



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

Directorate of Higher Education Reviews Programme Review Report

Bahrain Polytechnic
Faculty of Business and Logistics
Bachelor of International Logistics Management
Kingdom of Bahrain

Site Visit Date: 25 – 27 October 2021

Extension Visit Date: 14 March 2023

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Acronyms

ADD	Academic Development Directorate
AQAC	Academic Quality Assurance Committee
BILM	Bachelor of International Logistics Management
BoT	Board of Trustees
BP	Bahrain Polytechnic
BPSC	Bahrain Polytechnic Students Council
BQA	Education & Training Quality Authority
CAG	Curriculum Advisory Group
CD	Course Descriptor
CEC	Career and Employment Centre
CILO	Course Intended Learning Outcome
CILT	Chartered Institute of Logistics & Transport UK
DHR	Directorate of Higher Education Reviews
DILT	Diploma in Logistics & Transport
FB	Faculty Board
HEC	Higher Education Council
ILO	Intended Learning Outcome
ICT	Information Communication Technology
IMCO	International Maritime College Oman
IT	Information Technology
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoF	Ministry of Finance
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
PAD	Programme Approval Document
QM	Quality Matters

QMAP	Quality, Measurements and Analysis and Planning
QMS	Quality Management System
SMT	Senior Management Team
ToR	Terms of Reference

I. Introduction

In keeping with its mandate, the Education & Training Quality Authority (BQA), through the Directorate of Higher Education Reviews (DHR), carries out two types of reviews that are complementary. These are: Institutional Reviews, where the whole institution is assessed; and the Academic Programme Reviews (APRs), where the quality of teaching, learning and academic standards are assessed in academic programmes within various colleges according to specific standards and indicators as reflected in its Framework.

Following the revision of the APR Framework at the end of Cycle 1 in accordance with the BQA procedure, the revised APR Framework (Cycle 2) was endorsed as per the Council of Ministers' Resolution No.17 of 2019. Thereof, in the academic year (2019-2020), the DHR commenced its second cycle of programme reviews.

The Cycle 2 APR Review Framework is based on four main Standards and 21 Indicators, which forms the basis of the APR Reports of the Higher Education Institutions (HEIs).

The **four** standards that are used to determine whether or not a programme meets international standards are as follows:

Standard 1: The Learning Programme

Standard 2: Efficiency of the Programme

Standard 3: Academic Standards of Students and Graduates

Standard 4: Effectiveness of Quality Management and Assurance

The Review Panel (hereinafter referred to as 'the Panel') decides whether each indicator, within a standard, is 'addressed', 'partially addressed' or 'not addressed'. From these judgments on the indicators, the Panel additionally determines whether each of the four standards is 'Satisfied' or 'Not Satisfied', thus leading to the Programme's overall judgment, as shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Criteria for Judgements

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

The APR Review Report begins with providing the profile of the Programme under review, followed by a brief outline of the judgment received for each indicator, standard, and the overall judgement.

The main section of the report is an analysis of the status of the programme, at the time of its actual review, and the extension visit in relation to the review standards, indicators and their underlying expectations.

The report ends with a Conclusion and a list of Appreciations and Recommendations.

II. The Programme's Profile

Institution Name*	Bahrain Polytechnic
College/ Department*	Faculty of Business and Logistics
Programme/ Qualification Title*	Bachelor of International Logistics Management (BILM)
Qualification Approval Number	Bahrain Polytechnic Academic Board Resolution No. (Res2009.94) of 2009
NQF Level	8
Validity Period on NQF	Not Applicable
Number of Units*	31
NQF Credit	480
Programme Aims*	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Prepare students for positions in middle management and other roles as future transport and logistics professionals, transport and environmental policy analysts, planning professionals and consultants, and transport service providers who can take leadership positions in a sector facing change. 2. Provide students with the skills to manage change associated with the way transport systems and networks adapt to external circumstances. 3. Develop students' ability to think critically and analyse opportunities arising from the adaptation and development of various transport modes; how to plan global supply chains and manage transport networks effectively. 4. Raise awareness of growing environmental concerns in global and local transport, including energy supply, alternative fuels and carbon emissions.
Programme Intended Learning Outcomes*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operate effectively in a transport and logistics environment. • Demonstrate effective thinking and problem-solving to plan and analyse transport and logistics systems, including communication systems. • Explain the complex relationships between land/sea/air use and transport networks that give rise to transport and logistics demands and recognise how they blend together to create the global supply chain.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use transport network analysis and critical thinking to develop solutions that solve transport and logistics problems.• Apply an in-depth understanding of how transport hubs function and how they contribute to the local and global marketplace.• Identify and analyse critical issues relating to energy and transport• Apply principles of urban and regional transport planning in Bahrain.• Analyse the environmental effects of the industry from a local, regional and global perspective and utilise knowledge and skills to seek solutions to limit the negative effects on the industry.• Practice as a professional using 21st century skills.
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* Mandatory fields

III. Judgment Summary

The Programme's Judgment: Confidence

Standard/ Indicator	Title	Judgement
Standard 1	The Learning Programme	Satisfied
Indicator 1.1	The Academic Planning Framework	Partially addressed
Indicator 1.2	Graduate Attributes & Intended Learning Outcomes	Addressed
Indicator 1.3	The Curriculum Content	Partially addressed
Indicator 1.4	Teaching and Learning	Addressed
Indicator 1.5	Assessment Arrangements	Addressed
Standard 2	Efficiency of the Programme	Satisfied
Indicator 2.1	Admitted Students	Addressed
Indicator 2.2	Academic Staff	Addressed
Indicator 2.3	Physical and Material Resources	Addressed
Indicator 2.4	Management Information Systems	Addressed
Indicator 2.5	Student Support	Addressed
Standard 3	Academic Standards of Students and Graduates	Satisfied
Indicator 3.1	Efficiency of the Assessment	Partially addressed
Indicator 3.2	Academic Integrity	Addressed
Indicator 3.3	Internal and External Moderation of Assessment	Partially addressed
Indicator 3.4	Work-based Learning	Addressed

Indicator 3.5	Capstone Project or Thesis/Dissertation Component	Addressed
Indicator 3.6	Achievements of the Graduates	Addressed
Standard 4	Effectiveness of Quality Management and Assurance	Satisfied
Indicator 4.1	Quality Assurance Management	Addressed
Indicator 4.2	Programme Management and Leadership	Addressed
Indicator 4.3	Annual and Periodic Review of the Programme	Addressed
Indicator 4.4	Benchmarking and Surveys	Addressed
Indicator 4.5	Relevance to Labour market and Societal Needs	Partially Addressed

IV. Standards and Indicators

Standard 1

The Learning Programme

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

Indicator 1.1: The Academic Planning Framework

There is a clear academic planning framework for the programme, reflected in clear aims which relate to the mission and strategic goals of the institution and the college.

Judgment: Partially Addressed

- The Bachelor of International Logistics Management (BILM) has an academic planning framework that is reflected in the Programme Approval Document (PAD), which is in compliance with the Programme Approval Policy as well as the Naming and Awarding Qualifications Policy. The process for ensuring that the programme is relevant, fit for purpose and complies with existing regulations is clearly outlined in the SER. Relevance and fitness for purpose are ensured by considering the greater economic perspective (through the Economic Vision 2030 for Bahrain, Curriculum Advisory Group (CAG) meetings along with alignment of BILM to the vision, mission and values of Bahrain Polytechnic (BP).
- The BILM submitted a summary of its risk register, which includes risks related to programme delivery such as staff shortages, and risks associated with the Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport (CILT) accreditation, amongst others. Risks are discussed at Faculty Board meetings of Faculty of Business and Logistics. The Panel notes that the summary of BILM risk register outlines the potential risks, however, the strategies to manage these risks are not outlined in the document. Consequently, the Panel recommends that Faculty of Business and Logistics should document how the risks of BILM are managed.
- The BILM adheres to the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) qualification design requirements. The BILM validation report confirms its placement at NQF Level 8; and that the BILM meets the validation standards.
- The programme title, Bachelor of International Logistics Management, is clear, concise, and accurately reflects the nature of the qualification. It is also appropriately reflected on

students' certificates, as indicated in the BILM testamur certificate. Furthermore, the qualification description and course contents are available on BP's website.

- The Panel notes that the programme has clear aims that are clearly outlined in the PAD, which are aligned with the Economic Vision 2030 for Bahrain. The BILM team utilised the data from the Skills Gaps Research Study, CAG reports, and surveys in composing the programme aims. However, it was noted from the documents that, whilst programme reviews are conducted regularly, programme aims have not been recently revised. Consequently, the Panel recommends that the Faculty of Business and Logistics should regularly revise the aims of the BILM programme.
- BP's strategic goals are outlined in the provided evidence and are available on the website. The mission and strategic goals (Towards Sustainability, Graduate Success, Assurance of Learning, Engagement for Impact, Added Value Research and Entrepreneurship), together with the programme's contribution to these goals are described in the BILM PAD. The contribution to added value research and entrepreneurship is also described in the BILM PAD.

Indicator 1.2: Graduate Attributes & Intended Learning Outcomes

Graduate attributes are clearly stated in terms of intended learning outcomes for the programme and for each course and these are appropriate for the level of the degree and meet the NQF requirements.

Judgment: Addressed

- Generic graduate attributes are defined at institutional level and embedded in the BILM learning outcomes. The PAD describes how theoretical and practical knowledge, as well as employability skills are embedded in the programme. These skills include communication, problem-solving, planning, organisation and technology.
- The Programme Intended Learning Outcomes (PILOs) are appropriately written and the Panel finds that the PILOs are generally measurable. However, a few of the PILOs may be difficult to measure, such as 'Operate effectively in a transport and logistics environment' and 'Practice as a professional using 21st century skills.' Consequently, the Panel advises the BILM team to regularly revise the PILOs to ensure that all of them are measurable.
- The NQF BILM Validation Report was provided to the Panel as an evidence of compliance with NQF requirements. The SER refers to the alignment of the PILOs with NQF sub-strands as stated in the NQF mapping scorecard: theoretical understanding; practical application of knowledge; generic, problem-solving and analytical skills; communication, Information Communication Technology (ICT), numeracy; autonomy, responsibility and context.

- The Panel notes that the learning outcomes and programme aims are generally well aligned and appropriate for this type and level of the programme. The Panel is satisfied that the BILM PAD clearly links the PILOs with the creation of theoretical and practical knowledge, and employability requirements. All the Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs) are mapped to the PILOs, as shown in the provided evidence. The Panel finds that this is comprehensive and appropriate. There is also clear evidence of connection between the CILOs and the NQF sub-strands. Examples of this are given in the templates of the 'Introduction to Supply Chain Operations & Procurement' (TL6302) course and the 'Strategic Supply Chain and Retail Logistics' (TL7302) course. The Panel also finds that the CILOs are appropriate for the course levels.
- During the site visit, the Panel could not find evidence of benchmarking the Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs) against similar regional and international programmes. During the extension visit, the Panel found that a comprehensive desktop benchmarking exercise was undertaken with several regional and international programmes. Whilst the Panel considered the ILOs to be current and relevant, in the logistics environment, it is necessary to ensure that the ILOs are updated regularly to ensure that these reflect industry and academic developments (see the recommendation under Indicator 1.3).

Indicator 1.3: The Curriculum Content

The curriculum is organised to provide academic progression of learning complexity guided by the NQF levels and credits, and it illustrates a balance between knowledge and skills, as well as theory and practice, and meets the norms and standards of the particular academic discipline.

Judgment: Partially Addressed

- The study plan is well-designed with a clear progression from one year to the next and suitable student workload. NQF levels and credits are appropriate and clear, as described in the BILM Course Guide. Pre-requisites for each course are outlined in the mapping scorecards of the BILM courses (e.g., 'Urban Public Transport' (TL8303) and 'Airport Management' (TL8405)). The Panel finds that the mapping to NQF levels and credits is suitable and NQF's confirmation panels are utilised appropriately, as shown in the provided evidence.
- Benchmarking of the curriculum was conducted with several UK universities. The SER further outlines the recognition and accreditation by CILT International, United Kingdom. The Panel found that the accreditation process by CILT International is focused on the (seven) courses under the auspices of CILT International. Based on this and the site visit interviews that were conducted virtually, the Panel found that benchmarking is not regularly used to update the learning outcomes and curriculum. On the other hand, the site visit interviews revealed, and the Panel recognises, that industry input was used to

adjust programme offerings. To ensure that courses remain updated, relevant and competitive in the international market, the Panel recommends that the Faculty of Business and Logistics should regularly benchmark BILM's learning outcomes and curriculum with comparable regional and international programmes.

- The SER cites the NQF programme validation and placement at Level 8 as evidence of the balance between theory and practice. The NQF Validation Report includes statements asserting that most of the courses cover theoretical and practical knowledge. Sample of mapping scorecards provide specific evidence of balance between theoretical and practical learning. Evidence was also provided in the interviews with graduates as they informed the Panel that they were well prepared in terms of both knowledge and skills, having acquired the relevant knowledge and been able to apply the skills in a practical environment. The Panel is satisfied that there is an appropriate balance between theory and practice, and between knowledge and skills in the curriculum.
- The mapping scorecards provide details on the learning outcomes, the allocation of NQF level and the course contents in terms of breadth and depth. The breadth of the course is described in the topics that are covered by the course, and the NQF Allocation table describes the depth of knowledge, skills and competencies that should be demonstrated after completion of the course. A selection of course files were examined by the Panel, including for example the 'Passenger Transport Management' (TL7300), 'Inventory and Warehouse Management' (TL7301) and 'Managing in the Transport and Logistics Environment' (TL6300). The Panel finds that course contents appropriately cover the expected elements in terms of breadth and depth.
- The BILM mapping of the library and learning resources contains a list of textbooks that was used by the Panel to assess the course reading lists. Whilst most of the reading materials are recent, there are a few courses where reading lists could be updated (e.g. 'Humanitarian Aid and Disaster Relief Logistics' (TL6303) and the 'Shipping Safety, Security and Port State Control' (TL8201)). The Panel advises the BILM team to ensure that all the reading lists are up-to-date. The site visit interviews revealed that current international research as well as practical case studies from the Bahraini environment were used within the classroom environment to demonstrate practical application of the theoretical concepts. The Panel finds this to be appropriate and relevant.

Indicator 1.4: Teaching and Learning

The principles and methods used for teaching in the programme support the attainment of programme aims and intended learning outcomes.

Judgment: Addressed

- BP has an Institutional Teaching and Learning Policy supported by Teaching and Learning Principles. The provided policy refers to the BP utilising a blended learning approach including face-to-face interaction or virtual-based learning, online supported delivery (e.g., Moodle), project-based learning, job placement internships, individual work, and group work. The policy further describes that students are engaged in the learning process and are encouraged to ask questions and use problem-based learning strategies. The policy also states that BP 'endeavours to create an atmosphere in the classroom where everyone is equal and can express their learning and opinions about the subject, and share their knowledge, while tutors facilitate and guide the learning'.
- BP Teaching and Learning Policy reflects an appropriate range of teaching methods that are being utilised in the BILM programme. The SER states that all courses are supported by Moodle; and that BP joined Quality Matters organization to ensure the quality of its online courses. The Panel is satisfied that e-learning has been incorporated into the programme and supports the attainment of the ILOs.
- BILM teaching and learning methods are outlined in the BILM PAD and aligned with institutional methods. During the site visit interviews, the Panel noted that sufficient teaching and learning methods using problem-solving and project-based learning are embedded when teaching the programme *via* localised case studies and industry projects. These methods aim at enhancing the development of creativity, innovation and independence in learners, as clarified by BILM staff and confirmed during the interviews with students. In the site visit interviews, it was also indicated that students felt engaged and free to participate and ask questions.
- The SER outlines the concept of independent learning, and it was clarified in the provided evidence and gradually increasing throughout the programme, leading to the largely self-directed final-year project. During the site visit interviews, students and alumni stated that independent and lifelong learning are instilled by means of the practical applications and problem-solving requirements in the courses. Employers also revealed that graduates of the programme are enthusiastic, able to conduct independent research and able to seek and determine unique solutions to practical workplace problems. The Panel appreciates that students' participation is encouraged *via* exposure to practical situations and, that students learn to be creative and innovative which leads to enhancing their lifelong learning skills.

Indicator 1.5: Assessment Arrangements

Suitable assessment arrangements, which include policies and procedures for assessing students' achievements, are in place and are known to all relevant stakeholders.

Judgment: Addressed

- BP has an Assessment Policy and Academic Integrity and Honesty Policy that are available to staff as well as students through BP's website and Moodle. Key points of the assessment policies are also published in the BILM Course Guide. Additional assessment requirements are added to courses related to the CILT qualification. As part of the licensing agreement, CILT's assessment procedures need to be adhered to for relevant courses. The Panel is satisfied that the assessment policies and procedures are adhered to and that the information is disseminated to the relevant stakeholders.
- The mechanisms for assessments, grading, and feedback on assessments are clearly outlined in the BILM Course Guide. The BILM has both formative and summative assessments, in the form of assignments and examinations. Examples of both formative and summative assessments were provided and the Panel is satisfied that both are utilised. Marking occurs in the form of marks, rubrics and model answers. Turnitin is also used to provide feedback to students to enable them to rectify any possible plagiarism. Feedback on assessments is given to students as soon as possible, but no later than 10 working days / two weeks after assessment. The Panel is satisfied that there are clear criteria for marking and that students are given feedback on their assessments within a reasonable timeframe.
- The importance of ethics in assessment and evaluation is clearly described in the provided evidence. Cases of suspected academic dishonesty are investigated by the Programme Manager by applying the Academic Integrity and Honesty Policy. Samples of examined assessments provided evidence of utilising ethical practices and scientific research. The interviews further indicated that students were advised that the principles of ethics and scientific research ought to be taken into account in every assessment.
- Following marking, assessments are internally moderated. Tutors are advised of the moderation schedule at the beginning of each semester. From the interviews, the Panel was informed that a norming process is implemented during which three samples with marks being (low, medium, high) are being internally moderated and then stored on the SharePoint. Final marks are ratified by Course Coordinators, Programme Manager and/or Head of School before the release of final grades by the Academic Board. Students are allowed to dispute grades within two weeks of the grade release as per Appeals policy. A committee of BILM faculty is formed to review appeals. During the site visit interviews, it was clarified that external moderation is not fully implemented as BILM has recently signed an MoU with the International Maritime College Oman (IMCO) and only two courses have been externally moderated. Courses related to CILT are externally moderated by CILT them. This is discussed further under Standard 3, Indicator 3.3.
- BP has a clearly defined policy on academic integrity and the processes to be followed in the case of academic misconduct. The BILM Course Guide explains the concept of academic integrity and the penalties. It also clearly outlines the appeals process against academic decisions. Several examples are provided of investigations into academic

misconduct, as well as the outcomes of misconduct investigations. The Panel is satisfied that provisions are made for addressing misconduct, as well as providing clear guidelines on appeals against misconduct findings and penalties.

Standard 2

Efficiency of the Programme

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

Indicator 2.1: Admitted Students

There are clear admission requirements, which are appropriate for the level and type of the programme, ensuring equal opportunities for both genders, and the profile of admitted students matches the programme aims and available resources.

Judgment: Addressed

- BP's Policy for Enrolment and Academic Progression provides a clear outline of the admission general requirements, and it is published on the BP's website. Additional specific requirements are outlined in the PAD and Student Admission Policy. The programme admission requirements are clearly aligned with BP's admission requirements and are comparable across various programmes, as outlined in the Criteria for Selection to Bahrain Polytechnic Programmes document, which clarifies in detail the admission requirements of new and transfer students specifically with respect to the requirements of English language and Mathematics. The entry requirements are clearly communicated to stakeholders on the website, and the policy documents are available to all staff on SharePoint.
- The Results and Reporting Policy states that 'Students have the right to: Enjoy the educational opportunities offered by the Polytechnic without any discrimination due to social status, gender, religion, creed, disability', thereby describing the acceptance on equal basis of females and males. This is supported by the table provided in the SER, which generally indicates a higher percentage of female than male graduates. It was noted from the provided evidence that the pass rate in 2019-2020 was over 90%, which indicates that the admission requirements are appropriate.
- The BILM is offered in English; and students who do not meet the entry requirements are given the opportunity to enrol in BILM by taking BP's Foundation programme. This programme includes English, Mathematics, ICT and Personal Academic Learning courses. To exit the Foundation programme and enter the BILM, students are required to pass the 'English Proficiency Test (equivalent to IELTS 5.0 in all skills) and 'Math Password Test', as stated in the SER. It also states that 'the passing requirement for the Foundation course is CEFR B1+/IELTS 5.0 in all skills. The SER reflects that more students enter the programme through the Foundation programme than directly, as it is a requirement for inadequately prepared students to demonstrate their proficiency in the Foundation programme before proceeding their studies in the BILM. The Panel is satisfied that there

are appropriate remedial support measures for inadequately prepared students to enter and progress in the programme.

- From the interviews, the Panel noted that students transferring from other institutions should apply as new students and take all the required entry tests mentioned earlier and follow the admission requirements. It was noted that BP has a policy on exempting students from English and Mathematics as a result of entry tests; and that the admission to BP is done annually and not on a semester basis.
- At the time of the review, the Panel noted that there is a draft of a recently revised admission policy; and when evidence was requested, the Panel was informed that it is still a draft and under review and no evidence was provided. The Panel was also informed that the revised admission policy was not benchmarked with regional or international institutions, as it is a draft version. During the extension visit which was conducted virtually, the Panel found that the admission policy has been revised and benchmarked against the admission requirements of the International Maritime College Oman, and the Germany University of Technology Oman.

Indicator 2.2: Academic Staff

There are clear procedures for the recruitment, induction, appraisal, promotion, and professional development of academic staff, which ensure that staff members are fit-for-purpose and that help in staff retention.

Judgment: Addressed

- Within the BP, human resources matters are guided by the Human Resources Management Policy. This policy covers recruitment and staff development. In addition, the Polytechnic's Board of Trustees (BoT) has set up a Recruitment Committee that approves the annual recruitment plan. Induction is done for all new staff and all recruited staff are required to complete the BP's internal Certificate in Tertiary Teaching and Learning. From the interviews, it was clarified that appraisal is conducted annually for each staff member at the beginning, middle and at the end of the year by using a standardised form. The BoT has also established a Performance Management Committee to ensure fairness in all aspects related to staff as explained in the SER. The Panel is satisfied that there are clear procedures for the recruitment, induction, and appraisal of staff.
- BP has published promotion criteria and as per BP's organization chart, any academic staff member has the opportunity to be promoted from 'Assistant Tutor' to 'Tutor' and 'Senior Tutor'. However, it was noted at the time of the review that none of the staff members has been promoted since 2019. During the extension visit, the Panel was informed that two staff members representing 10% of the total BILM staff have been recently promoted. BP

has also developed and implemented a new comprehensive system for academic promotions in January 2023 to ensure fitness for purpose and alignment with international practice. It includes the detailed criteria for promotion to Assistant lecturer, Senior Lecturer, Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, and Professor.

- There is a policy outlining research activities, which ensures that research is aligned with the research plan of the Institution. Developing research skills for staff is mentioned as a new focus area to be encouraged by BP, as clarified in the SER. However, in the SER, it is stated that due to staff shortages, limited hours can be allocated to research. The limitation of research hours was confirmed further in the interviews where it was stated that staff workload is high, and hours could therefore not be used for research purposes. It was also noted that female and male staff members were treated the same when allocating the teaching load. However, women are given maternity leave and nursing hours to support their needs, as per the rules of the Civil Service Bureau.
- To address the recommendation given to BP before the extension visit regarding the shortage of academic staff, BP has recruited three additional staff members, with relevant specialisation in logistics. An experienced staff member was also relocated to teach and mentor at the BILM programme. Furthermore, a visiting professor from Shandong, China, has been contacted to provide guidance for the BILM programme on teaching, mentoring and research. With regard to succession planning, a new Deputy Chief Executive Academic Affairs and Registrar has been appointed to handle the succession planning of BILM staff in line with the new strategic plan.
- BP has a Human Resources Management Policy, which includes a section on staff training and development. Individual development needs are identified during the performance appraisal, as clarified from the interviews. There is also a Training and Development Committee, at the institutional level, meeting four times a year to look into staff's training needs. It is worth noting that staff applying for training opportunities such as workshops and conferences ought to be aligned with the yearly training plan; and requests should be supported and approved by the Head of School as well as the Dean.
- The evidence provided during the review week shows a high staff turnover rate in the previous four years. To address the recommendation given to BP in relation to staff retention and ensuring the continuity of qualified academic staff before the extension visit, BP launched its new strategic plan 2023-2026, which focuses on 'people'. Therein a clear KPI has been set with several initiatives addressing staff retention. Furthermore, several initiatives were taken to manage staff retention, which include a 'New Polytechnic Dashboard' and 'Academic Staff Representation in Committees for Effective Engagement'. The Panel was informed during the extension visit interviews that BP has launched its new agile committees' structure, the purpose of which is to align with international best practice, by ensuring engagement of staff across the institution. BP also established the

Academic Council which will assist in planning, coordinating, developing, and overseeing educational provisions in the interests of maintaining standards. In addition, the new Promotions Policy aims to improve the retention rate of qualified academic staff.

Indicator 2.3: Physical and Material Resources

Physical and material resources are adequate in number, space, style and equipment; these include classrooms, teaching halls, laboratories and other study spaces; Information Technology facilities, library and learning resources.

Judgment: Addressed

- A list of classrooms and laboratories that are being used by the BILM was provided. In the interviews, it was indicated that there was an adequate number of classrooms and laboratories, and these were appropriately equipped. This is also reflected in the video tour of the facilities. The multi-purpose hall, Bahrain hall, also has space for seminars and events. The Panel is satisfied that adequate facilities exist and that these are well equipped.
- BP has 44 computer laboratories, each containing approximately 20 computers and equipped with the latest software. Each student is given an email account to facilitate the communication on and off campus. Classrooms are fitted with active boards. Responsibilities for Information Technology (IT) are clearly described in an ICT services policy. The SER clarifies that the library study facilities are wi-fi equipped. Based on the interviews, it was clear that students have campus-wide access to wi-fi, and that, following a student survey, wi-fi was improved and now adequately meets students' needs.
- The library has adequate computer facilities and the library manager attends faculty and Academic Board meetings. The library has adequate physical books and an extensive range of e-books and other e-resources; and BP subscribes to major databases related to the BILM programme. The site visit interviews revealed that the library resources are adequate and that there is sufficient access to a broad range of literature. Academics can also request additional physical or e-books *via* a book order form. The Panel was provided with evidence of communication between BILM and library staff indicating book ordering and status of resources in the library. The Panel is satisfied that the library has adequate resources along with study spaces as seen from the virtual video tour.
- There are clear maintenance procedures for facilities and systems, and the maintenance is the responsibility of the Maintenance and Projects Department. Maintenance is performed based on regular inspections and/or complaints. The Maintenance Department has an appropriate preventative maintenance plan detailing asset numbers, asset locations and a schedule for preventative maintenance. Other inspections are fulfilled by contractors, on a daily, monthly, quarterly and half yearly basis, dependent on the system that requires

maintenance, as clarified in the SER. The Panel is satisfied that adequate maintenance procedures and practices are in place and that the facilities are appropriately maintained.

- There is a Health and Wellness Centre on campus. From the interviews, it was clarified that this includes a clinic staffed by a qualified nurse, whom students and staff could approach when needed. Other safety aspects considered are firefighting system, extinguishers and emergency exists.

Indicator 2.4: Management Information Systems

There are functioning management information and tracking systems that support the decision-making processes and evaluate the utilisation of laboratories, e-learning and e-resources, along with policies and procedures that ensure security of learners' records and accuracy of results.

Judgment: Addressed

- BP uses a number of systems, including Moodle, Banner, SharePoint and Argos application to cater for the Institution and BILM. These are integrated in the Management Information System (MIS), which provides appropriate and adequate information to support decision-making. The IT Services Department tracks printer and internet usage to control usage as clarified in the SER. Similarly, the library tracks the use of physical resources, e-books, databases and opinions (*via* surveys) to adjust library offerings. The Panel inquired about the utilization of Moodle in decision-making and the BILM team explained that it is mainly used to detect plagiarism and not for decision making. During the extension visit, the Panel was provided with samples of MIS-generated reports from Banner that deal with room occupancy and admission data. In addition, several examples that show evidence of decision-making based on MIS reports were also provided.
- Student transcripts are managed through the Banner system. The accuracy of results and student transcripts is verified in a number of ratification processes, including verification by Course Coordinators, Programme Managers and Heads of School as clarified in the SER and the interviews that were conducted during the review. It was also clarified during these interviews that all records are password protected and that back-ups of records are kept both on and off campus as per the provided policy and procedures. The evidence provided and interviews with BP staff and alumni indicated that the certificates and transcripts are released in a timely manner.

Indicator 2.5: Student Support

There is appropriate student support available in terms of guidance, and care for students including students with special needs, newly admitted and transferred students, and students at risk of academic failure.

Judgment: Addressed

- There are numerous student support services offered by the Registry, Library Learning Centre, Career and Employment Centre (CEC), Health and Wellness Centre and Academic Skills Centre, which are all governed by the Student Services Policy. Career guidance services are provided centrally by the Academic Development Directorate (ADD) and the CEC. The latter organizes activities related to work placements, work-integrated learning, and industry liaising. Career guidance services are provided further *via* a sound academic mentoring system, where mentors are assigned to students upon admission to the BP and are the first point of contact for student related issues. The interviews revealed that the mentoring system functioned very well and was helpful in providing guidance and student support. The interviews also revealed that academic staff members were proactive in assisting students with queries and guidance on study-related and personal matters to ensure the achievement of graduate attributes and ILOs. The Panel is satisfied that appropriate student support is provided in terms of resources, guidance and care.
- There is a comprehensive orientation programme for all students admitted to BP. Sample presentations for orientation have been provided. Orientation covers aspects such as 'available support services, attendance requirements, access to student account, Collection of ID cards, Health & Wellness services, Career & Employment Services, ICT services, complaints process, dress code, etc', as stated in the SER. Access to the information provided in the orientation programme is available to all students on Moodle. The Panel is satisfied that there are appropriate arrangements for inducting all admitted students.
- Women's needs are not specifically addressed in the SER, aside from the specification that Mondays are dedicated as 'females only day' at the activity hall. The interviews revealed that women did not feel the need for further female specific provisions, as men and women are treated as equals on campus.
- Specific services are provided for students with special needs or physical disabilities as clarified in the SER and policies are in place. Newly admitted students are required to declare any special needs upon entry, which are then communicated with the nurse and learning support specialist. A registry is kept of special needs students and their specific requirements. A learning support specialist monitors special needs students' progress and ensures that appropriate support is provided to them; and individual support is also offered.
- The support offered to at-risk students is well described in the SER and consists of several interventions. Students can be self-identified or identified through tutors or mentors due to absence or low scores on first assessments by using the Banner System. The identified students are referred to a Learning Support Specialist. At-risk students are also supported by mentors, the Learning Centre and PASS leaders as and when needed. During the interviews, it was clarified that records of at-risk students include the support offered and

students' progress, as each faculty keeps an at-risk register. The interviews also revealed that at-risk students are identified early and that academic staff members are proactive in supporting them, including taking personal interests in assisting such students. The Panel is satisfied that students' progress is monitored and that at-risk students are provided with adequate support.

- All support services are assessed through various surveys such as the Learning Support Service survey. Samples of teaching survey and course survey forms were provided for the period from 2018-2021. Analyses of graduate survey along with PASS leader survey were provided. Results are used for quality improvements, where applicable, as per the Review, Evaluation and Improvement Policy.

Standard 3

Academic Standards of Students and Graduates

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

Indicator 3.1: Efficiency of the Assessment

The assessment is effective and aligned with learning outcomes, to ensure attainment of the graduate attributes and academic standards of the programme.

Judgment: Partially addressed

- The Panel notes that BP has appropriate policies and procedures in place to make sure that assessments are of a fair standard and consistent with the learning outcomes. To ensure appropriate academic standards, some of the course examinations are subjected to moderation by BILM staff according to a specific schedule and others are moderated by CILT as clarified during interviews. The Panel notes that the assessment methods in the programme are in line with current good practices in terms of the level of assessments' complexity and meet the academic standards of the programme. Even though the assessment methods are appropriate with regard to the level of complexity and standards, samples of course files which include course descriptors and assessment cover sheets as well as interviews with faculty, confirm that two assessments (mid-term and final project) are used to evaluate the critical and analytical skills of students. The Panel recommends that the Faculty of Business and Logistics should introduce a variety of assessment methods to assess entrepreneurship, critical thinking and problem solving. The Panel also notes from the interviews that examination questions are recycled with slight changes and this practice should not be the case. Consequently, the Panel recommends that the Faculty of Business and Logistics should construct examination questions whenever the course is offered and not rely on using previously administrated examinations.
- Course descriptors contain a detailed description of assessments, what is expected from the students and how they will be marked. As noted from the SER, it is clear from the BILM curriculum documentation that for each course, there is a clear linkage between individual assessments and the required ILOs for the student. For example, for courses such as 'Strategic Supply Chain and Retail Logistics' (TL7302), 'Managing Transport Operations and Resources' (TL7002), 'Passenger Transport Management' (TL7300), and 'Inventory Warehouse Management' (TL7301); the ILOs of the courses are indicated next to the assessment on page one of the course descriptors and are outlined on pages two/three as noted in the provided evidence. Graduate attributes within the BILM include

the employability skills, which are embedded in the BILM ILOs. The Panel is satisfied with the alignment of assessments with learning outcomes and graduate attributes.

- The PAD includes the BILM teaching and learning philosophy; and course descriptors clearly show the linkage between assessments and the type of graduate the programme seeks to develop. The achievement of the student assessment in the BILM is measured through the mapping between the assessments and CILOs, which are then mapped to the PILOs as shown in the PAD. Faculty members enter CILOs and their mapping to PILOs, for assessments and examination questions into the spreadsheet, which is overseen by the Curriculum Development Unit and the Academic Quality Assurance Committee (AQAC), to ensure that graduate achievements are in line with BP's mission and strategic goals.
- The feedback from the moderation process is used to improve the assessments. Examples of moderation were provided for three years (2019, 2020 & 2021) for two courses namely 'Workplace Health and Safety in the Logistics Environment' (TL6501) and 'Inventory Warehouse Management' (TL7301). Furthermore, BILM PADs have made some improvements by implementing a 'competency mapping' that maps the PILOs to the prescribed domains as well as to the employability skills. The Panel appreciates that BILM introduced the 'competency mapping' to ensure that students are not over-assessed. Furthermore, the Panel notes that BP has developed new guidelines for online teaching and assessment during the COVID-19 pandemic, online instruction for students, and the training for the Big Blue Button, which is used for online invigilation. The Panel is satisfied with the mechanisms for monitoring the implementation and improvement of the assessment process.

Indicator 3.2: Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is ensured through the consistent implementation of relevant policies and procedures that deter plagiarism and other forms of academic misconduct (e.g. cheating, forging of results, and commissioning others to do the work).

Judgment: Addressed

- Policies and procedures relating to academic integrity apply for staff and students and are available on SharePoint, BP's website, Moodle and in the BILM Course Guide. It was found from the interviews that tutors during the first class go through the course descriptor with the students. The Panel also learned from these interviews that it is the Deanship of Student Affairs who is responsible for policies and procedures related to student academic integrity regarding cases of misconduct, consequences and penalties.
- The BILM tutors use the plagiarism software Turnitin and students are required to submit their written assessments through it. The Panel learned from the interviews that no other tools besides Turnitin are used to detect plagiarism, as the staff depend on their experience

with respect to this matter. From interviews, it was found that BILM academics do not have an acceptable agreed similarity index on Turnitin. They clarified that they use due diligence, and check every submission for similarities and where these similarities originate from and also 'ghost writing'. However, the Panel learned from the students that a similarity index of up to 20% is considered to be acceptable. The Panel, therefore, recommends that BP should introduce a general policy on the acceptable similarity index/range for deterring plagiarism and should also ensure the awareness of this policy amongst students, staff and quality personnel.

- It is clear from the SER that there is an Academic Appeal Policy and cases of academic misconduct and plagiarism are recorded, and appropriate actions are taken. Two examples are provided of different levels of misconduct and outcomes. It is also evident from the cases that appropriate policies and procedures are followed. Students are able to appeal any decision made relating to misconduct and an example of the Appeal Committee Decision and Appeal Decision Letter were provided; it is evident that the processes are followed as per submitted evidence. The Panel also learned that penalties are being applied consistently and that they forward any plagiarism incident to the Programme Manager and Head of School. In addition, for late submission of assignments, a 5% deduction penalty is given by the tutors. Any cases of academic misconduct and plagiarism are recorded in a risk log at the Faculty level. The Panel notes that this is helpful in identifying repeated cases of plagiarism. The Panel is satisfied with the measures taken by BILM to handle students' academic misconduct.

Indicator 3.3: Internal and External Moderation of Assessment

There are mechanisms in place to measure the effectiveness of the programme's internal and external moderation systems for setting assessment instruments and grading students' achievements.

Judgment: Partially Addressed

- It is clear from the SER that the BILM programme adheres to the Assessment and Moderation Policy, for the internal moderation of assessment and the selection of internal moderators, which clearly outlines the assessment and moderation process. The policy is implemented at the level of the BILM Department through the BILM Programme Committee and *via* internal pre-moderation and internal post moderation. The BILM Programme Committee approves Course Coordinators and moderators. The Panel notes that the majority of courses, which were internally moderated met the requirements outlined in this policy.
- The BILM moderation schedule provides the allocated moderators for each course; this schedule is approved by two committees, namely the BILM Programme Committee, the Business Faculty Board for final approval and then the Academic Board for information.

The Panel learned from the interviews that internal moderators are appointed by the Moderation Committee and approved by the Programme Manager. A pre-requisite for the appointment is that internal moderators must be familiar with the content of the courses that they are required to moderate, or they must have previously taught these courses.

- The aim of the internal moderation process is to improve on future assessments and to make sure that marks awarded to students are fair and consistent. This is clear from the internal (pre-moderation and post moderation) reports for several courses and different years of study. A sample of internal moderation after the assessment being finalised for each of the different courses was also provided. Feedback from moderation is incorporated in the end of semester course reviews. The Panel was informed that any major recommendations from this process form the basis of the course improvement plans, which are included in the annual programme review for the next offering of that course. However, minor changes to courses are approved by the Programme Committee before incorporating them.
- From the SER, the Panel notes that the BILM programme is licensed to write and deliver CILT examinations; however, examination papers must be verified by CILT before they are being administered; and scripts are moderated once examinations have been conducted. All material (course content and examinations) is subject to CILT's own verification and moderation policies. This external moderation used to cover seven of the course offerings. However, the Panel learned that because of budget constraints, this number has been reduced and since 2020-2021, only four courses are externally moderated by CILT, namely, 'Strategic Supply Chain and Retail Logistics' (TL7302), 'Managing Transport Operations and Resources' (TL7002), 'Inventory Warehouse Management' (TL7301), and 'Passenger Transport Management' (TL7300). Furthermore, there is an MoU with IMCO in Oman that allows for an external moderation agreement. However, the Panel learned from the interviews that none of the academic staff who are currently dealing with BILM are involved with or use IMCO for external moderation.
- It is noted in the SER that the external moderation has resulted in examinations being amended and also final marks being adjusted as per the standards applied by CILT, although these were minor and rare. An example was provided where the Academic Board approved the amended grade for a student in the 'Industry-Based Project' (TL8501) course.
- The Panel is of the view that the external moderation lacks a formal mechanism through which it is evaluated or reviewed for effectiveness. The Assessment and Moderation Policy explains that there should be a plan for external moderation to be conducted in four years. However, there was no evidence provided to show that all courses were externally moderated since the inception of the programme. Considering the aforementioned, the Panel recommends that the Faculty of Business and Logistic should systematically

implement external moderation on all BILM courses offered including the capstone project; and develop a formal evaluation of the effectiveness of the external moderation process.

Indicator 3.4: Work-based Learning

Where assessed work-based learning takes place, there is a policy and procedures to manage the process and its assessment, to assure that the learning experience is appropriate in terms of content and level for meeting the intended learning outcomes.

Judgment: Addressed

- The BILM programme students' work-based learning is linked to the 'Industry-Based Project' (TL8501) course, which exposes students to a practical setting in an industry of their choice. The Offsite and Workplace Learning Activities Policy outlines the procedures in a concise manner; and is also useful in ensuring that all students experience the same exposure and equally benefit from the experience and achieve the learning outcomes. The roles and responsibilities of the internship providers, academic supervisors, training supervisors and students are set out clearly in the Industry-Based Project course guide and are communicated to all the relevant stakeholders.
- The meetings between students and the academic supervisor are held on a weekly basis. During these meetings, areas such as the topic, the actual project, where to submit it, the marking rubric and then the presentation are discussed. The course guide further highlights when students are required to meet with their academic supervisors. From the interviews, it was found that junior academics are not involved in the supervision of students during their work-based learning. Therefore, the Panel recommends that the Faculty of Business and Logistics should establish training for junior academics to enable them to be involved in supervising students during their work-based learning.
- The inclusion of Work-based learning is a requirement in the Programme Approval Policy. It provides students with specific skills, such as problem solving and analytical skills – as it provides them with some practical experience in transport and logistics ranging from the public to private sector. In this course, students are expected to draw on their knowledge of various concepts and theories learnt through their studies and apply the most appropriate to their work-based learning project. This enables them to reflect critically on the employability skills of a work-ready graduate. The Panel examined samples of students' projects and found them appropriate in terms of content and level. The Panel also observed from the graduate surveys which was conducted by the Quality, Measurements and Analysis and Planning (QMAP) Unit and ADD in 2020, that the work-based learning project contributes to the achievement of the PILOs. The aim of the survey was to gain insight into how alumni rated their teaching and learning experience at BP and whether the PILOs were achieved.

- The Panel notes that the work-based learning project is marked out of 100% but is divided into four phases. Firstly, employability skills self-evaluation is allocated a mark out of 20%. Secondly, the project proposal is allocated a mark out of 10% and the proposal is approved by the host organisation and the BILM Project Proposal Approval Committee. Thirdly the project is allocated a mark out of 50% and lastly the presentation is marked out of 20%. The Panel notes that the project is marked by the academic supervisor and then a sample of the marked projects is checked by a second marker. The project is then internally moderated. The Panel notes that the industrial supervisor is not involved in the marking of the project. Therefore, the Panel recommends that the Faculty of Business and Logistics should involve the industrial supervisor in evaluating the student performance when he/she is on site.
- Surveys are used to check the effectiveness of work-based learning and are distributed to students, academic supervisors and industrial supervisors. Furthermore, the relevancy of work-based learning is continuously measured through the CAG and External Validation Panels with academics and industry experts. Surveys were distributed to alumni and employers and both show positive feedback and results. Whilst the results of the findings of the surveys are positive, the Panel found from the provided evidence and interviews with alumni, employers and industrial internship supervisors that although soft skills (problem solving, critical thinking, initiative, enterprise and leadership) need to be enhanced; yet, the interns demonstrate a high level of teamwork and professionalism and punctuality. In addition, the Panel learned from these interviews about the overall readiness of BILM students and the positive perception of employers about BILM students.

Indicator 3.5: Capstone Project or Thesis/Dissertation Component

Where there is a capstone project or thesis/dissertation component, there are clear policies and procedures for supervision and evaluation which state the responsibilities and duties of both the supervisor and students, and there is a mechanism to monitor the related implementations and improvements.

Judgment: Addressed

- As noted under Indicator 3.4, the 'Industry-Based Project' (TL8501) course is a requirement for the completion of BILM degree. Part of the requirements of this course is to complete a research-based project in a transport and logistics environment or context. In this capstone project, students can apply the concepts and skills gained in previous semesters in their projects. The capstone represents the culmination of students' achievement within the BILM degree. The mapping of the CILOs of the project to PILOs demonstrates how the project contributes to the achievement of the programme learning outcomes. The Panel reviewed samples of industry projects. From these samples, it was

clear how projects are reviewed and the types of topics which are conducted. A list of the titles of the capstone projects for the 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 along with the marking rubric were provided. The Panel notes that all topics were in the field of logistics.

- The requirements of the project are clearly outlined in the 'Industry-Based Project' (TL8501) course guide. It sets out the policies and procedures to be followed as well as the monitoring of the project and the role and responsibilities of each stakeholder i.e. academic supervisors and students and the required timelines. The Panel notes that prior to placements commence, a compulsory meeting takes place to orientate students and make them aware of the contents of the course guide. The Panel learned that at this meeting, the BILM Programme Committee, academic supervisors and students are present.
- The Panel notes that the industry-based project outlines the importance of the monitoring and review process. The Course Coordinator conducts the workshops throughout the semester as an added support and oversees the supervisors. There are weekly scheduled meetings with supervisors to discuss students' progress and their performance at these meetings. The Panel found from the interviews with students and other relevant stakeholders that there is a general satisfaction with the capstone project supervision process and the related support provided.
- When students submit their final project, they are required to present their findings and to complete a self-evaluation reflection on whether they have met the employability skills outlined in the Employability Skills Implementation plan. The assessment of the project is broken down into the project proposal, the actual project, the presentation and then a reflection to self-evaluate on employability skills. The marking rubrics are attached as appendices in the submitted evidence by BILM. Moderation is conducted as per BP's policy to ensure that the level of assessment and supervision is appropriate. The final assessment of projects is marked by the supervisor. A sample of the projects is marked by the second marker and is then internally moderated. The Panel notes that external moderation is not conducted for the capstone project. The Panel urges BP to systematically implement the external moderation on the capstone project; and evaluate its effectiveness, as recommended earlier under Indicator 3.3.
- The 'Industry-Based Project' (TL8501) course is reviewed after each offering and improved based on the feedback from the faculty members; and improvements are incorporated by the BILM Programme Committee into the course descriptor for the next semester. One example of improvements in 2018-2019 was the removal of the literature review from students' final presentations. The Panel acknowledges this removal, as for a research project, the main focus ought to be on the research methodology, findings and recommendations. The Panel appreciates the practices of the capstone project starting from the beginning, during and until it is conducted.

Indicator 3.6: Achievements of the Graduates

The achievements of the graduates are consonant with those achieved on equivalent programmes as expressed in their assessed work, rates of progression and first destinations.

Judgment: Addressed

- The Panel notes that there are different kinds of assessment of different levels for different types of courses. For example, in some courses the Panel observed that assessments are appropriate and demonstrate students' understanding of the supply chain concepts, its principles and the role of transport and logistics in supply chain structures; and these assessments meet the expectations of courses placed at level 6 on the NQF. Moreover, the Panel observed that in the provided evidence, the assessments meet the expectations of courses placed at level 7 and 8 on NQF.
- From interviews with the BILM Programme Committee, students, alumni and employers as well as the Graduate Survey and Survey responses, the Panel confirms that the level of students' achievement is appropriate for the BILM. This has been confirmed during the interviews as BILM graduates are sought after by logistics companies. Another example is that many of the BILM graduates have established careers in industry whilst other graduates have just started work. The Panel learned from the interviews with alumni that they are satisfied with the assessments they had been provided during the BILM programme and their achievements and that BILM graduates hold senior positions in their workplace. The Panel appreciates the satisfaction of alumni towards the BILM programme.
- The Panel further learned from interviews with external stakeholders – the CAG and employers that they are highly satisfied with the graduates that the BILM produces. Some examples of their competencies were mentioned such as good work ethics, being able to think logically and the way they present their work. Various students and graduates have won international awards; and since 2013 BP has maintained its international accreditation with the CILT.
- The Panel finds that there is little change in the statistics related to students admitted, enrolled, dismissed, transferred and graduated in the academic years 2017-2018, 2018-2019, 2019-2020, with an average graduation rate of 89,31%. The average pass rates of females versus males are as follows: 2017-2018 Average: Female 81.59% / Male 89.92%; 2018-2019 Average: Female 89.95% / Male 84.6%; and 2019-2020 Average: Female 92.73% / Males 90.19%. The Panel found that the ratios of admitted students to successful graduates including year-on-year progression, retention, and length of study are consonant with those on equivalent programmes.

- The Panel was informed that the Registry Department tracks student progression in terms of retention rate, graduation rate, and progression rate. Graduates are also regularly surveyed by the CEC to find out their employment rates with the results being presented to the Academic Board.
- Employers have the opportunity of assessing graduates' performance through a survey as well as to find out from alumni whether they deem the programme as effective and resulting in a well-prepared career path. The Panel noted from the interviews with employers and CAG that they are very satisfied with the graduates from BILM and that they were confident that once students complete the BILM programme, they would be able to work effectively in logistics within any industry. Within this context, the Panel acknowledges the general satisfaction expressed towards the graduates' profile. The Panel appreciates the satisfaction of employers towards the graduates of the programme.

Standard 4

Effectiveness of Quality Management and Assurance

The arrangements in place for managing the programme, including quality assurance and continuous improvement, contribute to giving confidence in the programme.

Indicator 4.1: Quality Assurance Management

There is a clear quality assurance management system, in relation to the programme that ensures the institution's policies, procedures and regulations are applied effectively and consistently.

Judgment: Addressed

- To achieving BP's vision, mission, strategy and goals, quality assurance processes for teaching and learning are defined in several documents such as the Review, Evaluation and Improvement Policy, Programme Approval Policy, and Results and Reporting Policy, and Applied Research and Enterprise Activities document. The Quality Management System (QMS) encompasses all BP's policies and procedures that are related to all staff members on the SharePoint; whereas policies and procedures which relate to students are available on Moodle and BP's website. The policies are communicated also in CAG meetings on a yearly basis as clarified in the provided evidence.
- At the institutional level, the QMAP Unit facilitates and ensures consistent application of all quality assurance practices across the Institution - under the supervision of the Academic Board and AQAC. At the faculty level, a Programme Committee (chaired by the Head of School) meets monthly and ensures quality assurance, approval of courses, relevance and results. However, as noted under several indicators, several policies and procedures are not consistently implemented. To address the recommendation given to BP before the extension visit on this matter, BP has formed a committee titled 'Academic Standards, Strategy, and Quality' to ensure the consistent implementation of the institutional policies and procedures at the programme level. It was explained to the Panel during the extension visit interviews, that this committee is responsible for ensuring compliance with local requirements and good international practices and monitoring the implementation of academic policies through continuous review and evaluation. It is also responsible for managing the development, review, and improvement of academic policies to ensure agility and responsiveness. In addition, BP has taken steps to improve its quality operations by restructuring the Quality Directorate and Academic Development. The reporting line of the Faculty Quality Manager has changed to report to the Directorate of Quality and Academic Development, which will ensure central management of quality operations and consistency.

- Quality matters are regularly raised within the AQAC, the Faculty Board and the BILM Programme Committee. New teaching staff members are informed of the importance of quality assurance during staff induction. However, during the interviews, the Panel noted that some of the staff members were unaware of certain policies and procedures such as, the responsibilities of the Quality Improvement Action Procedure with regard to the periodic review of the programme, the planned benchmarking with IMCO, and the responsibilities of supporting Applied Research and Enterprise Activities. To address the recommendation given to BP before the extension visit on these matters, BP has added a standard agenda item to Faculty Boards, Academic Standards, Strategy, and Quality Committee, and the Academic Council, to communicate to academic staff the recent policy updates and build their awareness of the implementation of policies and procedures.
- The QMS monitoring is incorporated in the general Policies and Procedures document and specified in Review, Evaluation and Improvement Policy. In general, all policies are revised every four years and approved by the BoT, as and when required. Moreover, a requirement can be announced through contacting a quality staff member. Requesters can be individuals, a unit, a faculty or groups who perceive the need for the development or maintenance of a new or existing policy/procedure. A quality staff member reviews the request in consultation with the policy owner and QMAP Unit. The further lines of approvals are SMT, and/ or Academic Board, and BoT, as clarified in the provided document.

Indicator 4.2: Programme Management and Leadership

The programme is managed in a way that demonstrates effective and responsible leadership and there are clear lines of accountability.

Judgment: Addressed

- The programme is assigned to the School of Logistics & Maritime Studies, led by the Head of School. The school is integrated in the Faculty of Business and Logistics together with a second entity, the School of Business. The faculty is led by the Dean of Faculty who oversees that courses, programmes, and services meet required standards. For engaging and supervising faculty members, the Dean's work is facilitated by Programme Managers. The Head of School is supported by one Programme Manager.
- The Programme Manager is the point of contact for performance evaluations, professional development planning and other operational staffing issues. There is also a Programme Committee, which oversees the relevance of the curriculum, the academic quality, and the continuous improvement of the programme. Members of the committee are all Course Coordinators who prepare recommendations, mainly for approval by the Faculty Board, which ensures that courses, programmes, and services meet the required standards. The Faculty Board evaluates Programme Committee's recommendations, and, if approved,

passes them for final approval to the relevant entity, mainly Academic Board. The Faculty Board consists of Dean, Head of Schools, Programme Managers, and representatives of staff members, Registry and student body.

- The reporting lines are as follows: Each Tutor (lecturer) is assigned to a Line Manager, who is the BILM Programme Manager. BILM Programme Manager reports to Head of School. Head of School reports to Dean of Faculty. Programme Committee reports to Faculty Board which, in turn, reports to Academic Board. The Dean of Faculty reports to Deputy CEO: Academic. From the site visit interviews with the administrative and academic staff, the Panel is satisfied that the existing reporting lines are clear and facilitate adequate communication and decision-making across the Faculty.
- For all the above-mentioned management posts and committees, clear Terms of Reference (ToR) are stated within the job descriptions supported by BP's quality assurance guidelines and policies. The clarity of the different managerial positions and of the ToR of the committees at various levels helps identify where different academic and administrative responsibilities lie, and who exactly is responsible for the custodianship of the academic standards of the programme at the different levels within the Institution. This was confirmed to the Panel from the conducted virtual interviews with the administrative and academic staff.

Indicator 4.3: Annual and Periodic Review of the Programme

There are arrangements for annual internal evaluation and periodic reviews of the programme that incorporate both internal and external feedback and mechanisms are in place to implement recommendations for improvement.

Judgment: Addressed

- Policies and organizational arrangements are in place for annual reviews of the BILM programme. As per the Annual Programme Review Procedure, the process normally starts at the beginning of the academic year, lasts for a maximum of three consecutive months, and is initiated and approved by the AQAC and by a subcommittee of the Academic Board. The preparation of the programme review report, and the development of a quality improvement plan is done by a Review Team, which is led by the Programme Manager and includes Course Coordinators.
- A continuous monitoring of the implementation of improvements is identified when comparing the Course Action Plan of 2018-2019 with the annual programme review that took place in 2018-2019 and faculty meeting minutes. One of the action items in the quality improvement plan of the BILM programme was to 'Monitor performance of direct entry students and compare against students from Foundation'. This action item led to the revision of the admission criteria.

- BP has an organizational arrangement for periodic reviews, which should be conducted every four years. However, when the Panel requested reports during the review on the conducted ones in the last five years as extra evidence, nothing was submitted and the Panel received a written statement which reads as ‘BP QMAP Unit did not assign periodic review due to constant ongoing external review and accreditation’. The same was echoed during the interviews. However, during the extension visit, the Panel was provided with evidence which shows that the BILM has completed the periodic review, and the report was approved in the Academic Council meeting that took place on Tuesday, 8th November 2022. Furthermore, as indicated under Indicator 4.1, BP has formed the Academic Standards, Strategy, and Quality Committee to ensure that its programmes adhere to the institutional policies and procedures.

Indicator 4.4: Benchmarking and Surveys

Benchmarking studies and the structured comments collected from stakeholders’ surveys are analysed and the outcomes are used to inform decisions on programmes and are made available to the stakeholders.

Judgment: Addressed

- BP has in place a Benchmarking Policy along with a comprehensive Benchmarking Framework. In relation to the benchmarking, the SER clarifies that the benchmarking exercise is a work in progress. The Panel was provided with a document showing a desktop comparison between several institutions; however, it was a draft, without a date and not approved. From the interviews, the Panel was informed that an MoU with the IMCO was signed in May 2017. When the Panel requested a document/report on benchmarking with IMOC or any other institution, a finalized report wasn’t provided by the BILM team. To address the recommendation given to BP before the extension visit, the BILM has gone to another desktop review cycle with CILT, which was completed at the end of 2022 and an action plan was provided on how to respond to CILT requirements. In addition, a comprehensive desktop benchmarking exercise was undertaken with several regional and international programmes. The benchmarking included list of courses, course contents, admission criteria, learning resources, staff, research, ILOs and graduate attributes have been implemented after conducting benchmarking exercises.
- The collection of structured comments from internal and external stakeholders is done by utilising several types of surveys such as Student Teaching Surveys, Student Course Surveys, End of Semester Course Reviews, Student Withdrawal Surveys, Graduate Destination Surveys, Alumni Surveys and Employer Surveys. However, BP did not submit any samples of Employer Surveys although it was requested by the Panel several times as extra evidence and site visit evidence. To address the recommendation given to BP before the extension visit in relation to the use of Employers Surveys in improving the

BILM programme and the performance of its graduates, BP has developed a new version of the Employer Survey in line with the Institutional Quality Survey Framework. During the extension visit, evidence was provided of the analysis of the employer surveys and how the employer survey results were used in enhancing the programme by including applied mathematics and applied statistics courses.

- From submitted evidence and interviews, the Panel noted that the response rate within the Student Course Surveys reached a level that impedes drawing valid conclusions as evident in the provided evidence. In interviews, the commonly known effect was affirmed: highly engaged students tend to respond to surveys, whereas less engaged students do not. To address the recommendation given to BP before the extension visit on this matter, the surveys have been physically administered in the classroom in order to improve the response rates for all courses. Furthermore, the Panel was informed during the extension visit that all surveys will be integrated in Moodle as part of the course content to ensure that students provide feedback.
- During the interviews, the Panel learned that the collected comments from internal and external stakeholders are discussed in the monthly meetings of the Business and Logistics Faculty Board and these comments are used to inform decisions on the BILM programme. For example, a course in Health & Safety (TL6501) was introduced as a compulsory course in the BILM study plan in response to feedback from CAG. Moreover, during these interviews, it was clarified that currently students are involved in a project about urban public transport to be in line with Bahrain's 2030 vision to develop the urban transport in the country again in response to CAG and societal needs.
- During the review, the Panel was not provided with sufficient evidence to show how BP utilises the output of the surveys and how results are communicated to stakeholders in a formal and regular manner. To address the recommendation given to BP before the extension visit on these matters, BP has developed mechanisms to communicate the outcomes of the surveys to the relevant stakeholders through newsletters, press releases, and Moodle. Furthermore, BP has also introduced a system to share feedback with its stakeholders *via* focus groups, which proves to be suitable to the nature of the programme.

Indicator 4.5: Relevance to Labour market and Societal Needs

The programme has a functioning advisory board and there is continuous scoping of the labour market and the national and societal needs, where appropriate for the programme type, to ensure the relevancy and currency of the programme.

Judgment: Partially Addressed

- The CAG has clear ToR and serves as a programme advisory board. It consists of representatives of the local transport/logistics industry and BILM alumni and is focused

on the workplace/employers' expectations. The Panel concludes from submitted minutes of meetings and interviews that CAG takes an active role in providing feedback not only at their meetings but also during the project-based discussions with the lecturers supporting students within the 'Industry-Based Project' course (TL8501).

- From the interviews, the Panel concludes that feedback of CAG is used in programme decision making. Examples include the suggestion of CAG to expand the duration of the industrial training. Furthermore, CAG facilitates the communication between BILM students with industry to conduct more collaborative projects with different entities in Bahrain in order to link theory with practice. Examples include collaborative projects with Bahrain Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Bahrain Airport. The Panel is satisfied with the existing collaboration between BILM and the Industry.
- Formal studies with regard to labour market and societal needs that are organized by or organized for BILM are not reported in the SER. Moreover, it is worth noting that no further information was submitted to the Panel as evidence when BILM was requested to provide it during the review of the programme. The submitted evidence was limited to a presentation submitted at the Bahrain Economic Development Board in 2013 and an Employability Skills Report analysing graduates' skills on site during 2020, however, the latter was for all the programmes offered by BP. During the extension visit interviews, the Panel was informed that BP is using the studies on labour market needs issued by the Ministry of Labour, Tamkeen, and Bahrain Economic Development Board. The Panel was also informed about the Bahrain Skills project, which aims to identify the market needs in each field, including logistics. However, none of the provided evidence during the extension visit included a recent market study for the programme. Therefore, the Panel recommends that Faculty of Business and Logistics should conduct regular studies on labour market needs with respect to the BILM programme.

V. Conclusion

Taking into account the institution's own self-evaluation report, the evidence gathered from the interviews and documentation made available during the virtual review, the Panel draws the following conclusion in accordance with the *DHR/BQA Academic Programme Reviews (Cycle 2) Handbook, 2020*:

There is Confidence in the Bachelor of International Logistics Management offered by Bahrain Polytechnic.

In coming to its conclusion regarding the four Standards, the Panel notes, *with appreciation*, the following:

1. Students' participation is encouraged *via* exposure to practical situations and, that students learn to be creative and innovative which leads to enhancing their lifelong learning skills.
2. The Bachelor of International Logistics Management introduced the "competency mapping" to ensure that students are not over-assessed.
3. The practices of capstone project, starting from the beginning, during and until it is conducted.
4. The satisfaction of alumni towards the Bachelor of International Logistics Management programme.
5. The satisfaction of employers towards the graduates of the programme.

In terms of improvement, the Panel recommends that the Bahrain Polytechnic and/or the Faculty of Business and Logistics should:

1. Document how the risks of Bachelor of International Logistics Management are managed.
2. Regularly revise the aims of the programme aims.
3. Regularly benchmark the learning outcomes and the curriculum with comparable regional and international programmes.
4. Introduce a variety of assessment methods to assess entrepreneurship, critical thinking and problem solving.
5. Construct examination questions whenever the course is offered and not rely on using previously administrated examinations.
6. Introduce a general policy on the acceptable similarity index/range for deterring plagiarism and also ensure the awareness of this policy amongst students, staff and quality personnel.

7. Systematically implement the external moderation on all Bachelor of International Logistics Management courses offered including Capstone project; and develop a formal evaluation of the effectiveness of the external moderation process.
8. Establish training for junior academics to enable them to be involved in supervising students during their work-based learning.
9. Involve the industrial supervisor in evaluating the student performance when he/she is on site.
10. Conduct regular studies on labour market needs with respect to the Bachelor of International Logistics Management programme.