



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

Directorate of Higher Education Reviews Programme Review Report

**University of Bahrain
College of Health and Sport Sciences
Bachelor of Science in Nursing
Kingdom of Bahrain**

Site Visit Date: 27-29 September 2021

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Acronyms

APR	Academic Programme Review
BDF	Bahrain Defence Force
BQA	Education & Training Quality Authority
BSN	Bachelor of Science in Nursing
CC	Curriculum Committee
CHSS	College of Health and Sport Sciences
CILO	Course Intended Learning Outcome
DHR	Directorate of Higher Education Reviews
GPA	Grade Point Average
HEC	Higher Education Council
HEI	Higher Education Institution
HoD	Head of Department
IELTS	International English Language Test System
ILO	Intended learning Outcome
IT	Information Technology
KHUH	King Hamad University Hospital
LMS	Learning Management System
MoH	Ministry of Health
NHRA	National Health Regulatory Authority
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
OHS	Occupational Health and Safety
OSCE	Objective Structured Clinical Evaluation
PAC	Programme Advisory Committee
PCAP	Postgraduate Certificate in Academic Practice
PEO	Programme Educational Objective
PILO	Programme Intended Learning Outcome

QAAC	Quality Assurance & Accreditation Centre
QAC	Quality Assurance Committee
SAC	Student Advisory Committee
SER	Self-Evaluation Report
SIS	Student Information System
TOEFL	Test of English as a Foreign Language
UILO	University Intended Learning Outcome
UoB	University of Bahrain
UTEL	Unit of Teaching Excellence and Leadership
WHOCC	World Health Organization Collaborating Center

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 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 and 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, 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*	University of Bahrain
College/ Department*	College of Health and Sport Sciences Department of Nursing
Programme/ Qualification Title*	Bachelor of Science in Nursing
Qualification Approval Number	Ministry of Health Decision No. (391/113/2003) of 2003
NQF Level	8
Validity Period on NQF	5 years from Validation Date
Number of Units*	35 courses
NQF Credit	540
Programme Aims*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Graduate professional nurses who are accountable, reliable and capable of meeting international nursing standards in providing nursing services to the individual, family and community. • Prepare competent nurses who are motivated and proactive, with a broad vision of civic responsibilities and ethical values in carrying out professional duties. • Graduate nurses who are capable of contributing towards the advancement of the profession and healthcare services through lifelong learning. • Empower nurses to create and sustain caring environments utilizing critical thinking, leadership, communication and basic research skills. • Serve the community by working with public and private health sectors to enrich the nursing practice.
Programme Intended Learning Outcomes*	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide comprehensive, culturally sensitive nursing care by integrating knowledge, skills and attitudes, applying evidence-based practice and utilizing critical thinking. 2. Actively address ethical issues related to the protection of clients' rights, and facilitate informed decision making. 3. Assess health education needs at various levels of care, and develop health education packages to promote wellbeing for both clients and identified population groups. 4. Utilize best nursing practices to enhance the safety and quality of care.

	<ol style="list-style-type: none">5. Interact effectively with members of healthcare teams and clients in order to promote health and improve the quality of care through the application of management processes and leadership skills.6. Accept responsibility for personal professional judgments and actions in accordance with the scope and standards of practice and the code of professional conduct.7. Sustain competence by participating in life-long learning, research and professional development.8. Promote the image of the nursing profession in society.
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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	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	Partially 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	Addressed
Indicator 3.2	Academic Integrity	Addressed
Indicator 3.3	Internal and External Moderation of Assessment	Addressed
Indicator 3.4	Work-based Learning	Addressed

Indicator 3.5	Capstone Project or Thesis/Dissertation Component	Not Applicable
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	Partially Addressed
Indicator 4.4	Benchmarking and Surveys	Addressed
Indicator 4.5	Relevance to Labour market and Societal Needs	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: Addressed

- The Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) which is offered by the College of Health and Sport Sciences (CHSS) at University of Bahrain (UoB) was established in 2003 in collaboration with the American University of Beirut and the University of Illinois in Chicago under the administration of the Ministry of Health (MoH) to graduate nurses to serve the needs of the Bahraini society and the growing health care needs. It is worth noting that the Nursing Department at CHSS has been designated as a World Health Organization Collaborating Center (WHOCC) for nursing development.
- The BSN has an academic framework with clear aims, Programme Educational Objectives (PEOs) and Programme Intended Learning Outcomes (PILOs). The Panel notes that the aims of BSN are aligned with departmental mission and graduate attributes are reflected in the Programme Educational Objectives (PEOs). From interviews, the Panel learned that both PEOs and PILOs were established in 2012 after CHSS merged with UoB.
- Different perspectives of possible risks were described in the risk register. The Panel notes that COVID-19 pandemic raised potential risks that affected the student (reducing the risk of students' infection during clinical training) and delivery of the programme (competitiveness in finding certain staff's specialty and ensuring staff's safety not to get infections). Measures and actions to reduce these risks were described during the interviews, such as increased technical support by the UoB for students, and provision of laptops after shifting to online delivery. In the interviews, students reported that during the COVID-19 pandemic, they were connected to their instructors almost around the clock and as and when needed. Necessary assistance from BSN staff was prompt and helpful.

The Panel is satisfied that potential risks have been anticipated by the UoB and BSN; and appropriate actions were taken particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic.

- The BSN programme adheres to the qualification design requirements of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF). The SER clarifies that in 2016, the BSN programme was validated by the Directorate of National Framework Operations of the BQA and placed on the NQF Level 8. It comprises 540 NQF credits (135 credit hours) as per SER.
- The programme title (Bachelor of Science in Nursing) is concise and clearly indicates the type and level of the qualification as well as its content. The title of the programme and its abbreviation are accurately documented on the UoB website, the certificate and all the documents that were provided to the Panel.
- The programme's aims are consistent with the Nursing Department mission, which are based on the UoB's vision and mission. The Panel notes that the aims are reflected in the philosophy of the department and achieved through the courses offered in the study plan. The Panel notes that the philosophy of the department is current and consistent with international programmes.
- The Panel notes that the BSN has a Programme Advisory Committee (PAC), which includes stakeholders from public and private health sectors such as the MoH, Bahrain Defence Force (BDF), King Hamad University Hospital (KHUH) and freelance nurse consultants in Bahrain. The PAC is supervising the programme and its feedback improves the appropriateness and actuality of PEOs and PILOs for the BSN programme. The Panel notes that the aims, PEOs and PILOs are clearly stated, current and consistent with established international standards of nursing science.
- It is stated in the SER, that the PEOs and PILOs are aligned with the Department and College mission and the University Intended Learning Outcomes (UILOs). The Panel notes that protocols are available for this purpose and the results of these processes are documented.

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

- It was noted in the SER that the PILOs and PEOs are considered synonymous to the specific graduate attributes by the BSN examples include critical thinking, problem solving strategies, and decision-making skills in the context of health care. From

interviews, the Panel learned that there are no explicitly stated generic graduate attributes for BSN. Hence, BSN considers UILOs as their generic graduate attributes. The Panel is satisfied that PILOs and PEOs are appropriately described for students in the Nursing and are equivalent to the specific graduate attributes and embedded in the Intended learning Outcomes (ILOs).

- A total of eight PILOs are clearly described in the SER. The Panel notes that the PILOs specify, among other things critical thinking, evidence-based practice and professional nursing competencies that are required to provide comprehensive and culturally sensitive nursing care, as well as taking responsibility for one's own professional actions and lifelong learning skills. In doing so, graduates are also expected to actively address ethical issues related to health care and health education. The Panel was informed that the wording of some of the PEOs and PILOs had already been changed in response to the external consultation in order to make them more concise and measurable. The Panel is satisfied with the actions taken by the programme team.
- Benchmarking with three regional institutions was conducted in 2019-2020 as clarified during interviews. It included programme structure, curriculum, and learning outcomes and results show similarities of BSN and these programmes. The Panel is satisfied that the PILOs are appropriate and commensurate with the type and level of the degree.
- The classification of BSN CILOs is divided into four domains: knowledge and understanding, subject-specific skills, thinking skills, and General & Transferable Skills (other skills relevant to employability & personal development). From interviews, the Panel learned that the CILOs are aligned with the PILOs and checked each semester. Moreover, the CILOs are also aligned with the teaching, learning and assessment strategies and are linked to the topics of the courses and assessment methods. The Panel notes that the CILOs are clearly described and in line with NQF requirements. The mapping of the CILOs to the PILOs is reported using a 10-level numerical listing (a-j).
- The Panel reviewed the CILOs application of Bloom's Taxonomy, this showed increasing level of thinking skills associated with increasing course complexity required in higher level nursing courses. The 100 and 200 level courses have a vast majority of knowledge, comprehension, and application level CILOs. In comparison, the 300 and 400 level courses have more CILOs written at the analysis, synthesis, and evaluation level. The Panel noted that Community Health course (NUR 415) has none; and the Integrative Practicum (NUR425) has one out of a possible four CILOs written at a higher order level. Consequently, the Panel suggests a review of CILOs in the 300 and 400 level courses for use of Bloom's Taxonomy and level of thinking skills expected of students, to ensure increasing complexity of learning.

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 BSN is described as a competency-based four-year programme, which is placed on the NQF Level 8. The sequence and structure of the courses, which are specified in the study plan/curriculum framework, are appropriate. The curriculum shows that course levels and teaching and assessment methods progress in a meaningful manner from one level to the next. The student workload is appropriate with 135 credit hours combining theory and practice. Of these 135 credits, general education accounts for 17 credits, supporting subjects for 39 credits, and nursing courses for 70 credits. Additional courses are added for college requirements. These courses are distributed over eight full semesters and one summer session. The Panel notes that the student's workload is appropriate and prepares students for future employment.
- Review of the curriculum takes place regularly, primarily involving members of the Curriculum Committee (CC), and also a review conducted by external reviewers from a regional university; and as a result, a reformulation of the PEOs and PILOs was made. Furthermore, benchmark with regional institutions took place. In addition, members of the faculty, PAC, Student Advisory Committee (SAC) and graduates survey provide valuable input to the curriculum development. The involvement of these entities was confirmed during virtual interviews. The Panel notes that the review and the further development of the curriculum are appropriate.
- All courses contain both clinical and theoretical components, with one hour of lecture classified as the equivalent of three contact hours. Moreover, some theoretical courses include laboratory components as evident from the study plan. The Panel notes that the programme contains 99 actual clinical training hours, which was considered sufficient by all participants during the virtual visit interviews, both faculty and preceptors. It was especially emphasized that the contact between students and lectures during the clinical assignments takes place on a daily basis. The Panel appreciates the balance between theory and practice, and between knowledge and skills in the BSN study plan.
- The content and the amount of time required for each course is described in the course specification forms. Course descriptions include details on course topics, resources used, formulated CILOs and their assignment to each PILO, references, and assessment information. Basic courses (e.g., in Anatomy and Physiology I, Sociology, and Introduction to the Nursing Profession) are offered in the first semester. More advanced courses follow in the second semester, such as Anatomy and Physiology II, Growth and

Development Across the Lifespan, Health Promotion, and Computer Literacy. This continues throughout the programme until specialized courses in infant, child, and adolescent nursing or nursing research and professional issues are added to the curriculum in the senior semesters. These are fundamental to the programme and provide the depth and breadth in the offered courses. This in turn, prepares students for the nursing profession. The Panel is satisfied that the depth and breadth of programme content are appropriate to the level of the course.

- The textbooks are listed in the course descriptions. It is noticeable that some of the books listed there are 10 years old or older. The most recent work in the course descriptions (Semester I 2019-2020) is from 2016. In some cases, the publication year or edition information is missing, and, in some cases, both are missing. References to current journal articles are not described/available. It is worth noting that the Panel was provided with a list of published research by BSN staff from 2019-2021; however, it was unclear how research is embedded in their teaching. Therefore, the Panel encourages BSN staff to ensure that results of their research are incorporated in the courses. Consequently, the Panel recommends that CHSS should ensure that the syllabus/curriculum reflects the updated versions of textbooks; and ensure that current research findings and journal articles are utilized by BSN faculty in the courses.

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

- A teaching and learning Policy is in place; and is available on the College's homepage. From virtual interviews, the Panel was informed that the Nursing Department is in the process of getting a simulation laboratory that will promote specific teaching methods for preparing students for clinical training and will allow for the evolution of teaching.
- Different teaching-learning methods are described in the course descriptions; the teaching methods range from lectures, discussions, problem-based learning, case-based learning to debates. Teaching and learning methods are described in a differentiated manner in all. The teaching methods used are adapted to the course content, e.g., the "Introduction to Nursing" course includes teaching methods such as lectures, discussions, and classroom activities at the beginning of the study. As the programme progresses, the methods become more challenging for students, e.g., in the 'Counseling' course, methods cover lectures, group discussions, online assignments, audiovisuals, class activities, and role-playing. Clinical components of learning methods include demonstrations of clinical procedures, clinical practice assignments in nursing laboratories and clinical facilities,

reflective practice assignments, and reflective debriefings and field trips. The Panel notes from the provided evidence that 80.2% of exit students confirmed that teaching methods and approaches vary; and they are consistent with the CHSS philosophy. The Panel appreciates that the teaching methods used by staff are appropriate to the study content, meet current international teaching requirements, and enable the students to achieve the intended learning outcomes.

- UoB's Teaching and Learning Policy supports e-learning and due to the COVID 19 pandemic, more online and virtual learning has been offered at UoB. The design of the practical components in a virtual learning environment has been a challenge. Objective Structured Clinical Evaluation (OSCE) and online case studies were used, as well as working with video tutorials. During the COVID-19 pandemic, e-learning resources were greatly expanded and the needs of students have been taken into account. Virtual teaching systems have been utilized such as the use of Blackboard as a Learning Management System (LMS). In the virtual interviews, it became clear that students received comprehensive support and that virtual contact (e.g., *via* e-mail, video conferencing, or telephone or Blackboard) with instructors and lecturers was possible to a high degree. In addition to the technical requirements, UoB also offered personal support in using technology. The Panel notes that e-learning is now a fundamental part of teaching and is expected to be utilized as a support for face-to-face interaction even after the COVID-19 pandemic.
- From interviews, the Panel noted that BSN experienced academic staff created a positive and supportive learning atmosphere. Case-Based Learning is practiced in the programme. This methodological orientation contributes to the active participation of the students. This was confirmed during the interviews with students and alumni. Students are encouraged to actively participate in lectures and seminars, and the Panel notes that student participation in the programme has been actively encouraged and enhanced by the 99 actual clinical training hours which build their independence. The Panel learned that students also volunteered during the pandemic to support the healthcare sector. Consequently, the Panel appreciates the involvement of the nursing students as volunteers during Covid 19 which contributes to enhance independent and lifelong learning; in addition to achieving PEOs and learning outcomes.
- The Panel notes that lifelong learning is one of the PEOs of the programme. Students and alumni reported during the virtual interviews that they are encouraged to attend conferences and workshops. Students are also encouraged to engage in lifelong learning informally by conducting actual clinical training and being supervised by Clinical Nurse Preceptors.

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

- The assessment of student outcome is regulated at different levels; at the university level through Regulations of Study and Examination; and at the curriculum level, assessments are performance-based, formative, and summative. At the course level, topic and course-specific specifications are formulated for assessment. The schedule of assessments is set as per university regulations and communicated to students at the beginning of the semester. In interviews, it became clear that the aim of the policies and regulations related to assessments are in line with the regulations and requirements of the UoB and HEC.
- The assessment policies and regulations are known and accessible to external stakeholders (e.g., employers and preceptors) on the college's website. It was also clear from the virtual interviews that the regulations are known to the staff and also to the students, from which it can be concluded that the implementation is in place. has taken place.
- Formative and summative assessment is conducted systematically, and criteria are formulated: Clinical Competencies, Self - Direction, Communication/interpersonal skills, Clinical Reasoning, Application of Nursing Process, Safety, Asepsis, Medications, Clinical Procedures, Documentation and Health Education. Documents that structure systematic assessment for students have been examined by the Panel. Students receive timely feedback on their performance and their progress, this was confirmed by students and alumni in the interviews. The Senior Exit Survey 2019-2020 which was distributed for exit students revealed that 68.8% get prompt feedback after completing the assignments and the grades are posted in timely manner. The Panel is satisfied that the formative and summative assessment, and criteria for feedback are in place and that feedback is generally timely.
- The CHSS has a systematic moderation policy. This is to ensure proper and fair assessment of student performance. Different assessment procedures are applied in the Moderation of the Assessment Regulation. During the pandemic, internal moderation was modified and conducted for mid-term and final examinations and high weight assignments as clarified during interviews. External moderation was put on hold (discussed in more details in Standard Three). During the pandemic, UoB adapted two forms of assessments options: the first is pass/fail grade and this won't affect students' Grade Point Average (GPA); the second option is to opt for the final examination and later the result will be calculated within the GPA. Recently, a mid-clinical evaluation has been introduced to assess clinical performance at an earlier stage, which allow students and lecturers to reflect on their current status on clinical practice. In discussions with students, alumni, and

faculty moderators, it was noted that student performance is evaluated fairly and rigorously.

- UoB has a policy for dealing with plagiarism and academic misconduct that applies to the entire university, including the Nursing Department. These regulations are publicly available on the university's website. The purpose of this policy is to clearly state the university's position on academic dishonesty, including plagiarism, and to set forth the rules for dealing with academic dishonesty. The policy on plagiarism outlines responsibilities for necessary actions. Likewise, it describes responsibilities for prevention. For example, students are informed at enrollment and at the beginning of their studies about how to avoid academic misconduct, and this information is communicated repeatedly during their studies. The university's Student Misconduct Committee is involved in preparing and conducting workshops for students on academic misconduct. During interviews, the students, alumni and faculty members confirmed that they were aware of these rules. An example of academic misconduct (plagiarism) was documented. The Panel notes that regulations to avoid academic misconduct are in place and known to all programme's stakeholders. The Panel also notes that there are provisions in place for addressing student grades appeals.

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: Partially Addressed

- The admission requirements are published in the CHSS booklet and on the UoB website. The BSN programme ensures equal opportunity for admission for students of both genders. However, the Panel notes that students applying to and enrolling in the BSN programme are characterized by a higher number of female students compared to male students. The Panel also notes discrepancies between the admission information published on the UoB Admissions and Nursing Department webpages with the admission information stated in the SER. For example, the SER states the requirement of a secondary school certificate or equivalent with a minimum grade of 70% whereas the Nursing Department website states a minimum cumulative GPA of 80%. In the virtual interviews, the Panel was informed that the minimum grade for admission is 85% provided that the applicant passes an aptitude test, and is medically fit. Moreover, the potential candidate ought to pass an admission interview. The Panel was also informed that all UoB programmes must follow UoB criteria with respect to admission requirements; with the exception that some departments can require a higher minimum secondary school cumulative GPA. However, the admission interviews and aptitude tests were waived at the beginning of 2020-2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Panel recommends that the College should revise published admission requirements for clarity, consistency, and accuracy.
- The admission requirements are appropriate for the BSN programme level and consistent with local and international academic standards for a baccalaureate in nursing degree. Admission is based on several criteria including secondary school completion or equivalent with a minimum grade; aptitude tests; and admission interviews; English language competency; medical fitness; and moral conduct. English language competency is assessed in various ways. Students are considered competent in the English language if they achieve a 90% or better grade on high school English courses; Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) score of 500; or International English Language Test System

(IELTS) score of 5.5. From virtual interviews, the Panel learned that 100 applicants were admitted to the Nursing Department in September 2021.

- Some students admitted to the programme are enrolled in a special foundation programme based on a set of criteria. Students who score less than 90% in high school and do not pass the English aptitude test enroll into a foundation programme before entering the BSN programme. The foundation programme consists of three core courses: English Language, Mathematics, and Communication Technology. Additionally, all nursing students complete the Introduction to the Nursing Profession course (NUR118) in the programme's first semester of the first year; as it introduces students to fundamental nursing concepts and prepares them to learn more complex nursing concepts as they progress in their study. Students in interviews with the Panel confirmed that they felt well-prepared to enter the programme. The Panel is satisfied with the set of foundation courses offered to the BSN students.
- The SER indicates that the Admission Policy has provisions for applicants transferring from other universities or transferring from another programme at UoB to the BSN programme. Students transferring from another UoB programme must complete at least nine credit hours and no more than 66 credits hours in order to transfer into the BSN programme. Transfer students may be exempted from BSN programme courses if they took courses with similar codes and content. Students transferring from another university must also meet certain conditions. Those conditions include that the university from which the student is transferring is approved by the HEC in Bahrain; the student has completed at least 30 credit hours or the equivalent with at least a cumulative average GPA of 2.33 out of 4 or C+; has not dropped out from the transferring university for more than 16 weeks; and the academic department must approve the transfer request.
- The SER did not address the regular revision of the admission policy in response to student performance, stakeholder feedback, and benchmarks. In interviews with the Panel, the CHSS Quality Assurance Head clarified that the secondary school cumulative GPA requirement was increased to 85% and implemented with fall 2021 admissions. The rationale for the change was of two folds: (1) As the programme has limited enrollment opportunities compared to the number of student applications, the programme focused on enrolling highly qualified students, and (2) Grade inflation in some courses became a concern.
- Beyond this recent revision in admission criteria, the Panel was not able to verify whether the periodic and systematic review of admission criteria occurred in response to student performance and/or stakeholder's feedback. For example, during virtual interviews, the Programme Advisory Board clarified that they were not aware of the change in cumulative GPA admission criteria. The Panel recommends that the College should

regularly review the admission criteria in light of student performance, stakeholder feedback, and national and international benchmarks and revise accordingly.

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

- The Nursing Department follows UoB's academic and administrative bylaws, regulations, and policies in the recruitment, appraisal, promotion, and professional development of academic staff. The SER presents the multilevel process for faculty recruitment beginning with the Nursing Department and proceeding through a CHSS committee, College Council, CHSS Dean, University Council, and the Department of Human Resources. New part-time and full-time faculty attend induction workshops at the university, college, and department levels. Faculty performance appraisal occurs according to the Civil Service Bureau system and utilizes detailed rubrics with clear appraisal criteria. Samples of completed Faculty Appraisal forms were provided to the Panel. Additionally, nursing faculty may seek promotion according to UoB policies and procedures. One faculty member was promoted to an Assistant Professor in 2019. Two other faculty members are in the process of being promoted to Associate Professor and Senior Lecturer. Faculty in interviews verified the procedures as stated in the SER, and that the policies and procedures are consistently applied.
- The Nursing Department applies UoB's Scientific Research Regulations to promote research among its faculties as well as to ensure its alignment with the CHSS and UoB research plans. Rules for faculty participation in conferences, seminars, and scientific, regional and international activities are available in the Faculty Academic Guide. The SER indicates that nursing faculty participate in research and scholarly efforts through publication, participate as expert consultants in nursing education at national and international levels, membership in professional societies, and present papers at conferences. A list of published research by BSN staff for 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 was provided to the Panel. Faculty in virtual interviews verified their participation in research and scholarly activities as noted in the SER and list of published research. The Panel is satisfied with the UoB research regulations and the Nursing Department's alignment with the regulations in support of scientific research conducted by nursing faculty.
- The number of academic staff in the BSN programme is 22: six Assistant Professors, four Senior Lecturers, nine Lecturers, two Research and Teaching Assistants, and one Instructor. The SER indicates that the current number of academic staff is adequate. The

overall student-to-faculty ratio is 1:26 including faculty from other departments who teach Science and English courses included in the BSN orientation programme. The Nursing Department follows UoB's faculty bylaws that stipulate the number of working hours and credits taught by nursing faculty members according to the bylaws: PhD-holders are allocated (40 hours per week which equal 12-15 credits) and non-PhD-holders are allocated (40 hours per week which equal 15-18 credits). In interviews, faculty verified they have enough time to engage in scholarly and community activities. Similarly, students in interviews confirmed that the BSN programme has enough faculty. Students described the nursing faculty as accessible and responsive. Panel's review of the Faculty Teaching Load 2020-2021 document verified that faculty workload is appropriate and equitably allocated. The SER provides information related to the nursing programme's consideration of women staff's needs in following the rules and regulations of the Civil Service Bureau by providing paid maternity leave and two hours a day for breastfeeding.

- Faculty information table and faculty CVs demonstrated that the BSN programme has a diversity of academic staff in their qualifications, nursing specialties, and professional experience. Of the nursing faculty, six hold doctoral degrees, 15 have a master's degree, and one has a BSN. Furthermore, a variety of nursing specialties are available such as medical-surgical nursing, pediatrics, obstetrics and gynecology, women's health, midwifery, critical care nursing, adult acute care, psychiatry/mental health, community health, emergency nursing, and advanced practice nursing. Faculty's teaching experience ranges from 5 to 44 years. In reviewing the faculty information table, it was noted that six of the 22 faculty or 27% are 55 years of age or older. In interviews with the Nursing team, it was clarified that the programme is currently experiencing a shortage of faculty in certain nursing specialties but not in the number of faculty. It was further explained that the programme intends to recruit new faculty with more diverse nursing practice specialties. The Panel recommends that the College should establish/prepare a workforce plan in order to substitute for the number of faculty expected to retire in the next five years and to maintain the numbers of sufficient, qualified faculty needed for different nursing specializations.
- UoB and CHSS have adequate arrangements for identifying, supporting, monitoring, and evaluating the continuing development needs of academic staff. There is sufficient evidence to show that CHSS and the Nursing Department support faculty development and that faculty are participating in development offerings. For example, faculty are actively engaged in Unit of Teaching Excellence and Leadership (UTEL) activities as well as the Postgraduate Certificate for Academic Practice (PCAP) programme. The SER also indicates that faculty are encouraged to continue their formal education to achieve higher degrees. Two nursing faculty are currently pursuing doctoral degrees and one is enrolled in a master's degree in a nursing programme. Faculty in interviews verified that the University, College, and Nursing Department support their professional development needs as indicated in the SER.

- As stated in the SER and confirmed in interviews with the Nursing management team and faculty, practices are in place to ensure staff retention. The Nursing Department works to retain highly qualified academic staff by providing opportunities for academic promotion and incentives as well as supporting professional development needs. For example, nursing academic staff participate in a survey that is intended to identify their specific needs for professional development. In addition, both full- and part-time faculty participate in three induction programmes in order to support their transition to faculty roles and responsibilities at UoB and within the Nursing Department. Two induction programmes are university-wide, and one is nursing programme-specific. In the virtual interviews, it was clarified that in the past few years, faculty turnover has been due to retirements only. The Panel is satisfied with the measures that are in place to ensure retention of 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

- UoB maintains seven classrooms and three nursing skills laboratories for the BSN programme. Each classroom includes a computer, a projector, and a whiteboard. Some classrooms also include a smartboard. From the provided video tour of facilities, the Panel found classrooms to be well-lighted and large enough for social distancing of students in chair-desks, and skills laboratories are adequately equipped. Additionally, BSN programme courses may utilize classrooms as well as a computer laboratory in the Integrated Sciences Department, and an auditorium in the main building. On the 2019-2020 Senior Exit Survey, 68.5% of students who responded rated classroom facilities as adequate for instruction and 71.5% rated laboratory facilities as adequate. The Panel confirmed the sufficiency and appropriateness of classes and skills laboratories in interviews with faculty and students. Faculty verified that manikins and equipment used in skills laboratory teaching is not up-to-date compared to international standards. Consequently, in June 2020 the programme submitted a request to the Ministry of Finance for approval of a state-of-the art nursing simulation laboratory, which was approved. According to the Nursing Department, it is in progress; and the target date for its utilization is September 2022. Faculty in interviews with the Panel verified that the three nursing skills laboratories are open from 8:00 am to 8:00 pm five days a week. Faculty and students in interviews confirmed that the nursing skills laboratories are open for skills practice with times assigned to each student.

- The SER indicates that UoB supports and utilizes information technology to meet students' needs including the Student Information System (SIS) and Blackboard, as LMS. From interviews, the Panel was informed that UoB provides students with an email account for official communication. Students are also provided with Information Technology (IT) support online and through the IT Centre, which also provides Wi-Fi services for students and staff. Additional instructional technologies were utilized by the programme during the COVID-19 pandemic when instruction and assessments were offered online through Blackboard and Microsoft Teams. The E-learning Centre and Digital Transformation Committee at UoB provided online workshops and educational resources to facilitate faculty's use of online instructional modalities. The SER indicates that ongoing technical support was provided to students with the transition to online teaching and assessments. Additionally, UoB provided laptops to students who were not able to afford them. Students in interviews verified that they received adequate support for the transition to online learning with the COVID-19 pandemic. The 2019-2020 Senior Exit Survey revealed that 75% of students agreed that they received prompt and sufficient support when needed from the IT Centre and IT support staff. Additionally, 72.4% responded that needed computer software was available while 70.9% responded that internet access was always available and functioning within the university network.
- The Ahmed Al Farsi Library located on the UoB Salmaniya campus provides physical and electronic resources to faculty and students. UoB faculty and students have access to 9,795 journals available in databases, 562 eBooks, 1,170 print books, 47,314 dissertations and theses available in a database, and 28 bound nursing journals. Library databases include those providing access to full-text articles in nursing and medical journals such as ProQuest Health and Medicine Complete, Science Direct, and PubMed Central. The library includes computers and six study rooms for student use. In the 2019-2020 Senior Exit Survey, 80.9% of students who responded agreed that library references including print and electronic format were available. Furthermore, 75.9% of students who responded rated the library facilities as adequate to support their learning activities with 81.4% agreeing the library staff were knowledgeable and helpful. Faculty and students in interviews verified the adequacy of library resources in meeting their needs.
- The CHSS provides regular maintenance of facilities and equipment in accordance with the Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) programme at UoB. Requests for maintenance outside of regular maintenance are coordinated with the University's Maintenance Department. The CHSS Dean and Head of the Occupational Health and Safety Committee monitor the application of OHS standards to facility and equipment maintenance. Adequacy of resources such as the library, nursing skills laboratories, classrooms, and IT support are evaluated with the Senior Exit Survey. The Nursing Department utilizes a skills laboratory coordinator to maintain the nursing skills laboratories.

- The SER indicates that UoB caters for the health and safety of students and staff on campus through a variety of measures: campus security department, multiple exits from buildings, adequate number of fire extinguishers, access to first aid kits, and emergency evacuation procedures. Moreover, UoB provides training for staff and students regarding health and safety issues such as conducting emergency evacuation drills. It is worth noting that UoB publishes a general Laboratory Safety Booklet for Students. The Nursing Department also provides a Laboratory Safety Booklet for Students covering safety measures specific to nursing skills laboratories. A Health Center staffed by four qualified nurses and two qualified physicians provide acute, chronic, and preventive health care services for students and employees. The Health Center also provides COVID-19 testing and temperature checks as well as participates in the national COVID-19 vaccination campaign. The Panel appreciates the arrangements that UoB puts in place to protect the health and safety of its staff and students at all times.

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

- The SER indicates that UoB utilizes the SIS to manage and monitor academic programmes and students. The SIS is used comprehensively across all programmes at UoB including the BSN programme. The SIS supports various functions and reporting to help administrators and faculty in their activities and decisions. For example, the SIS provides a platform for student evaluation of courses, academic advising, course attendance, and monitoring and approval of grades among others.
- The SER does not provide information on how data is used to inform decision-making regarding utilization of laboratories, e-learning, and e-resources. In interviews with the Panel, UoB laboratory staff clarified that data related to laboratory utilization is used to inform decision-making about numbers of sections needed for a laboratory course and scheduling. Additionally, evidence of the use of generated data from the LMS in decision-making was provided to the Panel. For example, detailed examination performance reports were retrieved from the LMS by faculty as well as an open online discussion held with students during the last academic year. As a result, guidelines and recommendations were made regarding allocated time for types of examination questions.
- The SER does not provide information on policies and procedures intended to ensure the security of student records other than noting that faculty and student access to the SIS is password-protected. A description of policies and procedures for ensuring the security of

student records was provided to the Panel. The Panel's review of the Information Technology Center Cyber Policies and Procedures available on the UoB website verifies that security of student records is ensured by specific procedures in the Access Control and Physical Security Policy and Password Security Policy. Additionally, prior to final grades being entered into the SIS, the BSN Department Head verifies them with the course coordinator for accuracy. During interviews, IT staff clarified that layers of security are provided for student records such as PC security ports, firewalls, and other technologies. Centralized IT staff complete daily, weekly, and monthly online and offline backup of student records and other UoB electronic records.

- The SER indicates that the Deanship of Admissions and Registrations issues students' final transcripts *via* SIS. However, the SER does not indicate if certificates and transcripts are issued in a timely manner or what approval and verification steps are undertaken at UoB. Interviews with Admission and Registration staff verified the certificate/transcript approval and verification steps utilized at UoB, they also clarified that certificates and transcripts are generally issued within one month of student completion of a programme; this was also confirmed by alumni as well.

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

- The Deanship of Students Affairs provides services that meet student needs and contribute to their success at UoB. The Panel's review of the Student Services webpage indicates the provision of fees exemption, part-time employment information, transportation services, disabled student services, health center, counselling support, general student guide, student guide for online learning, and career guidance. The Panel also noted that UoB supports its students achievement and their personal and academic goals by providing certain services such as success steps, examination preparation, research skills, counseling awareness, leadership preparation, peer learning, library induction, workshops, donation campaign and specialized IT courses. In the 2019-2020 Senior Exit Survey, results for BSN graduating students indicated an overall satisfaction with facilities and learning resources at 72.5%. The Panel considers the library, nursing skills laboratory, e-learning resources, guidance and care services provided to BSN students as appropriate
- The SER did not address the provision of career guidance services and support to help students prepare for their careers. The Panel learned from interviews that the UoB Career

Counseling Office helps students achieve their career goals and equips them with the necessary skills to enter the labor force. Furthermore, the Career Counseling Office provides resume advice and workshops. In the 2019-2020 Senior Exit Survey, 61.4% of graduating BSN students responded that they benefited from the Career Counseling Office in preparing them to enter the workforce. As well, the final course in the BSN programme—Nursing Integrative Practicum (NUR425) is a capstone clinical experience that prepares students for transition into professional nursing practice. From interviews, it was confirmed that the BSN faculty also provides nursing students with career counseling and advice as part of their academic advising role.

- Newly admitted students participate in a university-wide Induction Day provided by the Guidance and Counselling Department in the Deanship of Students Affairs. In addition, BSN students participate in an induction day conducted by CHSS. The Head of the Department (HoD) and faculty clarified in interviews that the CHSS induction day includes various topics including CHSS rules and regulations; course and clinical objectives; nursing curriculum; student expectations; and others. The Panel confirmed during interviews with students and alumni that induction services for newly admitted students are in place, appropriate, and helpful. Students and alumni were confident that they were well-prepared for success in the nursing programme.
- Academic Advising Regulations establish guidelines for academic advising at UoB. The UoB Student Guide 2020-2021 explains to students that they will be assigned an advisor upon matriculation, and that the main responsibility of the academic advisor is to offer personalized support to advisees. Students attend advising meetings with their assigned faculty members for discussion of a study plan, grades, and progress. Advising notes and comments are entered into the SIS for each advisor-student meeting. This information was confirmed in interviews with faculty and students. The 2019-2020 Senior Exit Survey showed the following results: (1) 49.5% of students responded that they had attempted to visit their advisor at least once per semester; (2) 68.9% responded that their advisor seemed interested in helping them; (3) 63.5% responded that their advisor promptly replied to their requests for a meeting; (4) 69.5% indicated that their advisor was knowledgeable about the curriculum plan; and (5) 59.5% replied that in general, advisors were excellent. The overall advising satisfaction was 65.2% indicating moderate satisfaction. Consequently, the Panel recommends that the College should examine reasons behind students' moderate satisfaction with their advising experience. Furthermore, the Panel suggests that the College explore the reasons why less than 50% of BSN students are visiting their advisors each semester, and implement improvements as needed. In addition, the Panel also suggests that College create another mechanism to evaluate the effectiveness of academic advising such as a student focus group.
- Staff interviewed verified that UoB policies promote equality between students in admission to the programme regardless of gender. The Student Services Office provides

comprehensive services to students with special needs including specialized transportation and peer assistance. Within the Nursing Department, students with academic, physical, or psychological special needs are followed up by their advisors in developing and implementing a study plan tailored to their needs for academic progression. Advisors also coordinate with the Guidance and Counselling Office as needed. Human Resources staff in interviews with the Panel stated that while 67% of academic staff at UoB are women, 90% of nursing academic staff are women. Furthermore, and as noted previously, most students admitted to the nursing programme are women. During interviews, the Panel was informed about the establishment of the Equal Opportunities Committee at UoB to ensure that both students and faculty receive equal opportunities as per the guidance of the Supreme Council for Women.

- Within the BSN programme, advisors and faculty identify the students at risk of academic failure. Advisors in collaboration with faculty guide and counsel students identified at risk of academic failure on how to improve their grades. Advising notes and comments are entered into the SIS for each advisor-student meeting. The SAC supports students at-risk by providing examination preparation workshops. The SAC also offers peer support and encourages students to meet their academic advisors regularly to discuss their academic progress. Faculty in interviews with the Panel verified the type of support provided for at-risk students as written in the SER.
- The Senior Exit Survey is used to evaluate student experiences with some support services: advising, information technology, library, facilities, registration, and career counseling. The CHSS SAC also plays a role in assessing student needs and taking steps to improve support services in line with student needs. For example, the CHSS shared in interviews with the Panel two examples of actions taken as a result of feedback from the SAC. The first was SAC input that not enough time was being allotted for online examinations. As a consequence, nursing faculty increased the allowed time. The second was separating didactic courses from clinical courses.

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: Addressed

- Assessments are used in all courses in both the class and clinical learning environment. The Panel verified during interviews that policies and procedures are in place, consistently, and regularly applied to assessments.
- Course assessments (e.g. midterm, final, student project, group project, interview, case based learning, role play, student presentation, nursing care plans) are clearly stated in the specification forms (syllabi) and the allotted value of each assessment towards the final grade is clearly stated. Final assessments are valued at 40% in compliance with university policy. The Panel reviewed a variety of assessments tasks and noted the ability for students to develop critical thinking skills, knowledge, attitudes, collegiality, leadership, and professionalism. The assessments build in level of complexity directed by the CILOs. During interviews, the faculty clarified that first-year students are assigned to develop a nursing process care plan. By the second year, the assignment increases in complexity with the student implementing the plan of care for the patient in the clinical setting.
- Clinical assessments are guided by the clinical objectives and clinical policy. These assessments include clinical evaluations, reflective practice assignments, clinical case studies, OSCEs. The Panel noted that the clinical policy addresses student behaviors and expectations before, during and at the end of clinical, safety, accuracy of documentation, rights of clients, integrity, successful communication, and the Bahrain National Code of Professional Conduct for Nursing. The clinical policy aims to prepare students for clinical success but does not specifically address clinical assessments. Clinical objectives align students' clinical experience with clinical assessments. During interviews faculty verified students receive clinical objectives during the first class, at clinical orientation, and are also posted on Blackboard and LMS.

- The Panel verified the alignment of assessments with the CILOs and PILOs and the increasing level of assignment complexity across the BSN curriculum. All course specifications documented the alignment of assignments to CILOs which are then mapped to PILOs. The Quality Assurance and Accreditation Centre (QAAC) and HoD annually check students' CILO achievement in relation to PILOs for all nursing courses on offer. In general, the Panel is satisfied with the depth and breadth of assessments used in class and clinical settings. The Panel finds these methods to be valid, reliable, and consistent with accepted educational practices.
- Alignment of assessments with learning outcomes and graduate attributes begins with the faculty at the Curriculum Committee level. Interviews with faculty as well as meeting minutes verified faculty review and the mapping of CILOs to assessments and teaching methods to ensure achievement of intended learning outcomes. Two or three faculty are assigned to review a course, using a pre-established review tool. Once done feedback is provided to the Course Coordinator. The alignment review process continues at the college and university levels. All nursing courses are on a two-year rolling plan for internal moderation. This process includes analysis of course assessments to learning outcomes and graduate outcomes as per course rolling plan.
- Graduate achievement of intended learning outcomes is ensured by student evaluation which consists of direct formative and summative assessment methods. Mapping of CILOs to PILOs is a major method for measuring the achievement of PILOs. The mapping of CILOs to PILOs composed by the QAAC for the academic year 2018-2019 was reviewed by the Panel. Faculty verified during interviews that a College wide benchmark is set at 70% achievement. Achievement ranged on average per PILO from 95-98.4%. The Panel notes that the SER 2019-2020 documents achievement of all CILOs and PILOs.
- Indirect measures of graduates' achievement of PILOs consist of the Nursing Alumni Learning Experience Survey, the Undergraduate Nursing Students Satisfaction Survey and the Employer Survey. The Nursing Alumni Learning Experience Survey, delivered every two years, has no questions directed toward specific PILOs, however it does address concepts from the PILOs such as critical thinking, professionalism, ethical responsibilities, analysis and interpretation of information. Most of these concepts ranked as 'agree' and 'highly agree'. Review of the Undergraduate Nursing Students Satisfaction Surveys, from 2017-2018, 2019-2020, and semester one 2020, reveals student achievement of PILOs. During interview, the Panel was informed that the survey questions are university wide, and are not specific to the programme. Therefore, the explicit BSN PILOs are incorporated conceptually in the survey questions. Overall, students report high satisfaction with most aspects of the programme except for extracurricular activities. The Employer Survey delivered 1st of November 2019 through 7th of January 2020 documents employer overall satisfaction with the achievement of most of the PILOs. Concepts of ethics, safety and quality, accepting responsibility, professional judgments, standards of practice, code of

professional conduct, and being an effective team member all scored above 70%. The Panel is satisfied with the mechanisms employed to ensure graduate achievement of PILOs.

- The HoD monitors the implementation and improvement of the assessment process through the development of an annual self-evaluation report known as BSN programme's annual SER. Review of previous annual SER reports verified that the Annual Report involves a sweeping review of the curriculum including programme context and management, programme evaluation, course evaluation, PILOs achievement, faculty and staff, and learning resources. It was verified during interviews that action plans are developed and implemented based on the analysis of the annual SER report. The Curriculum Committee minutes reviewed and the SERs provided served as rich evidence. For example, developing a state of the art skill laboratory was a recommendation from the Department Council, which is now in the tendering stage of development.

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

- UoB has stringent policies and procedures to cultivate academic integrity across faculty and students. The Panel reviewed the provided supporting materials and observed the existence of policies addressing absenteeism, cheating, dismissal, and student appeals exist. Students verified during interviews that they participate in a two-day Induction, one day at the University level, the second day at the College level. Information related to key academic policies, academic integrity, ethics, plagiarism is received either through print-based material, or more recently due to the pandemic, posted online in the LMS. Moreover, new recruited faculty verified also during interviews that they participate in an Induction Day which includes content on academic integrity, ethics and research policies and procedures.
- Students and Faculty also described for the Panel the support services of Safe Assign and Turnitin to provide formative assistance with their writing. As well as the orientation at the start of a class provided by faculty to the student setting clear expectations of what is acceptable level of match when using the authenticity detection services. Faculty participate annually in a one daylong workshop to introduce them to the techniques of preventing student plagiarism. This provides faculty with the skills and knowledge to assist students in their pursuit of research and writing.

- The UoB's anti-plagiarism policy is supported by using SafeAssign, a plagiarism detection tool is available on Blackboard e-learning platform. SafeAssign is used as a tool to provide students with feedback regarding the percentage of plagiarism of their work. The Panel verified during interviews with faculty and students this was in use, consistently in every course, with an acceptable range of 20-25%, depending upon the nature of the assessment (e.g. prone to many common phrases), and the course (e.g. is the assessment new, or has been used repeatedly). The Panel notes that both faculty and students are extremely clear around expectations in this area.
- Academic misconduct during examinations is managed through strict invigilation of students when testing face-to-face. The Panel verified during interviews that students are monitored by the faculty in the class. Any instance of copying or cheating will be submitted to the Dean and the Academic Misconduct Committee. The Dean will provide official written communication regarding the outcome and if necessary, penalty. When testing occurs virtually the University E-learning Centre recommends using the Lockdown Browser, an electronic platform, to assure test security.
- The Academic Misconduct Committee follows a linear process for all investigations of misconduct or plagiarism. Conducted interviews verified the system of 1st warning, 2nd warning, and then dismissal. The committee report includes recommendations for sanction to the Dean for final decision. There have been three reported cases of student academic misconduct in the past year. All have been investigated and unfounded. The Panel reviewed samples of students' academic misconduct (plagiarism) and actions taken. The Panel found this document to be a thorough record of the student misconduct investigation, including actions taken, and followed the process as outlined.

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: Addressed

- Internal moderation is conducted on a course rolling plan and guided by the Quality Assurance and Enhancement Policy; Teaching and Learning Policy; Regulations of Study and Examination; and the Quality Manual. Moderators are faculty with expertise in the course content and are appointed by the Quality Assurance Committee (QAC). The moderation is a well-defined systematized process as per the provided evidence. The Panel, during virtual interviews verified the process of internal pre and post moderation which is based on the course rolling review plan established by the HoD. Course Coordinators prepare material for pre-moderation, and faculty with content expertise are assigned to review the courses. Amended changes by the moderators are followed up by

the QAC and incorporated into the courses by the assigned staff. In addition, the HoD provides a summary report on the pre and post moderation in the programme's annual SER.

- The process of internal moderation contributes directly to the review and improvement of both course and programme. In the pre-moderation process, the moderator follows specific, consistent comprehensive criteria to review assessments to ensure, clarity, appropriateness, fairness, accuracy, and alignment with CILOs and specified topics. During virtual interviews, the Panel verified that internal course moderation has yielded opportunity for course improvement (e.g. if CILO achievement falls below 70% the pre-moderation process would examine contributing factors to this drop in performance). The pre-moderation process also allows for an annual review of the CILOs, which are mapped to PILOs.
- From interviews, the Panel learned that the QAC receives all moderation forms, analyze the semester's moderation activities and devises an improvement plan if warranted. This plan is submitted to the HoD and the QAC. The QAC improvement recommendations are documented in the SER. The Moderation of Assessment Audit Report includes all the recommendations made through pre and post moderation reviews; and QAC ensures the implementation in all the courses.
- The procedure for external moderation and the criteria for selecting the external moderators are described in the Assessment Moderation Policy. The Panel verified during virtual interviews that the external moderators may be former faculty, a content expert, or faculty from another university. The Moderation Committee prepares a list of courses for external moderation at the beginning of 2nd semester. Recent external moderators included academic nursing experts from a regional University with a regional and international experience.
- Similar to the internal moderation, the external moderation process includes a detailed review of the course portfolio (syllabus, assessments, assessment criteria, grading distribution, sample work, study plan and faculty feedback). Narrative in the external moderation forms indicated review of the assessments toward linkage to CILOs and PILOs as well as programmatic comments such as grade inflation, and appropriateness of course content. Additional comments include evidence of review of examination questions, leveling of content, and breadth of content. The Panel found that the moderation process was deliberate and well structured. However, in reviewing the internal pre-moderation and post-moderation forms, moderator comments were brief and considerably confined to a checklist review. The Panel suggests including examples of both strengths and opportunities for each criterion, as this could make the review more valuable for the course coordinator (e.g. criterion 'complexity and level of assessment samples is suitable for target learners' rather than providing only a Yes/No response,

providing rich and descriptive feedback of both strengths and as well as deficits would be helpful. Particularly when reviewing moderation results across courses in the curriculum, the increased level of complexity would become apparent.

- The Panel during virtual interviews verified that external moderation is evaluated through processes within the Moderation Committee. The Committee collects and analyzes the external moderators' reports including recommendations. Suggestions for improvements from external moderation are shared with course coordinators. The Chairperson of the Committee follows up on the implementation of the action plans for improvement of assessment practices. For example, external moderation reports tackled strengths of assessments and gave recommendations on the courses. Among the recommendations was to conduct internal and external moderation for the clinical examinations. The Panel verified during interviews with the programme team that this recommendation has been acted upon. The Panel acknowledges the response of the Nursing Department on implementing the recommendations from the external moderators and encourages it to keep conducting it.

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 BSN programme includes several courses (NUR218, NUR228, NUR317, NUR318, NUR327, NUR328, NUR411, and NUR415) that include a clinical component totaling 99 hours of clinical. In addition, the Integrative Practicum (NUR425) is an 11-credit hour course offered in the second semester of the senior year and includes 495 clinical hours. These clinical hours, or work-based learning are a priority strategy to allow students to develop their clinical competency and apply theory into practice. Interviews with the programme team confirmed that the policies and procedures include detailed guidelines for before, during, and at the end of clinical. For example, students are provided with the course clinical objectives on the first day of orientation, and at their clinical orientation. The clinical evaluation tool is developed based on the clinical objectives. Clinical performance faculty/preceptor feedback is provided throughout the semester. Clinical placement is driven by the level and nature of student learning to be achieved in the course. During interviews it was shared that the clinical practice is governed by Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs). The MoU involves the clinical liaison, faculty, and Course Coordinator collaboratively securing hospital units and preceptors best aimed to meet student learning needs. The Clinical Policy includes additional detailed information on student behaviors and expectations. The Panel is of the view that these

policies and procedures are appropriate. The Panel appreciates the strong relationship between the faculty and preceptors which leads to effective communication and provides consistent support for students.

- Clinical training for students is overseen by faculty and clinical nurse preceptors. Roles and responsibilities of the faculty, the clinical nurse preceptor, and the students are explicitly set out in the Nursing Preceptor Training Guidelines. Preceptors must meet predetermined criteria, apply for the position, and once accepted must complete the Preceptor Training Workshop. The roles and responsibilities for faculty, preceptors, and students are communicated through the orientation for each stakeholder. All students are notified of the clinical expectations and evaluations during course orientation sessions. In addition, students participate in a clinical orientation in which work-based learning is reviewed, expectations and evaluations. During interviews with the faculty and students, it was verified that clinical expectations and evaluations were addressed during these orientations. Students expressed their satisfaction in knowing what was expected of them in clinical and being treated in a manner consistent with peer students in other universities at regional level.
- The Nursing Department allocates students to clinical experiences that align with each course's clinical objectives. Clinical skills and assessments are mapped to CILOs which in turn are mapped to PILOs. The BSc. Nursing Programme Clinical Objectives provided to the Panel were appropriate and rigor. Interviews with faculty verified that clinical objectives are mapped to the CILOs and PILOs.
- The work-based learning component of any nursing course is weighted 50% of the final course grade. This is clearly outlined in the course syllabus. The 50%-50% distribution between clinical and theory grade is by intention and nursing programme faculty philosophically value work-based learning and assessment of clinical skills equally to theoretical learning as it allows for consistency and transparency across the programme.
- Student work-based learning is regularly evaluated through course assessments. Course assessments are mapped to CILOs and PILOs as demonstrated in the course specification form (syllabus). Review of course portfolios verified that work-based learning is regularly evaluated (mid-term and final), and feedback provided to the student. A rating of low, moderate, high performance is used for portfolio evaluation with specific descriptive feedback from faculty and the preceptor for student to focus on. Interviews with faculty and students verified the work-based assessments and mapping of the CILOs to the PILOs. Limited clinical areas and increased student enrollment have required the Nursing Department to seek additional clinical areas for training as clarified during virtual interviews and in the SER. During interviews with faculty members, it was verified that there is a shift from only medical-surgical units to all areas of nursing practice to expose students to many areas. The Panel appreciates the expansion of work-based locations to

include more hospitals, and the exposure to all areas of nursing instead of limiting it to one area only in order to provide comprehensive learning experience that is aligned with the clinical objectives.

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: Not Applicable

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 BSN programme is designed to equip graduates with skills and competencies needed for professional nursing practice and lifelong education. The Panel verified through interviews with different stakeholders (preceptors, employers, and the Advisory Board) the level of student achievement is commensurate with baccalaureate nursing education. Review of student assignments and achievements confirmed student work as appropriate (written examinations, class presentations, case studies building to the integrative practicum in NUR425). The Panel confirmed through review of the provided evidence and interviews the high attainment of PILOs ranging from 95-100. The Panel noted, however, that faculty do not engage in the process of mapping/blueprinting individual test questions which compose the written examinations to the CILOs. The Panel confirmed this information during interviews with the faculty. For example, in NUR128 Course Portfolio illustrates test 1 maps to CILOs 1 and 2, test 2 maps to CILOs 3 and 4, and the final examination maps to all 5 CILOs. The Panel questions how faculty are assured the CILOs have been equally assessed using test questions, if test questions are not mapped or blueprinted to CILOs. The Panel recommends that the programme team should use a system of blueprinting for all test questions to Blooms Taxonomy (to ensure increasing complexity), CILOs (to ensure testing of each CILO), and additional significant curriculum content threads (e.g. QSEN, ethics, essential competencies). This process will help to assure confidence in adequately assessing students' achievements.
- Admission to graduation ratios has varied over the past four years, ranging from a low of 52% to a high of 93%. In general, the rate was observed to be trending up. Review of the

provided evidence shows a slight decrease in the number of students on probation and programme dismissal coupled with an increase in the graduation rates. This is also evident in Table 2 of the SER. Interviews with the programme team verified these numbers and provided explanations for how students are progressing through the programme. Academic grades below 70% will result in academic probation. This was in line with the benchmarked programmes; and is intentionally higher than the University (set at 60%) due to the professional nature of nursing education. During interviews with the programme team, the Panel was able to confirm that progression and retention are consonant with equivalent programmes.

- The Alumni Survey of 2019-2020 tracked student employment (92.1%), completed licensure (84.2%), enrollment in training courses (73.7%), and continued professional development (86.8%). From conducted virtual interviews, the Panel learned that there is a need for additional data or information about graduates' destinations. Examples of programmatic changes based on survey results include increasing time allocated for test questions (this has been done), separating theory from clinical (this is pending University approval), and increasing the clinical hours in the programme (this is not a supported change and unrealistic at this time). The Panel was informed during interviews that students pass rate in the national licensure exam was 92.1% in 2020 compared to (83%) in 2019 which is a significant increase. The Panel acknowledges this matter.
- Alumni Surveys are conducted annually and Employer Surveys are conducted every other year. The Panel notes the surveys have a decent response rate, 38 and 33 responses respectively for the Alumni, and 65 responses for the Employer Survey. In general, the Alumni surveys reveal a high attainment of UILOs (ranged from 91.4-65.7), with lower values related to information technology. PEOs ranged from 92.1-62.1. The Alumni Survey report concludes with an analysis of programme strengths and areas of improvement. Strengths included the development of the student's personality, skills and overall development of a mature, innovative staff nurse. The Panel heard these sentiments expressed during interviews with the students, preceptors, and employers. Suggestions for improvements include separating theory from clinical, diversifying clinical areas (beyond medical-surgical), and scheduling clinical on shifts other than days. These concepts were also echoed by faculty during interviews and some of these suggestions are under consideration. Similarly, the Employer Survey report from the same academic year concludes with an analysis of strengths, deficiencies, and comments. Strengths include an overall high regard for the University programme. This is consistent with feedback from external moderators who noted that this is the oldest nursing programme in the area with many lauded nursing graduates. Employers also found the graduates to be abundantly professional and an effective member of the healthcare team. The Panel found support of this during interviews with the preceptors and faculty. Suggestions include the use of an advanced simulation laboratory for specialized training and increasing clinical hours. The Panel was informed that the simulation laboratory request is moving forward. Increasing

clinical hours is not realistic at this time due to the lack of available clinical space. The Panel confirms that the Alumni and Employer Surveys are strong tools to support the BSN programme decisions.

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

- UoB has appropriate policies and procedures that meet the needs and functions of the BSN programme. A comprehensive Quality Manual for the entire university was provided to the Panel. It includes provisions for periodic reviews and validation of PEOs, PILOs, and CILOs. There are also provisions for monitoring, evaluating, and communicating feedback from students and stakeholders. The Quality Assurance (QA) processes incorporate feedback from committees, preceptors, and employers, which are incorporated into the evaluation of the BSN programme. In the interviews, it was confirmed that feedback and input from faculty members, exit students, and employers is systematically collected and incorporated into programme self-evaluation reports. It was also confirmed that institutional policies and regulations are regularly revised and communicated to the relevant stakeholders.
- The Panel learned from interviews that a comprehensive and systematic QA management system is in place; and that numerous committees have been formed. Faculty members repeatedly referred to the committees and the QA management system during interviews. At the university level, the QAAC regulates the QA practices, and at the college level, a QA Committee oversees standards and practices. The QA committee is chaired by the Director of the Quality Assurance Office (QAO) and supported by the Curriculum Committee and the Strategic Planning Committee. The work of these committees is based on, among other things, the QA Manual and the Teaching and Learning Policy. The Panel is satisfied with the collaboration and transparency in communication between the Quality Assurance Office at the college level with the Quality Assurance and Accreditation Center at the university level.
- The QA management system is clearly described in the QA Manual, which illustrates the internal QA responsibilities at the department, college and university levels. There is an operational plan which sets out the tasks for the academic year and include reviews of

updated courses, course portfolios, moderation forms and self-evaluation reports. In addition, the Panel notes that the BSN programme has been internally and externally reviewed; and an overview of implemented and planned measures is defined in the QA Operational Plan (2018 - 2023).

- Faculty members indicated in the virtual interviews that they are aware of their responsibilities in the area of quality management. They fulfill their responsibility by evaluating courses and assessments and through their active participation in the QA committees. In these interviews, it became clear that faculty members actively participate in quality development and see themselves as an essential part of its process. The Panel notes that there is a good exchange, for example between faculty members and preceptors on the QA related issues.
- The Panel notes that the QA management system is not static at the college and department levels and is responsive to needs or current events. For example, changes were made in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and the transition to online learning. It was also confirmed during the virtual interviews that QA practices are monitored and evaluated to identify areas for improvement which are incorporated in the QA operational plans.

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 college's organizational chart was provided to the Panel, and the roles and responsibilities of the different entities are clearly described in the QA Manual. These roles and responsibilities were addressed in the interviews, and the Panel was able to determine that the defined guidelines are known and that the responsibilities are carried out.
- The Panel notes that numerous forms of reporting are available and that the HoD communicates regularly with faculty members. The Nursing Department has also numerous committees where communication between faculty members takes place; and committees within the Department report to the HoD twice per semester. The terms of references for these committees and senior management posts such as the Vice President for Academic Programmes and Graduate Studies, the College Dean, and the HoD are clearly stated in the QA Manual. In the virtual interviews, the Panel notes that the communication and reporting structures were viewed as very positive by faculty members and external stakeholders, such as preceptors and employers. For example, it was reported that contact between the members of the Nursing Department and

preceptors occurs daily during clinical assignments and that there is a close exchange of information. The Panel appreciates the collegial and collaborative relationship between the members of the Nursing Department and the preceptors.

- Responsibility for compliance with academic standards rests with the HoD at the departmental level. The HoD conducts monthly meetings to discuss all matters pertaining to the BSN programme. In particular, decisions concerning the lecturers, the teaching-learning processes or student matters are in the focus. Results of these meetings are forwarded to the UoB Academic Council and its decisions are communicated to faculty members. During the virtual interviews, the Panel notes that the academic responsibilities and maintenance of academic standards are clearly defined on the department, college and university levels.
- There are clear regulations for the management of the BSN programme. Annual appraisals of employees are conducted by HoD which are then reviewed by the Dean. Interviewed staff confirmed that leadership responsibilities are clearly defined and can be understood through the college organizational structure, which is headed by the Dean. However, the Panel notes that current Acting Dean of the College is not specialized in Health Sciences. Consequently, the Panel recommends that the University should ensure that CHSS has an academic Dean specialized in Health Sciences.

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: *Partially Addressed*

- The annual reviews of the BSN programme are conducted in accordance with the procedure prescribed in the Quality Manual and the CHSS QA Operational Plan. Courses and faculty performance are reviewed through evaluation forms that are filled at the end of each semester and the results are communicated to faculty members. Faculty evaluations in the Department of Nursing are consistently ranging from 'good' to 'very good'. Student surveys also cover areas related to course delivery, planning, instruction, and the learning environment, as well as student support and advising. The annual self-evaluation reports of the BSN programme are comprehensive and include information about the programme itself, students, faculty, research, and the areas for improvements that have been identified by the different stakeholders on the programme and course levels.

- The CHSS QA Operational Plan is monitored by the UoB's senior management. Based on this plan, the self-evaluation of BSN programme is conducted annually. The Academic Council in consultation with members of the Nursing Department discuss the necessary actions to be taken based on the results of the annual self-evaluation and the feedback received from the programme's stakeholders. In the course of the annual cycle, the progress achieved in the implementation of the previously identified actions for improvement is reviewed and monitored by QAO.
- UoB Quality Manual includes a clear procedure for the periodic review of the programmes. It does not specify the period for the periodic reviews but it clearly states that it should focus on the currency of curriculum and the extent to which the teaching and assessment methods enable students to achieve the ILOs. The periodic review process entails selection and appointment of external reviewers as well as soliciting feedback from external stakeholders including PAC. The Panel notes that topics such as students' intake, clinical training, academic planning and the revision of the curriculum of the BSN programme are regularly discussed with external stakeholders. To address the required changes, feedback is elicited from all the stakeholders and findings are incorporated into an action plan that the Panel was provided with as evidence.
- From virtual interviews, the Panel was informed that a periodic external review of the BSN programme has not been performed on a regular basis. However, the last external review took place in 2020; and the report shows a satisfactory structure and performance of the programme and gives some recommendations for improvement such as 'Explain how textbooks are evaluated and selected and Consider creating a content mapping between relevant courses'. This last external review, which involved the moderation of some courses, was conducted by two external experts from a regional university. As mentioned earlier in (Indicator 3.3), external experts' feedback was incorporated where possible and some are to be implemented soon. These actions are described in the action plan, examples of such actions are: Evaluation of PAC meetings (every year) and Course portfolio creation (every semester). Despite the above mentioned, the Panel recommends that CHSS should ensure a systematic frequent periodic review for the whole programme in line with the procedure specified in the University Quality Manual.

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

- UoB has a Benchmarking Policy in place. The Academic Programme's Benchmark Report provides comparison to similar BSN programmes offered regionally (Oman, Jordan, KSA). During the benchmarking process of 2019-2020, it was found that the programme structure and learning outcomes were similar to the benchmarked programmes. The curricula were also found to be similar with the exception that one regional university separates theory and clinical into two distinct courses not integrated into one course. The Panel notes no comparison to international programmes and recommends that CHSS should expand the scope of benchmarking to consider international institutions of the same capacity and level.
- As per the Benchmarking Policy, the goals of benchmarking include fostering a culture of continuous improvement in the university and providing information for decision making, planning, and goal setting. During the virtual interviews, the Panel notes that the results of the benchmarking inform decision making and further development of the programme. One example is the separation of theory courses from clinical courses, which are now reported as separate courses, each with its own credit hours. This action was in response to the benchmarking analysis, which indicated that - in contrast to UoB - the three benchmark universities separate the theoretical and clinical components. Another example is the revision of some of PEOs and PILOs based on the benchmarking results.
- Four types of surveys are used at UoB: Student survey, faculty survey, employer survey, and alumni survey. These surveys provide a structured way to capture internal (students and faculty members) and external (employers) perspectives. Employer surveys aim to elicit feedback and opinions on graduates' readiness for the labour market and the level of their attainment of the UILOs and PILOs. The BSc Nursing Employers Survey Report (2019-2020) indicates that out of the 65 employers that have responded to the survey, 69% reported being satisfied or very satisfied with the performance of the BSN programme graduates. Only 5% were not satisfied and about one-third of employers surveyed were neutral about the performance of BSN programme graduates. These statements were confirmed in the interviews with employers. The results of the Survey of Faculty Members (2019-2020) indicate some areas for improvement. For example, 60% of the faculty members think that the duration of the integrative course is not adequate and 33% of the faculty members state that they do not think that the elective courses are adequate.
- The Panel notes that the comments collected from the different stakeholders are usually discussed, analyzed and incorporated into the decision-making process as well as the BSN programme improvement plans. For example, recent student surveys indicate that an increase in clinical training hours is desired. This information was discussed in the meetings and a decision is currently pending approval due to covid-19.
- During the virtual interviews, the Panel noted the good collaboration and two-way communication between the Nursing Department and its external stakeholders. External

stakeholders appreciated being involved in communications and being able to participate in brainstorming for improvements. The Panel learned that external stakeholders are informed about implemented actions based on their feedback in the PAC meetings, personal communication or *via* emails. Alumni confirmed that their feedback was taken into account. Employers reported that they were very satisfied with the collaboration and the incorporation of their feedback.

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: Addressed

- The Nursing Department has had a PAC since its inception. The PAC members are experts in the Nursing field and have many years of practical and academic experience. During the virtual interview, they showed a high level of commitment, however, they reported that their involvement in programme development was suspended during the COVID-19 pandemic; and they are keen to keep regular meetings with the Nursing Department. The Panel recommends that the CHSS should maintain consistent and regular communication with the PAC.
- The SER confirms that the BSN programme is constantly updated in line with the mechanisms specified in UoB Quality Assurance and Enhancement Policy and the Quality Manual to meet the labour market and societal needs. The evidence provided includes the CHSS most recently conducted labour market analysis in 2019-2020. The analysis includes data on hiring rates, nursing workforce needs, and characteristics of BSN graduates, among others. It indicates that clinical education hours should be increased and that there is an urgent need for critical care nurses. Comments and feedback received from PAC, external reviewers/moderators and stakeholders' surveys are also used to improve the BSN curriculum as indicated earlier in different parts of this Report.
- The Panel was informed during the virtual interviews that the Nursing Department is relying on the results and analysis of the studies conducted by the National Health Regulatory Authority (NHRA). According to a recent healthcare workforce study conducted by NHRA, there is a need for general and specialized nurses in the Kingdom of Bahrain. Hence, the Panel advises the CHSS to conduct a study to ensure that the Nursing Department caters for labour market needs by preparing specialized nurses in certain healthcare fields for the upcoming future and this was also supported by the PAC members.

- The SER and the provided evidence confirm that the policies and procedures related to updating the BSN programme to meet workforce requirements and societal needs are regularly implemented and monitored by the QAC at the college level and the QAAC at the university level. Overall, the Panel is satisfied with the actions taken by CHSS and the Nursing Department in ensuring the relevance of the BSN programme to market and societal needs.

V. Conclusion

Taking into account the institution's own self-evaluation report, the evidence gathered from the virtual interviews and documentation made available during the virtual visit, 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 Science in Nursing of College of Health and Sport Sciences offered by the University of Bahrain.

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

1. The balance between theory and practice, and between knowledge and skills in the BSN study plan.
2. The teaching methods used by staff are appropriate to the study content, meet current international teaching requirements, and enable the students to achieve the intended learning outcomes.
3. The involvement of the nursing students as volunteers during Covid 19 which contributes to enhance independent and lifelong learning; in addition to achieving PEOs and learning outcomes.
4. The arrangements that UoB puts in place to protect the health and safety of its staff and students at all times.
5. The strong relationship between the faculty and preceptors which leads to effective communication and provides consistent support for students.
6. The expansion of work-based locations to include more hospitals, and the exposure to all areas of nursing instead of limiting it to one area only in order to provide comprehensive learning experience that is aligned with the clinical objectives.
7. The collegial and collaborative relationship between the members of the Nursing Department and the preceptors.

In terms of improvement, the Panel recommends that the College of Health and Sports Sciences and/or the University of Bahrain should:

1. Ensure that the syllabus/curriculum reflects the updated versions of textbooks; and ensure that current research findings and journal articles are utilized by BSN faculty in the courses.
2. Revise published admission requirements for clarity, consistency, and accuracy.

3. Regularly review the admission criteria in light of student performance, stakeholder feedback, and national and international benchmarks and revise accordingly.
4. Establish/prepare a workforce plan in order to substitute for the number of faculty expected to retire in the next five years and to maintain the numbers of sufficient, qualified faculty needed for different nursing specializations.
5. Examine reasons behind students' moderate satisfaction with their advising experience.
6. Use a system of blueprinting for all test questions to Blooms Taxonomy (to ensure increasing complexity), CILOs (to ensure testing of each CILO), and additional significant curriculum content threads (e.g. QSEN, ethics, essential competencies). This process will help to assure confidence in adequately assessing students' achievements.
7. Ensure that CHSS has an academic Dean specialized in Health Sciences.
8. Ensure a systematic frequent periodic review for the whole programme in line with the procedure specified in the University Quality Manual.
9. Expand the scope of benchmarking to consider international institutions of the same capacity and level.
10. Maintain consistent and regular communication with the Programme Advisory Committee.