are used and resources utilised engage the learners productively throughout the sessions. Trainers employ their theoretical and professional experiences to illustrate concepts and link theory with practice.
- Effective summative and formative assessment tools, which vary between knowledge and practical based assessment, are used to evaluate learners' understanding and measure their achievement of course objectives and/or ILOs. Though marking is mostly accurate, there are cases where the rubric used to evaluate learners' practical work is not sufficiently detailed.
- STC offers local achievement and externally accredited courses in health and safety that cater for the shop floor workers and supervisors. Courses are offered based on clear understanding of the market and stakeholders' needs and requirements.
- While the externally accredited courses are well-structured and planned, local achievement courses are suitably structured and planned and both are designed to support theoretical and, where needed, practical learning. Courses are reinforced with an appropriate range of quality resources that reflect current industrial standards.
- Learners at STC receive effective support and guidance throughout their learning experience, particularly those enrolled in the externally accredited course. Learners and stakeholders have access to well-informed guidance on courses and are kept aware of learners' achievement.

Capacity to improve 'Good'

Judgement justifications

- STC maintained its previous overall judgement and effectiveness of teaching/training and assessment has improved from 'Satisfactory' to 'Good'.
- Repeat business is good and improving between 2017 and 2018 from 31.7% to 43.77% respectively, and Number of enrolment has increased from 267 learners in 2016 to 593 in 2017 to 1108 learners in 2018. In general, learners' pass rates remain high in the local achievement and externally accredited courses.
- STC has clear strategic direction which is informed by reflective self-evaluation process which is based on achievement data analysis and learners' and stakeholders' views and feedback.
- Improvement carried out since the last review include creating useful links in the STC website to guide learners on occupational health and safety international standards and local laws and regulations, introducing new courses such as English language courses, and administrative and commercial management courses, recruiting a full-time specialist in training development, purchasing equipment for the Confined Space, Gas Testing and First Aid courses, and obtaining external accreditation from the Professional Evaluation and Certification Board (PECB) in September 2017. Furthermore, the Centre is planning to build an IT laboratory for on-line examinations, and upgrade the database management system.
- STC has sufficient and appropriate physical and human resources to enable improvement to be carried out. Accordingly, previous review recommendations have been partially addressed. This was clearly reflected in the improvement of the training and assessment methodologies used by trainers.
- STC is listed on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) register. At the time of this review, the Centre mapped one national qualification which is 'Award in Fire Safety', and provides one foreign qualification, which is (HBAC Level 2 Award in Health and Safety within Workplace), that is aligned to the NQF.

The provider's key strengths

- Learners' acquisition of knowledge and development of skills and competences.
- Pass rates in local achievement and externally accredited courses other than NEBOSH.
- Training and assessment methods that succeed in engaging learners productively throughout the sessions and measure their achievement reliably.
- Training courses which are offered on clear and sufficient understanding of labour market and stakeholders' requirements in terms of the needed levels and professional standards.
- Support and guidance provided to learners, particularly those enrolled in the externally accredited courses.
- Clarity of the strategic direction and effectiveness of the monitoring of learners and staff performance.

Recommendations

In order to improve, STC should:

- improve pass rates in NEBOSH courses particularly in the NEBOSH International Technical Certificate in Oil and Gas Operation Safety
- revise the rubrics used to evaluate learners' practical work to ensure that these are sufficiently detailed to maintain consistency
- ensure that learners proficiency in English is assessed in the externally accredited courses particularly in NEBOSH and Highfield Awarding Body for Compliance (HABC), in accordance with the awarding body requirements.
- improve the quality assurance arrangements by ensuring that:
 - all policies and procedures are sufficiently detailed and effectively implemented
 - the verification of learners' assessed work is consistently implemented.

Learners' achievement 'Good'

Judgement justifications

- Learners acquire pertinent knowledge and develop effective vocational skills and competences relevant to the field of Health and Safety. However, a minority of learners are not mastering the required skills and competences upon course completion.
- Learners and clients expressed their satisfaction with the acquired skills and competences and the extent to which those are utilised at the workplace.
- Most learners in the local achievement courses, which constitute the majority of the enrolment (70%), achieve their course requirements. The majority of learners enrolled in the externally-accredited courses achieve the qualifications they aim for in a timely manner; however, in NEBOSH courses, which represent around 6.9% of the total enrolment, a significant minority do not achieve the certificate they aim for. The pass rates in these courses are relatively low particularly in the NEBOSH International Technical Certificate in Oil and Gas Operation Safety.
- Relevant pre-course assessments are conducted in the majority of courses to measure learners' attainment at entry level and establish a starting point from which the progress made by learners is measured. From the observed sessions, scrutiny of learners' work and considering the starting points of learners at entry level, the vast majority of learners progress well towards achieving the course objectives. However, for a minority of them, the added value is minimal.
- Learners are attentive and show positive attitude toward their learning. A significant minority are able to reflect on their learning during the practical activities. Most learners attend regularly; however, punctuality is an issue in a few cases.
- From the observed sessions and scrutiny of learners' work, the majority of learners exhibit confidence and ability to work well both independently and collaboratively during the in-class activities. They are able to work effectively in a leadership and/or subordinate role; however, in the less effective sessions, learners require further support from the trainer to complete the given tasks.

Areas for improvement

- the added value and mastering of skills and competencies for a minority of learners
- pass rates in NEBOSH courses particularly in the NEBOSH International Technical Certificate in Oil and Gas Operation Safety.

Effectiveness of teaching/training and assessment 'Good'

Judgement justifications

- STC trainers employ their knowledge and professional experience effectively; they provide accurate explanation of concepts and respond clearly and professionally to learners' questions. Training is enriched with a range of relevant vocational examples and real-life cases that link theory with practice. Effective training strategies and learning resources are used to engage learners productively throughout sessions. These include probing questioning and role plays, particularly in practical sessions.
- A range of relevant formative and summative assessment tools are used to evaluate learners' understanding and measure the achievement of course objectives and/or ILOs. These include pre-and post-course assessments, in-class activities and practical assessment. Marking is mostly accurate, trainers use clear marking schemes and model answers are in place; however, in cases the rubric used to evaluate learners' practical work is not sufficiently detailed.
- Sessions are planned, delivered and managed well. Lesson objectives and/or ILO's are shared with learners. Lesson plans are appropriate and fit for purpose considering the fact that the majority of the conducted courses are of short and very short duration. In the longer courses, few lessons plans are suitably informed by learners' prior and continuous assessment.
- Individual learners' needs are sufficiently accommodated during lesson delivery by providing further explanation and clarification, and role distribution in the practical activities. This works well considering the level of the Centre's intake, as a significant number of learners are blue-collar workers.
- Trainers provide workplace related context activities during practical sessions and relevant links that enforce the need for lifelong learning; however, higher order and critical thinking skills are occasionally promoted.
- Records of learners' performance are maintained; these include attendance, punctuality, and scored marks in the formative, post-course and practical assessments. During sessions, learners are provided with useful feedback on their contributions and useful written feedback is provided on learners' projects and assignments in the longer courses. Furthermore, learners are provided with 'Learner Assessment Report' upon course completion, which include appropriate feedback on their performance during the course, though it focuses more on positive aspects rather than where and how to improve further.

Areas for improvement

- the clarity and details of the rubrics used to evaluate learners practical work
- development of higher order and critical thinking skills.

Quality of course/programmes 'Good'

Judgement justifications

- STC courses are offered based on a clear understanding of the market; the Centre has an effective mechanism for collecting and analysing learners and stakeholders' needs. In addition, accidents' statistics are regularly received from the Ministry of Labour and Social Development (MLSD), which reflect gaps relevant to health and safety. This information is well utilised by the Centre to inform the courses on offer.
- STC offers a range of local achievement and externally accredited courses in the field of health and safety that caters for the needs of shop floor workers and supervisors. The majority of learners and stakeholders are highly satisfied with the range of the courses as reflected in their feedback and the percentage of repeat business. STC is respondent to stakeholders' requests and changes in the market.
- While externally accredited courses are well-planned and structured, local achievement courses are suitably planned and structured. Course outlines clearly indicate the course objectives and/or ILOs and assessment methods used. All courses are designed and planned to enhance and support progressive theoretical and, where needed, practical learning. Formative and summative assessments are fir-for purpose and appropriately mapped to the course objectives and/or ILOs.
- STC has formal policy and procedure which are appropriately implemented for the design, approval, update and periodically review of courses. Though local achievement courses are reviewed periodically, the outcome is not reported in the format stated in the policy. Regular communication is maintained with the awarding bodies regarding updates and validation of course contents. STC is a listed institution on the NQF register, and has mapped one national qualification and provides one foreign qualification that is aligned to the NQF.
- Courses are well-resourced to meet the needs of learners and stakeholders. The Centre has the equipment needed for the practical courses on offer; a unique confined space facility is provided for practical exercises. All equipment meet industrial standards and are used by the local industry and are sufficient to the number of learners.
- Local achievement courses' outlines identify the target audience. In the case of the 'Confined Space Entrant' course the admission requirements stipulate that learners must be physically and medically fit, with no phobias and have

the correct personal protective equipment. One of the offered Highfield Awarding Body for Compliance (HABC) courses and NEBOSH courses require mastering good level of English; however, there is

no formal assessment in place at present to verify learners' English proficiency level upon entry to these courses.

Areas for improvement

- assessment of English proficiency upon entry to HABC & NEBOSH courses as per the requirements of the awarding bodies.

Learners' support and guidance 'Good'

Judgement justifications

- Though STC has useful policies and procedures related to learners' support and guidance which are also included in the 'Learners Guidance', these policies do not clearly indicate how at-risk learners are identified.
- Learners are provided with effective support and guidance to help them achieve better outcomes, including mock examinations, remedial/revision sessions and supplementary materials which are offered to learners enrolled in the externally accredited courses.
- Purposeful site visits and workplace simulation activities are utilised to enhance learners' skills and abilities and enrich their learning experience. In addition, very useful links and relevant references about local and international occupational health and safety laws are available on the Centre's website.
- Clients and learners have access to well-informed guidance and advice about courses through STC's course outlines and catalogues, informative website and useful social media accounts. Moreover, learners are provided with useful induction at the beginning of their courses.
- Clients are always kept informed about learners' performance. Upon course completion, clients receive attendance records, certificates and individual learner's achievement reports. These reports include course details, pre- and post-course test scores, practical activities and exercises marks, alongside useful remarks on learners' performance. Furthermore, STC monitors and follows up with clients on learners' attendance.
- STC has a policy on 'reasonable adjustment and special consideration' to identify and support learners with special educational needs and/or disabilities. However, the policy is insufficiently detailed in relation to the available arrangements for reasonable adjustments and special consideration circumstances. Though no cases have been encountered yet, the nature of the

provision requires candidates to be physically and mentally fit.

Areas for improvement

- none of significance.

Effectiveness of leadership, management and governance 'Good'

Judgement justifications

- STC has a clear strategic direction which maintains sustainability of business. The strategic plan is created based on main processes within the Centre and informed by data analysis, learners and stakeholders' needs and requirement. Operational plans are developed accordingly, executed, monitored and followed up sufficiently as reflected by achievements made so far. However, these plans are brief and do not clearly specify actions taken and timescale.
 - Learners' achievement is closely monitored. Records of learners' achievement are kept, aggregated and analysed. Where needed, the outcomes are utilised to inform action planning and improvement. For instance, as a response to the low pass rates in the NEBOSH courses, the Centre has designed and offered a local achievement English language course that aims at improving learners' English level.
 - Trainers' performance is sufficiently monitored through class observations where the outcomes are shared and discussed with the trainers to ensure continuous improvement of training.
- Learners' results in the externally accredited courses are also used as an indicator of trainers' performance. Staff performance is monitored through annual performance appraisal and they are provided with training and development opportunity based on their job requirements or the Centre's needs. Career development plans are developed and regularly monitored.
- STC's organisation structure is fit for purpose and is supported with qualified staff whom meet the provider's aims and objectives. Roles and responsibilities are clearly identified.
 - Quality assurance arrangements are appropriate; albeit, some policies and procedures are not detailed enough and are yet to be fully implemented. Moreover, verification of learners' assessed work is inconsistent.
 - The learning environment is fit for purpose, policies, procedures and practices are effective in ensuring the health, safety and well-being of the learners and staff.
 - Links are well-established with stakeholders and relevant sections of the community. Learners' feedback

about the conducted courses is regularly gathered, aggregated and analysed, and where needed utilised to inform improvement. Though continuous communication is maintained with employers, on courses or to identify training gaps within their organisations, their feedback about the provision is inconsistently gathered.

- STC is externally accredited by a number of awarding bodies such as NEBOSH, HABC, National safety Council (NSC), Emergency First Response (EFR) UK, and Professional Evaluation and Certification Board (PECB).

Areas for improvement

- details of the operation plans.
- details and implementation of some policies and procedures
- consistency in the verification of learners' assessed work.

Appendix (1): Provider information

Name of the provider (English)	Safety Training & Consultants Centre (STC)					
Name of the provider (Arabic)	مركز السلامة للتدريب والاستشارات					
Licensing body	Ministry of Labour and Social Development (MLSD)					
Year of establishment	05-01-2013					
Age range of learners	18+					
Number of learners	Male	2321	Female	90	Total	2411
Learning areas	Externally accredited	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Examination Board in Occupational Safety & Health (NEBOSH) National Safety Council (NSC) Emergency First Response EFR UK Professional Evaluation and Certification Board (PECB) Highfield Awarding Body for Compliance (HABC) These courses make 30% of the total enrolment.				
	Local achievement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health and safety local courses make 70% of the total enrolment English language 				
	Local attendance	Not applicable				
Institution's listing status	Listed on the National Qualification Framework (NQF)					
List of Qualification mapped/aligned to the NQF	Mapped: Award in Fire Safety.					
	Aligned: HBAC Level 2 Award in Health and safety within Workplace.					