



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

Directorate of Vocational Reviews

Review Report

Al Ghad Training Institute (GTI)
Tubli
Kingdom of Bahrain

Date Reviewed: 21-24 May 2017

VO109-C3-R066

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Introduction

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

In the previous review Al Ghad Training Institute (GTI) overall effectiveness was judged as good, as were all aspects of its provision.

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

Grading scale

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

Main Question	Judgement
Learners' achievement	Good (2)
Quality of teaching / training and assessment	Good (2)
Quality of programmes	Good (2)
Quality of support and guidance	Good (2)
Leadership, management and governance	Good (2)
Capacity to improve	Good (2)
Overall effectiveness	Good (2)

Review judgements

Overall effectiveness

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

Grade: Good (2)

The overall effectiveness of Al Ghad Training Institute (GTI) is judged as good, as are all aspects of its provision. The vast majority of learners develop effective vocational skills and knowledge in the fields of Information Technology (IT), leadership and management and English language courses. However, the writing skills of a minority of learners is insufficiently developed. Learners on the externally accredited courses have high success and retention rates, and the pass rates for these courses are in line or better than the international pass rates. The vast majority of learners are enrolled on local completion courses; they obtain certificates after successful passing of the formative and summative assessment. Trainers have relevant theoretical and practical command of their specialisations and have up-to-date certificates. Sessions usually start on time with sharing of learning objectives and recapitulation. However, in a few sessions class time management was an issue. Trainers use a range of effective training methods and activities to engage and motivate learners. In the vast majority of courses an effective range of formative and summative assessments are used to evaluate learners' understanding. Generally, marking is based on a clear rubric, though in some cases, particularly in the English courses, marking is not always sufficiently accurate.

GTI has fit-for-purpose marketing plans to evaluate local market trends and estimate current demands to meet the needs of learners and stakeholders. For the externally accredited courses the awarding bodies' requirements are followed in terms of examination standards and course contents. The structure of the local completion courses is fit-for-purpose overall, being well resourced with relevant course materials and learning aids. The Institute has clear requirements and mechanisms for access and entry level to courses. Suitable placement tests are used in the English and First Certificate in Computer courses to place learners on the right level; however, in a few cases the marking of the placement tests in English is not sufficiently rigorous. GTI has effective support mechanisms; learners seeking external accredited awards have access to relevant websites platforms. Trainers are approachable and respond to learners' inquiries. The Institute generates learners' performance reports but trainers' comments on these reports are sometimes subjective.

The Institute has a strategic plan and the management uses a Balanced Scorecard to manage and monitor implementation. Internal and external moderations of assessment and marking processes are effective. However, in a few cases external moderation is insufficiently critical

to identify areas for improvement to assessment. Trainers' performance is monitored through regular session observations and outcomes are shared with them, but follow up actions are not always consistent. Learners' individual achievement is aggregated and trend analysis is used effectively to improve the provision.

Capacity to improve

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

Grade: Good (2)

GTI has shown considerable progress in addressing the recommendations of the previous review report of 2014 and is successful in maintaining its 'Good' grade. The Institute has a suitable organisation structure with defined roles and responsibilities. The strategic plan is closely monitored by the management team. Effective quality assurance practices are implemented. Although the self-evaluation process is regular and effective, the Self-Evaluation Form (SEF) submitted over estimates the overall performance. GTI has maintained enrolment numbers since 2014. Learners' performance records are kept, constantly updated and closely monitored and outcome of trend analysis are used to trigger improvement actions

The pass rates in the externally accredited courses are comparable to or better than the international pass rates. Courses on offer meet learners' and stakeholders' needs, being based on effective analysis and understanding of market needs. GTI is in the process of expanding its international affiliations and is in communication with different reputable international awarding bodies such as Pearson and Oracle. The computers available have recently been updated to match new technological demands and learners' requirements. The Training Need Analysis and registration systems are computerised. GTI employs qualified trainers, who are inducted and deployed effectively.

Learners' achievement

How well do learners achieve?

Grade: Good (2)

GTI learners' achievement is good overall. Scrutiny of learners' work reveals that the vast majority of learners develop effective vocational skills and knowledge in the fields of IT, leadership and management. Learners enrolled on the English courses gain better command of grammar, though the writing of a minority of learners is not sufficiently developed to meet

the expected courses levels. Interviewed learners and those who filled the learners questionnaires have stated that the courses have boosted their confidence and that the skills and knowledge gained are beneficial in the workplace and career.

According to the Learners Performance Data (LPD) and other achievement data, learners on the externally accredited courses have high success and retention rates. These courses represent 37% of total enrolment. Most learners on the Cisco Certified Network Associate Certificate (CCNA), Certified Internet Webmaster (CIW) Certificate, Autodesk Certificates and the International Qualification Network (IQN) Diploma in Human Resources achieve the qualifications they aim for in a timely manner. The pass rates for these courses are comparable to international pass rates. The vast majority of learners enrolled in local completion courses in IT, leadership and management and English obtain certificates of completion after meeting the course objectives and successfully passing of a number of formative and summative assessments. The review team compared a sample of learners' pre-and post-course test results and projects which show that learners progress well from their starting point. However, a minority of learners on the English courses progress to a satisfactory level only. Learners are self-motivated and attentive during sessions, with a positive attitude towards their learning. Most learners are able to work independently when completing a required assessment and collaboratively when given the opportunity. A minority of learners can reflect critically on what they have learned and plan what they need to do to improve further, through requesting more information from their trainers and discussing related scenarios as in cases of HR and IT courses. The Institute has a clear policy on attendance and punctuality, with learners attending regularly and the attendance rate being high for the majority of courses. However, during the sessions observed, punctuality is an issue.

The quality of provision

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

Grade: Good (2)

The effectiveness of training at GTI is good overall. Trainers have relevant theoretical and practical command of their specialisations. They are certified and during sessions they provide useful real-life examples and hands-on practical activities, responding well to learners' questions. Trainers have lesson plans that are informed with learners' prior and continuous assessment results. For instance, in a CCNA course trainers have added router configurations and other virtual machines practices as an outcome of some assessments results. In English conversation courses, debates and practice interviews are introduced to simulate formal interviews. Lesson plans include learning objectives, time allocation and training and assessment methods. Sessions usually start on time with sharing the learning objectives, effective

recapitulation of what has been taught and responding to any pending enquiries. However, in a few sessions class time management is an issue as activities took longer than planned.

Trainers use a range of effective training methods and activities to engage and motivate learners, such as demonstrations and brainstorming to maximise opportunities for discussions and direct questioning. However, in a few cases pair and group work are not effectively planned or facilitated for successful learning. In the vast majority of courses effective range of formative and summative assessments are used to assess learners' understanding and measure the achievement of objectives, including quizzes, exercises and final examinations. On the externally accredited courses, trainers use a variety of past examination papers to practice on during the sessions. Generally, marking is based on a clear marking scheme and the grades given reflect the overall learners' skills and knowledge growth. Nevertheless, in some cases, particularly in the English courses, marking is not always sufficiently accurate. Learners' performance is systematically monitored and GTI maintains updated performance records. During most sessions, effective verbal feedback is provided on learners' work and enquiries, though written feedback on learner's assessment is general and in some cases not constructive enough to help learners further improve. Trainers use a variety of resources to effectively facilitate learning, including official on-line portals for the external accredited courses, data show, videos and related websites.

Trainers address the varying needs of learners well during sessions, encouraging them to discuss their own experiences and express their needs. In some cases, trainers provide different levels of assessment to help learners achieve the session objectives. The results of the prior Training Need Analysis (TNA) are used to better cater for learners needs, such as class delivery language and adding specific topics to make the training more relevant. Trainers also enhance learners' higher order thinking skills through challenging tasks that encourage creative and critical thinking, especially in the IT courses.

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

Grade: Good (2)

The effectiveness of programmes in meeting the needs and interests of learners and stakeholders is good overall. GTI offers a range of externally accredited courses from different awarding bodies such as the Association of Accounting Technicians (AAT), the Institute of Sales and Marketing Management (ISMM), (CIW), (IQN), Cisco Networking Academy and Autodesk. The Institute also offers local completion courses in IT, leadership, management and a number of English courses, based on sufficient understanding of the labour market needs. GTI has fit-for-purpose marketing plans to evaluate local market trends and estimate

current demands. Appropriate focus group meetings are frequently conducted with learners and trainers to obtain their views on the quality and the relevance of the courses offered. For example, the IQN Diploma in Human Resources Management was introduced in responses to learners' requests for a more comprehensive course in HR.

GTI follows the awarding bodies' requirements in terms of examinations standards and new technology releases. The contents of these courses are continuously reviewed and changes are made accordingly. Whilst the structures of the local completion courses is fit-for-purpose overall, in a number of the English courses, assessments do not always test all language skills. Local completion courses are appropriately updated in terms of course content and assessment methods, though the Institute lacks a relevant written procedure, as most are left to trainers' own experience. Course outlines mostly indicate course objectives and content but do not necessarily state the assessment tools and training methods.

Courses are well-resourced with relevant course materials and learning resources. The locally designed course materials are well written, informative and supplemented with relevant examples. They are supported with relevant and engaging extra-curricular activities to enrich the learning experience. These include field visits, debates and recommended reading. The target audience is clearly specified in the course outlines for all courses. Suitable placement tests are implemented in the English and First Certificate in Computer courses to assess learners' abilities and place them at the right level, but in a few cases the marking of the placement tests in the English courses is insufficiently rigorous for accurate placing.

How well are learners supported and guided?

Grade: Good (2)

Support and guidance provided to learners to help them achieve better outcomes is good overall, GTI has an effective support policy that is published on its website. The Institute has an informative induction presentation that is provided to learners at the beginning of their course, which includes information about the course, assessments, grade distribution and health and safety procedures. Learners seeking externally accredited certifications have access to related websites portals where they can practice previous examinations and discuss related matters. Trainers are approachable and use social media to respond to learners enquires, follow up on activities and share useful content. The GTI website has a link to an online library that includes material related to their courses. Learners have access to extra classes for revision when needed. The Institute uses a specific form to identify the support needed by learners, though these forms are not always appropriately completed to achieve maximum benefit.

Through the Institute's informative website, social media platforms and brochures, learners and stakeholders have access to advice and guidance on course selection and, where applicable, opportunities for progression. Premises and facilities are fit for purpose. There are three laboratories, one classroom and a library for the use of learners and trainers. Relevant posters are displayed throughout the premises. However, a minority of learners have complained about the comfort of the chairs in the laboratories, and the number of the restrooms compared to the number of learners.

The Institute issues a learners' performance report which is provided to the learners upon course completion. However, trainers' comments in these reports are subjective and do not always reflect the actual performance of learners. GTI has good relations with stakeholders and provides them with attendance reports and the certificates awarded. There are flexible arrangements to meet the needs of learners in terms of timing and class days. GTI has adequate physical disability procedures that ensure equal opportunities to access courses. However, general practices for inclusion are not necessarily streamlined.

Leadership, management and governance

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

Grade: Good (2)

GTI's leadership and management is good overall. Mission and vision statements are communicated to staff, stakeholders and learners, focussing on market positioning and meeting the needs of learners. The Institute has a strategic plan that is based on a shared understanding of what needs to be improved to be competitive and valid. The management uses the Balanced Scorecard to manage and monitor progress. Operation plans set specific actions with realistic time-lines. Although actions are regularly observed, updates on the follow up are not always kept appropriately to keep track of what further improvement is needed.

The Institute has a detailed policies and procedures manual that is used appropriately to quality assure the provision. Learners' prior attainment is assessed effectively and internal and external moderations of the assessment and marking process are effective. However, in a few cases external moderation is insufficiently critical to identify areas for improvement with regard to assessment levels and trainers' adaption. The self-evaluation process is regular and effective in identifying areas for improvement. However, the Self-Evaluation Form (SEF) submitted for the review is only adequate, as it doesn't identify areas for improvement and it overestimates its provision.

Considering the enrollment and the size of the operation the Institute has a fit-for-purpose organization structure, with roles being defined clearly. Qualified trainers are recruited, inducted and deployed effectively according to their specialisations. Training opportunities for most staff are provided according to their duties and personal improvement plans. In some cases, trainers achieve an upgrade to their certificates, enabling them to teach higher level courses. In addition, trainers' performance is monitored through regular session observations. The forms used are comprehensive and have relevant evaluation criteria. Outcomes are shared with trainers and areas for improvement are highlighted. However, follow-up actions on class observation are not always consistent.

Learners' individual achievement is aggregated and analysed, and trend analysis is used effectively to improve the provision; for example, more support classes were introduced to help learners improve their achievement on the externally accredited courses. Learners' feedback about courses is regularly gathered through end-of-course evaluation and the management takes any necessary actions based on their views, for example by seeking new awarding bodies or improving the class environment. Health and safety policies, procedures and practices are effective in maintaining a safe and secure learning environment.

The provider's key strengths

- GTI offers a range of externally accredited and local completion courses in different fields, these being based on an effective understanding of stakeholders' requirements and market needs.
- Learners' individual achievement is aggregated and analysed, and trend analysis is used effectively to improve the provision.
- Qualified trainers are recruited, inducted and deployed effectively. Training opportunities and updates are provided.
- GTI utilises effective mechanisms to support learners in achieving better outcomes.
- Trainers have lesson plans with clear ILOs that are informed with learners' prior and continues assessment results.

Recommendations

In order to improve, GTI should:

- ensure that learners develop English skills, particularly in writing, and that assessment structures covers all language skills
- ensure that marking in all English courses and placement test are accurate and that written feedback on learners' work is constructive enough to help them further improve
- improve leadership and management by:
 - ensuring that external moderation is more critical in identifying areas for improvement
 - ensuring that follow-up actions on class observations are consistent.

Appendix

Description of the provision

Al Ghad Training Institute (GTI) started operation in December 2012 and is licensed by the Ministry of Labour and Social Development. The Institute offers a range of externally accredited courses from different awarding bodies such as Cisco Networking Academy and Autodesk, the Institute of Sales and Marketing Management (ISMM), Certified Internet Web Professional (CIW), the Association of Accounting Technicians (AAT) and the International Qualifications Network (IQN). It also offers several local completion courses in IT, leadership, management and English. Most learners are adults and are sponsored through Tamkeen schemes. About 63% of learners are enrolled in the local courses and 37% in the externally accredited courses.

The Institute has one site in Tubli. It employs a managing director, seven administration/marketing staff, three part-time heads of departments, a pool of part-time trainers, a maintenance and health and safety officer and a human resources and administration manager. Since the last review, which was conducted in September 2014, the Institute enrolled 13 learners in 2014, 375 in 2015, 684 in 2016 and 133 in 2017 up to date of this review.