



الهيئة الوطنية
للمؤهلات وضمان جودة التعليم والتدريب
National Authority for Qualifications &
Quality Assurance of Education & Training

Directorate of Vocational Reviews

Review Report

**Al Muheet Institute
Nuwaidrat
Kingdom of Bahrain**

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The Directorate of Vocational Reviews

The Directorate of Vocational Reviews (DVR) is part of the National Authority for Qualifications and Quality Assurance of Education and Training (QQA) that was officially set up in 2008 as an independent body governed and supervised by the Council of Ministers. Established to raise standards in vocational education and training, the DVR is responsible for monitoring and reporting on the quality of vocational provision, identifying strengths and areas for improvement, establishing success measures, spreading best practice and offering policy advice to key stakeholders, including the Ministry of Labour and the Ministry of Education.

Reviews are based on the DVR's *Review Framework*, and carried out on providers' premises by teams of carefully selected and highly trained reviewers. All providers are invited to nominate a senior member of their staff to participate in the planning of the review, and to represent them during review team meetings. Reviewers examine a range of evidence before arriving at a series of judgements and awarding grades for the quality of the provision.

Review grades are awarded on a four-point scale:

Grade description	Interpretation
1: Outstanding	This describes provision or outcomes that is/are at least good in all aspects and outstanding in the majority.
2: Good	This describes provision or outcomes that is/are at least satisfactory in all aspects and good in the majority. There may be some particularly successful approaches or outcomes.
3: Satisfactory	This describes a basic level of adequacy. There are no major areas of weakness which substantially affect what learners, or significant groups of learners, achieve. There may be some features which are good.
4: Inadequate	This describes situations where major weaknesses in some areas affect the outcomes for learners and outweigh any strengths in the provision.

Introduction

Description of the provision

Al Muheet Institute was established in 2009 and is licensed by the Ministry of Education to deliver General English Language, Information Technology (IT) and school tutorial and remedial courses. All courses are short, non-accredited courses except the International Computer Driving License (ICDL) which is externally-accredited. Most English and tutorial learners are children and young adults, while those enrolled on IT courses tend to be employed older adults. The English language courses are offered with progression levels; levels 1 to 6 for young learners and adults. Each level is further sub-divided into three levels; the duration for each sub-level is 18 hours and for one complete level is 54 hours.

The institute operates from one location in Nuwaidrat and is managed by an executive director and institute director. The institute has two senior teachers who act as subject coordinators and also teach and a pool of teachers who are all employed on a part-time basis. The institute also has three administration staff and a person responsible for housekeeping who are all employed on a full-time basis. The institute has a Board of Directors comprising four members.

Scope of the review

This review was conducted over three days, by a team of four reviewers. During the review, reviewers observed training lessons and other related activities, analysed data about the courses and qualifications learners achieve, examined learners' written and other work, studied documents and materials provided by the institute and met with staff, learners, parents and teachers.

In the previous review, the overall effectiveness and all other aspects of the provision were judged as satisfactory.

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

Table of review judgements awarded

Overall Effectiveness	
How effective is the provision in raising learners' achievement and meeting the full range of learners' and stakeholders' needs?	Grade: 4 Inadequate
Learners' Achievement	
How well do learners achieve?	Grade: 4 Inadequate
Quality of Provision	
How effective is teaching and/or training in promoting learning?	Grade: 4 Inadequate
How well do courses meet the needs and interests of learners and stakeholders?	Grade: 3 Satisfactory
How well are learners supported and guided to achieve better outcomes?	Grade: 4 Inadequate
Leadership and Management	
How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	Grade: 4 Inadequate

Review judgements

Overall effectiveness

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

Grade: 4 Inadequate

Al Muheet Institute's overall effectiveness is inadequate, as are all the aspects of the provision except the quality of programmes, which is graded as satisfactory. A significant minority of learners develop basic skills and knowledge in the General English language courses, which is at a level too low to meet their needs. As a result, they make limited progress from their starting point and do not fully achieve their courses' objectives. Learners are awarded completion certificates upon completing the courses required hours, whether they gain skills or not. Although, the majority of learners are generally enjoying their learning as seen on a number of lessons observed, a minority of learners are not self-motivated and do not reflect positive attitude towards their learning which hinders their participation. Notwithstanding the above, learners on the tutorial and ICDL courses, which represent together around 31% of total enrollment, develop suitable knowledge and skills.

Although the majority of teachers are suitably qualified with relevant knowledge about the subject they teach, a minority of them have insufficient teaching experience. The majority of teachers use limited teaching strategies to engage and motivate learners during lessons; it is mostly teacher-centered and does not sufficiently maintain learners' interest and participation. They deliver their lessons at one level paying little consideration to the varying needs and abilities of individuals. The institute offers a suitable range of General English language courses, tutorial courses covering the Ministry of Education schools' core subjects and ICDL which generally match learners and parents' needs and aspirations. The institute has a sufficient arrangement to sense market and local community requirements. However, the rationale of offering the current courses is not entirely focused towards the courses' requirement. The General English courses which represent the largest portion of its enrollment, is suitably structured and planned. The institute uses course materials that are internationally recognised and are widely used for teaching English to foreign language learners. However, the course objectives are not always clearly defined specifically for each level and sub-level.

The institute does not ensure that learners receive proper support and guidance during their study to help them achieve better outcomes and reach their full potential as the arrangement is neither systematic nor inclusive. Learners do not always know how well they are performing and what they need to do to improve further. Although the institute has recently

introduced a useful strategic and action plan with specific key performance indicators, the implementations of these actions have not been realised by the operation team yet. Limited steps towards improvement have been taken to address QQA's previous review recommendations. Whilst the institute has hired an external consultant to review its overall operation, most management practices and procedures are newly deployed and their effectiveness cannot be measured yet.

Al Muheet Institute's capacity to improve is inadequate. The management has added more classrooms to their current facility to cater for increased enrollment and has recently introduced a useful strategic and action plan. Nevertheless, the institute lacks important elements of an effective quality assurance system and the current history of improvement remains insufficient to address the recommendations made in the last review. The premises do not meet the requirement of a safe study place for young learners as it lacks emergency exit pathway. Management has limited focus towards improving learners' achievements and the quality of teaching. Most of learners' achievements data are basic and these are not well monitored or verified for further improvement. The institute ascertains the views of learners and parents, but, the outcomes are not used to inform decision making. Although the number of enrollment has increased between 2013 and 2014, repeat business is satisfactory.

Learners' achievement

How well do learners achieve?

Grade: 4 Inadequate

Learners' achievement at Al Muheet Institute is inadequate overall. A significant minority of learners' in General English language course develops limited English language skills and do not make the expected progress. Although learners' performance data (LPD) provided by the institute indicates that achievement rates are high, this was not sufficiently reflected in the observed lessons or in the standard of learners' work. The assessment processes do not correctly measure learners' progress. Learners make limited progress as the arrangement for evaluating learners' prior attainment is not sufficiently effective to place learners at the level suitable to them; too often they are placed on a course level, either too high or too low for their abilities. This was evident through lessons observation and the outcome of various meetings. Learners are given diagnostic test at the beginning of the term and the same test is given at the end of the term; from samples of learners' diagnostic tests provided, learners have made little or no progress; as they have made similar mistakes in the initial test to those in the final test. Learners are awarded completion certificates upon completing the courses required hours, whether they gain skills or not.

From lesson observation and sample of scrutiny of learners' work, it reveals that learners develop suitable knowledge in tutorial courses. However, a minority of learners still has difficulties in developing their basic and accumulated skills and do not reach the expected level they aim for. The tutorial courses represent 26% from the total enrollment. Whilst learners' achievement is measured during lessons through suitable activities and relevant exercises, the institute does not keep relevant formal records, and learners' prior attainment is insufficiently assessed to establish a starting point from which progress or added-value could be measured. Notwithstanding the above, the majority of learners in ICDL programme achieve the qualification and develop technical skills, this represents small portion of the institute's business.

Although, the majority of learners are generally enjoying their learning as seen on a number of lessons observed, a minority of learners are not self-motivated and do not reflect positive attitude towards their learning which hinders their participation. From class activities which are mainly used for individuals and a sample of scrutiny of learners' work, the majority of learners are able to work independently and, when given the opportunity, work in pairs with their classmates. Nonetheless, a few learners remain too dependent on their teacher for further support to complete their tasks. Moreover, learners do not sufficiently reflect critically on what they are learning or identify what they must do to improve further.

From lesson observation and a range of records, learners are attending regularly and the overall attendance rate for the last two years is about 90%. Punctuality is an issue in a few cases and punctuality policy has recently being introduced.

The quality of provision

How effective is teaching and/or training in promoting learning?

Grade: 4 Inadequate

The majority of Al Muheet Institute teachers are suitably qualified with relevant knowledge about the subject they teach. However, a minority of them has insufficient teaching experience. The majority of teachers use limited teaching strategies to engage and motivate learners during lessons; the approach is mostly teacher-centered and does not sufficiently maintain learners' interest and participation. Moreover, in a significant number of lessons, teachers do not effectively check learners understanding during class activities. Occasionally, teachers provide instant verbal feedback to learners but, this is not sufficient to facilitate effective learning. This was particularly evident in the less successful lessons. Only in a few successful lessons, proper teaching methods and activities are used; such as direct questions and answers and useful discussions to further learners understanding and solve

problems. However, the majority of teachers deliver their lessons at one level paying little attention to the varying learning needs of individuals.

The majority of lessons start and end on time with relatively useful recapitulation. However, in a few cases, lessons have issues with time management. Lesson objectives are generally shared with learners, but this is not consistent among all teachers, as a few teachers write their plan on the whiteboard and do not always adhere to it. The majority of teachers do not plan their lessons effectively as these are not sufficiently informed by learner's continuous assessments or the outcome of their prior attainment assessment. Teachers utilise limited learning resources in the classrooms such as textbooks and whiteboard to facilitate their teaching and promote effective learning.

Whilst learners are appropriately assessed utilising some formative assessment during lessons, final summative assessment is not effective to ensure that learners have gained the required skills or met their intended objectives. Assessment of learners' work is not sufficiently rigorous and the marking scheme is inconsistent. The samples of learners' work provided by the institute to the review team for tutorial and English language courses had limited useful written feedback, with some answers being marked as correct even when they had mistakes. The institute maintains limited progress reports about learners such as attendance, participation and test results. However, these reports are not consistent with insufficient reflection of learners' works and the grades given are not clear and left to teachers' own estimate.

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

Grade: 3 Satisfactory

Al Muheet Institute offers a suitable range of General English language courses, tutorial courses covering the Ministry of Education schools' core subjects and ICDL which generally match learners and parents' needs as revealed from the meetings with learners and parents. The institute has a sufficient arrangement to sense market and local community requirements. However, the rationale of offering the current courses is not always focused toward the courses requirement.

The General English courses are internally designed and the ICDL course is externally-accredited and is covered into seven modules. The ICDL programmes are reviewed and updated at the international vendor's recommendations. As such, the institute does not have any specific policy for reviewing the existing curriculum.

The General English programme is suitably structured and planned. The institute uses course materials that are internationally recognised and are widely used for teaching

English to foreign language learners. However, the course objectives are not always clearly defined specifically for each level and sub-level. Despite the course materials being appropriate for the intended study, the time allocation towards the objectives of the lesson is compressed. Additionally, the institute offers six extra hours at every sub-level as part of support activities, such as the Talk Master.

In spite of the fact that English language courses constitute 63% of its core business, there are no resources or materials specifically developed that can be used by teachers to enrich learning experience at different levels. Teachers bring in their own resources; these do not always meet the specific and varying needs of the individual learners. Moreover, additional activities which support and enhance the programmes on offer have recently been introduced and their impact is yet to be measured. Al Muheet has recently introduced learning support programmes like Youth Leadership Programme last September. The institute also arranges for field trips to places of interest such as Pottery Village and Wildlife Reserve, followed up by class activities. However, there is no evidence of these support activities to be considered as a regular part of all English language courses.

How well are learners supported and guided to achieve better outcomes?

Grade: 4 Inadequate

Limited support and guidance are available to learners during their study to help them achieve better outcomes. Most provided support is haphazard and mainly dependent on teachers during the lesson. The institute's administration staff maintain a pleasant relationship with parents. As required, they follow up with parents regarding their children's attendance or lateness to lessons. Although the institute has recently established some new support practices; such as Talk-Master, Toastmaster and students' council, the impact of these has not materialised yet.

Whilst the institute shares with parents the results of their children's examination papers and keeps them updated on their attendance, insufficient information is provided about their children's performance throughout the course and limited written feedback is given. Announcements and reminders are sent to parents through short messaging system (SMS) and in order to inform parents about course's overview, the institute has recently introduced an induction session at the beginning of the course to all parents. For the last three years, limited evidence and records are provided to parents about the open day. Learners and parents are only made aware of the progress made in general English courses at the end of course through learner's performance report. However, performance reports are not evaluative enough and feedback does not accurately reflect the progress made by learners on English skills.

Although the institute provides details about outcome of the placement test and brief information on course level to parents in advance, detailed course outline per level is not shared. Stakeholders have access to general course information through the available course leaflets and brochures but, the institute website is currently not functional.

Stakeholders are satisfied with Al Muheet flexibility in delivering courses that highly suit their needs. The institute has sufficient classrooms and computer laboratories to conduct their courses. In addition, a number of classrooms are crowded and general learning environment is not sufficiently inspiring.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?

Grade: 4 Inadequate

The institute has clear mission and vision statements that are sufficiently focused on raising learners' achievements and the quality of its provision. A detailed strategic plan is developed with specific key performance indicators. However, the plan has recently been developed and limited steps towards improvement have been taken to address QQA's previous review recommendations. Although the institute has hired an external consultant to review its overall operation, most management practices and procedures are newly deployed and their effectiveness cannot be measured yet. The management employs sufficient and suitable human resources that meet the organisation aims and objectives, the management reports to the Board of Directors, but, with limited interaction of the institute's operation. Internal committees are established to improve the quality of its provision. However, these have little impact on the rates of the learners' achievements or the quality of teaching in lessons. The institute has a basic data base to monitor the performance and progress of current learners. However, this data is not fully utilised by the management team and as such; it does not effectively measure the impact of what it supposed to do.

The institute has arrangement to assess learners' prior attainment before the start of a course. There is one placement test for children' levels and one test for all adult levels. The learners are placed at the different levels depending on the range of their score. However, the test is not effective to accurately assess the levels and the outcomes are not effectively utilised to put learners at a suitable level.

Qualified Teachers are recruited on part-time basis, and for English language courses, native teachers are recruited. Although, senior teachers visit most teachers during lessons, there is

limited evidence that quality of teaching has improved based on these observations. Hence, the institute does not ensure that teachers improve their performance based on the identified areas for improvement. Teachers are asked to self-evaluate themselves, but the outcome of these is not used effectively to further improve the quality of teaching. They are provided with some development opportunities, as the institute recently has started Train the Teachers workshops for most teachers.

Whilst the institute collects learners' and parents' feedback after each course, which are aggregated and analysed, there is no clear evidence of improvement actions based on these comments. Useful links with local communities and international accrediting bodies are maintained. Whilst the premises has basic health and safety measures in place, the premises lack proper emergency exit pathway and the stairs are too narrow, making it too risky for learners attending their lessons, this was clearly conveyed to the institute's management.

The SEF provided by the institute for the purpose of the review is sufficiently detailed and provides information about the provider's operation. It identifies some valid areas for improvement. However, the grade provides over estimates its real status.

The provider's key strengths

- The institute is flexible in delivering courses that suit the needs of learners and parents.

Recommendations

In order to improve, Al Muheet Institute should:

- improve essential health and safety aspects immediately and ensure that learners are provided with suitable emergency exit
- ensure that learners are successfully achieving their courses objectives and make sufficient progress by enhancing teaching and learning experience through:
 - ensuring teaching strategies are effective in engaging and accommodating their needs
 - ensuring that learners are provided with useful feedback on how to improve further
 - improving lesson planning by effectively using the outcome of prior and continuous assessments of learners.
- ensure that learners are provided with suitable support and guidance that help them reach their potential and receive regular updates on their progress
- improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - effectively monitoring learners' achievement and improvement actions are acted upon
 - ensuring that effective methods are utilised to assess learners' prior skills, knowledge to place learners at a level suitable for them
 - ensuring that teachers' performance is improved through critical and constructive lesson observation.