

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



**Directorate of Higher Education  
Reviews  
Programmes-within-College Reviews  
Report**

**Bachelor of Web Media  
Faculty of Engineering, Design and ICT  
Bahrain Polytechnic  
Kingdom of Bahrain**

**Date Reviewed: 5-8 October 2015**

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### Acronyms

AQAC	Academic Quality Assurance Committee
BP	Bahrain Polytechnic
BWM	Bachelor of Web Media
CAC	Curriculum Advisory Committee
CAP	Certificate in Academic Preparation
CILO	Course Intended Learning Outcome
CSB	Civil Service Bureau
CTTL	Certificate in Tertiary Teaching and Learning
DHR	Directorate of Higher Education Reviews
EDICT	Engineering, Design and ICT
GPA	Grade Point Average
HEC	Higher Education Council
ICT	Information Communication and Technology
ILO	Intended Learning Outcome
MIS	Management Information Systems
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
PAD	Programme Approval Document
PAR	Programme Annual Review
PBL	Problem-Based Learning
PILO	Programme Intended Learning Outcome
QA	Quality Assurance

QMAP	Quality, Measurement and Analysis Unit
QMS	Quality Management System
QQA	National Authority for Qualifications & Quality Assurance of Education & Training-Bahrain
RAC	Review and Audit Cycle
SER	Self-Evaluation Report

## The Programmes-within-College Reviews Process

### A. The Programmes-within-College Reviews Framework

To ensure a robust external quality assurance system in the Kingdom of Bahrain, the Directorate of Higher Education Reviews (DHR) of the National Authority for Qualifications & Quality Assurance of Education & Training (QQA) has developed and is implementing two external quality review processes, namely Institutional Reviews and Programmes-within-College Reviews. Together will give confidence in Bahrain's higher education system nationally, regionally, and internationally.

Programmes-within-College Reviews have three main objectives:

- To provide decision-makers (in the higher education institutions, the QQA, the Higher Education Council (HEC), students and their families, prospective employers of graduates and other stakeholders) with evidence-based judgements on the quality of learning programmes.
- To support the development of internal quality assurance processes with information on emerging good practices and challenges, evaluative comments and continuing improvement.
- To enhance the reputation of Bahrain's higher education regionally and internationally.

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

#### **Indicator 1: The Learning Programme**

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

#### **Indicator 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 3: Academic Standards of the Graduates**

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

#### **Indicator 4: Effectiveness of Quality Management and Assurance**

*The arrangements in place for managing the programme, including quality assurance, give confidence in the programme.*

The Review Panel (hereinafter referred to as ‘the Panel’) states in the Review Report whether the programme satisfies each Indicator. If the programme satisfies all four Indicators, the concluding statement will say that there is ‘confidence’ in the programme.

If two or three Indicators are satisfied, including Indicator 1, the programme will receive a ‘limited confidence’ judgement. If one or no Indicator is satisfied, or Indicator 1 is not satisfied, the judgement will be ‘no confidence’, as shown in Table 1 below.

**Table 1: Criteria for Judgements**

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Judgement</b>
All four Indicators satisfied	Confidence
Two or three Indicators satisfied, including Indicator 1	Limited Confidence
One or no Indicator satisfied	No Confidence
All cases where <b>Indicator 1</b> is not satisfied	

## **B. The Programmes-within-College Reviews Process at Bahrain Polytechnic**

A Programmes-within-College review of the programmes offered by the Faculty of Engineering, Design, and ICT at Bahrain Polytechnic (BP) was conducted by the DHR of the QQA in terms of its mandate to review the quality of higher education in Bahrain. The site visit took place in October 2015 for the academic programmes offered by the Faculty. These programmes are Bachelor of Web Media, Bachelor of Visual Design, Bachelor of Information and Communication Technology and Bachelor of Engineering Technology.

This report provides an account of the review process and the findings of the Panel for the Bachelor of Web Media (BWM) based on the Self-Evaluation Report (SER) and appendices submitted by Bahrain Polytechnic (BP), the supplementary documentation made available during the site visit, as well as interviews and observations made during the review site visit.

BP was notified by the DHR/QQA in April 16, 2015 that it would be subject to a Programmes-within-College reviews of programmes offered by its Faculty of Engineering, Design, and ICT with the site visit taking place on 5-8 October 2015. In preparation for the review, BP conducted its self-evaluation reports of all its programmes and submitted the SERs with appendices on the agreed date in June 15, 2015.

The DHR constituted a Panel consisting of experts in the academic field of Web Media, Engineering, Visual Design, Information and Communication Technology and in higher education who have experience of external programme quality reviews. The Panel comprised nine external reviewers.

This Report records the evidence-based conclusions reached by the Panel based on:

1. analysis of the Self-Evaluation Report and supporting materials submitted by the institution prior to the external peer-review visit.
2. analysis derived from discussions with various stakeholders (faculty members, students, graduates and employers).
3. analysis based on additional documentation requested and presented to the Panel during the site visit.

It is expected that BP will use the findings presented in this report to strengthen its Bachelor of Web Media. The DHR recognizes that quality assurance is the responsibility of the higher education institution itself. Hence, it is the right of BP to decide how it will address the recommendations contained in the Review Report. Nevertheless, three

months after the publication of this Report, BP is required to submit to the DHR an improvement plan in response to the recommendations.

The DHR would like to extend its thanks to BP for the co-operative manner in which it has participated in the Programmes-within-College review process. It also wishes to express its appreciation for the open discussions held in the course of the review and the professional conduct of the faculty contributing to the Bachelor of Web Media and the BP staff in general.

### **C. Overview of the Faculty of Engineering, Design, and ICT**

The 2013-2014 Polytechnic Catalogue lists the Faculty of Engineering, Design, and ICT as one of the faculties of BP that was established in 2008. The Faculty offers undergraduate programmes comprising Web Media, Visual Design, Information and Communication Technology and Engineering Technology. The management structure of the Faculty includes a Dean, Head of Schools and Programme Managers.

At the time of the site visit, the total number of academic staff in the Faculty was 58 (57 full-time and one part-time), the total number of administrative staff in the faculty was 12

full-time members, and the total number of students at the time of the site visit was (395 full-time and 221 part-time).

#### **D. Overview of the Bachelor of Web Media**

The Bachelor of Web Media (BWM) programme has been offered since 2010. It is designed to prepare students for careers in the fields of Web Media. The BWM programme had its first intake in 2010, and 31 students graduated from the programme since its inception. As of September 20, 2015, 153 students were enrolled in the programme and ten full-time teaching staff contribute to the programme.

#### **E. Summary of Review Judgements**

**Table 2: Summary of Review Judgements for the Bachelor of Web Media**

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Judgement</b>
1: The Learning Programme	Satisfies
2: Efficiency of the Programme	Satisfies
3: Academic Standards of the Graduates	Satisfies
4: Effectiveness of Quality Management and Assurance	Satisfies
<b>Overall Judgement</b>	<b>Confidence</b>

## 1. Indicator 1: The Learning Programme

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

- 1.1 Bahrain Polytechnic has vision and mission statements that have been derived from Bahrain's Economic Vision 2030, whereas the mission of the institution is to 'produce professional and enterprising graduates with the 21st Century skills necessary for the community locally, regionally and internationally'. The strategic goals of BP have been recently revised and the goals for 2015-2019 period include sustainability, graduate reputation, assurance of learning, engagement for impact and incubating entrepreneurship and research, which are also reflected in the strategic plan of the Faculty. Moreover, the BWM Programme Approval Document (PAD) demonstrates a clear academic planning framework and implementation for the BWM programme. During the site visit, the Panel notes that the aims of the programme lean towards the practical side, in order to contribute to achieving BP's mission and strategic goals, including a detailed consideration of producing work-ready graduates. From interviews with staff members and review of relevant documentation, the Panel confirms that the Web Media programme aims are appropriate to the type and level of programme offered by the Faculty of Engineering, Design, and ICT (EDICT). This is demonstrated by the internal development of the Web Media programme in consultation with the local industry which ensures that the programme takes into consideration the needs and characteristics of the local labour market and produces employable graduates in line with the institution's

mission as mentioned above. The Panel appreciates the detailed approach that BP has taken with respect to academic planning for the BWM programme and that there are clear programme aims which contribute to the accomplishment of the institution's mission and the strategic plan of the Faculty.

- 1.2 The Web Media programme consists of 480 credits -where a typical course is awarded 15 credit hours- distributed over eight semesters and consist of a set of courses decomposed into several categories referred to as design (8 courses), electives (4 courses), technology (7 courses), management (4 courses) and ideas (4 courses) as per programme structure. The ideas courses focus on English Communication in the discipline of Web Media. The Panel appreciates that the programme provides provision for developing students' communication skills according to the discipline. The SER states that 'the first two years focus on equipping students with the theory and essential skills required in each course, practical application of knowledge and skills occurs at all levels, but assumes a greater importance in the advanced courses in the programme.' The Panel notes that the Web Media programme is structured in a manageable manner allowing students to complete their degrees in four academic years. According to the SER (80%) of the enrolled students have completed their degree in the specified period. The Panel notes that the industry project (WMB6004) is offered in the first semester of the fourth year while the community project (WMB7007) is offered in the second semester. The Panel encourages the Faculty to ensure that the industrial project is offered in the second semester of the fourth year instead of the first as per the employers suggestions during interviews to enable them to offer students a permanent job offer in their organizations. The Enrolment and Academic Progression Policy ensures that all courses follow logical sequence where courses have prerequisites with suitable workloads for students (e.g. WMB6004 is a pre-requisite for WMB7006). Such requirements ensure that students have and/or have acquired the necessary knowledge and skills at the time of signing-up in any BWM course. The Panel notes with appreciation that the curriculum of Web Media programme is well-organised to demonstrate academic progression with suitable workloads for students.
- 1.3 The course syllabi of the Web Media programme are self-descriptive, have good breadth and depth, and are consistent with similar programmes, locally and internationally. All course syllabi are posted online on the SharePoint Web site for the use of the academic staff while 'Moodle' is designated to students. The course syllabi provided to the Panel comply with a common template detailing the course aims , learning outcomes ,course content, assessment description, learning and teaching strategies, and learning resources. Mapping of CILOs onto PILOs is stipulated in the syllabi (WMB6001 and WMB7001). The Panel studied the provided syllabi and noted that the depth and breadth of the topics are suitable for the level of the programme and relevant for the discipline. For instance,

(WMB7002) Web Programming 2 course includes advanced topics like managing full-database driven Ruby-on-Rails projects and writing Web-apps using Ruby-on-Rails Web framework. Another example is (WMB7004) Advanced Interactive Applications that discusses topics such as intelligent systems design and high-level usability testing. Regular reviews of both courses (WM33, Semester 1, 2014-15, EDICT Faculty Course Reviews - Web Media) and programmes permit a continuous update of syllabi in terms of list of topics which is informed by feedback from local industry, assessment types, library resources, and even classroom appropriateness. The Panel appreciates that the depth and breadth of the syllabus are suitable for the programme and the course contents are kept relevant and updated regularly.

- 1.4 Programme Intended Learning Outcomes (PILOs) are clearly stated in the Web Media PAD. The Panel studies the PILOs and noted that these are well-written, meet students' expected achievements in similar programmes, and are appropriate for the level of the degree. The five learning outcomes are linked to the aims of the programme and cover a wide range of managerial and technical skills that Web Media graduates are expected to acquire such as 'using Internet solutions to address business and societal issues and demands' and 'staying abreast of the latest innovations in online communications'. However, the Panel noted that the PILOs do not stress out the need to develop the entrepreneurial skills although this is emphasised in the institution's mission. The Panel recommends revising the PILOs to include developing the entrepreneurial skills to be in line with BP's mission. During interview sessions, staff members showed a clear understanding of the PILOs and what is expected of students to achieve at the end of the programme. Moreover, the Panel was informed about the programme team's effort to map the PILOs onto the National Qualifications Framework (NQF). The Panel appreciates that the programme intended learning outcomes in general are clearly stated, suitable to the programme type and its level and are aligned to the programme aims and objectives.
- 1.5 Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs) are clearly indicated in all course specifications and are drawn from three categories referred to as 'generic transferable skills', 'knowledge and understanding', and 'practice'. Different bodies ensure the appropriate definition and consistency of all CILOs and their association with the PILOs. These bodies include Curriculum Development Unit, Web Media programme committee, EDICT Faculty Board, Academic Quality Assurance Committee (AQAC), and finally academic board. The checks and approval processes on the course descriptors are conducted prior to each semester, in order to make sure that the delivery of the course is directly aligned with the programme aims and links to the PILOs. The PAD of the programme specifies a standard matrix mapping the PILOs to the individual programme courses. The Panel was informed that BP has conducted workshops on writing learning

outcomes and provided guidance for course development to the programme staff to ensure that learning outcomes are appropriately written. Although, as mentioned previously, BP uses its own Bahrain Polytechnic Qualifications Framework, the Panel acknowledges that there is also awareness of the Bahrain National Qualifications Framework (NQF). During interviews, staff and students were aware of the course descriptors and understood the purpose and meaning of the learning outcomes. The Panel notes with appreciation the mapping of course intended learning outcomes onto programme intended learning outcomes.

- 1.6 The Web Media programme structure includes a work-based learning component that consists of industry project (WMB6004) and community project (WMB7007) both are allocated 30 credits each. These projects aim to expose students to real-world situations and provide them with opportunities to apply their skills. Each project has appropriate CILOs that are mapped to the PILOs to cover the practical application of knowledge and demonstrate the required employability skills. Students are encouraged to enrol in the in-house placement elective (GSP5202) to prepare them for the practical work experience. The Panel notes that there is a generic Assessment and Moderation policy and also a general Offsite and Workplace Activities Policy covering issues related to the right and responsibilities of all the involved parties including students, staff and employer. For example, the distribution of marks for the industry project (WMB6004) is divided into application (35%), documentation (35%), employer feedback (20%) and student reflection (10%). Whereas the assessment of the community project (WMB7007) is different and is composed of project report (20%), digital media products (50%), interview (15%) and project log (15%). However, a formal assessment policy for the (GSP5202) elective course is lacking and the Panel recommends that the Faculty introduce it to evaluate specific issues for the Web Media programme. In the industry project, students are expected to submit weekly reports along with a final report summarizing their experience at the hosting organizations. Interviewed students expressed their satisfaction with the current arrangements and the practical knowledge that they get from these projects. Contrarily to industry projects that involve a direct supervision of students by both organization supervisor and Web Media supervisor, community projects require from students to be on their own driving projects to completion. The topics of these projects are chosen to fulfil local organizations needs and conducted by a continuous collaboration between the student and the concerned organization. The Panel appreciates that students are engaged in supporting local community needs by being involved in the community projects. From interviews, staff stressed that industry and community projects aim at supporting the achievement of generic transferable skills and Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs). The Panel appreciates the role of industry projects in strengthening students' theoretical and practical skills.

- 1.7 The Web Media programme primarily motivates students around problem-based learning (PBL) approach so that students experience solving real-world problems. According to the SER, the Web Media PAD presents the philosophy of its delivery and the teaching and learning strategies used. However, BP is recently moving toward project learning approach to enable recruiting new staff members who are not familiar with problem-based approach despite having the practical and academic backgrounds needed for the delivery of the programme. From interviews with staff and students, the Panel notes that different teaching approaches used for course delivery including lectures, tutorials, hands-on laboratories, case studies, oral presentation, group discussions and online communication. The Panel notes that each course specification states clearly the learning and teaching strategies (WMB6007, WMB5006). 'Moodle' also supports staff in delivering their courses by ensuring that students have access to all necessary resources such as course materials, assignments anytime and anywhere. Independent learning occurs when students work on the community project where they work independently with local organizations without any interference from their tutors (more details are covered in paragraph 3.10). All staff members are expected to sign up in Certificate in Tertiary Teaching and Learning (CTTL) to ensure that they are up-to-date with all the current professional practices. Interviewed staff, clarified that they benefited a lot from the CTTL and highlighted that they managed to reflect and transfer what they learnt into their classes. During interviews with students, they commended their tutors for using a variety of teaching methods, encouraging them to work independently and collaboratively where needed while keeping them updated with current trends and topics related to their programme. The Panel appreciates that a variety of teaching methods which includes both problem-based and project techniques to enhance the programme's delivery.
- 1.8 BP has a well-documented Assessment and Moderation Guidelines. At the beginning of each semester, Assessment Plan for each course is provided to students. Moreover, there is a marking rubric for every assessment and all assignments have cover sheets showing detailed information on submission dates, submission requirements and links to learning outcomes. The assessments in the Web Media programme are subject to moderation as stated in different policies that are communicated to both faculty and students. There is a pre- and post- internal moderation that permits to ensure the fairness and appropriateness of assessments with respect to the different Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs). During interview sessions, the Panel was informed that post-moderation has been stopped for three years. During interviews, students highlighted that various assessment tools such as individual projects, group projects, examinations, and quizzes are used to cover theoretical and practical aspects discussed in courses. Interviewed staff clarified, that they use formative assessment throughout the semester to evaluate students'

assignments, laboratory reports and short quizzes. Summative assessment occurs at the end when students submit their completed projects. To ensure fairness in students' marks, double marking is used to verify students' grades. According to the policy, staff are given ten working days to pass on their feedback to their students either through 'Moodle' or through face-to-face meetings. Interviewed students highlighted that most of the time they have one-to-one meetings with their tutors to get their feedback on their assignments/projects due to the nature of the programme. During interviews with staff, they confirmed that students always come to get regular spoken and written feedback from them during office hours and sometimes off-campus. In line with the comprehensive assessment process, students also have the opportunity to appeal their grades, should they have any concerns over the grades received in assessments. Interviewed staff, clarified that most of the submitted appeals by students are resolved informally after sitting with students and discussing with them how the assignments/examinations are graded along with how the grading is done. Interviewed students, show full awareness of the Appeal Policy along with its procedure. The Panel appreciates that BP has a comprehensive assessment procedure that is well-communicated to students and staff members.

1.9 In coming to its conclusion regarding The Learning Programme, the Panel notes, *with appreciation*, the following:

- There are clear programme aims which contribute to the accomplishment of the institution's mission and strategic goals.
- The Web Media programme provides provision for developing students' communication skills according to the discipline.
- The curriculum of Web Media Programme is well-organized to demonstrate academic progression with suitable workloads for students.
- The syllabi of the Web Media Programme have sufficient depth and breadth and course contents are kept relevant and updated regularly.
- The programme intended learning outcomes in general are clearly stated, suitable to the programme type and its level and are aligned to the programme aims and objectives.
- Course intended learning outcomes are properly mapped onto programme intended learning outcomes.
- Students' of the Web Media programme are highly engaged in supporting the needs of the local organizations/community.
- Industrial projects play a vital role in strengthening students' theoretical and practical knowledge.

- A variety of teaching methods including both problem-based and project techniques are used to enhance the programme's delivery.
- BP has a comprehensive assessment procedure that is well-communicated to students and staff members.

1.10 In terms of improvement the Panel **recommends** that the Faculty should:

- align the programme intended learning outcomes with the entrepreneurial skills, which is stated clearly in the mission of BP
- introduce a formal assessment policy for the in-house placement elective course (GSP5202 elective) to evaluate subject-specific issues for the programme.

### 1.11 **Judgement**

On balance, the Panel concludes that the programme **satisfies** the Indicator on **The Learning Programme**.

## 2. **Indicator 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.*

- 2.1 BP has clear and well-documented admission policies and procedures for all students applying to the different programmes of BP including BWM programme. The entry policy is reviewed periodically in accordance with the policy on Creating Policies. To admit a student to the first year in the BWM programme, he/she must have a high-school certificate with a minimum Grade Point Average (GPA) of (70%). Entry Criteria to BP programmes require a satisfactory level of Mathematics and English in the placement tests. However, if a student does not achieve the required passing rate then he/she will be enrolled in Certificate in Academic Preparation (CAP) programme. Interviewed students and staff, have clear understanding of the policy and indicated that it is available on SharePoint and Student Handbook. Moreover, Programme Approval Document (PAD) lists particular admission requirements for the Web Media programme. During interviews, the Panel learnt that there is a conditional entry for direct admission for the BWM programme which is having a relevant work experience in the Web Media industry. The Panel is satisfied that admission policies and procedures are well-documented and reviewed annually.
- 2.2 The Panel studies the profile of the admitted students and notes that the students are diverse with different nationalities (Bahraini and Gulf citizens) and a mix of gender

coming from private and government schools. Their GPA ranged between (94%) to (98%) during 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015 respectively with a minimum GPA of (72%). As stated earlier, students join the BWM programme through direct entry if they have experience in the Web Media field; if they don't have such experience then they have to be enrolled in a one year programme which is the Certificate in Academic Preparation (CAP) programme. Interviewed students did not express major concerns over completing the CAP programme. The Panel notes that (80%) of students completed their studies in four academic year which indicate that the profile of the admitted students is suitable for the BWM programme. As of September 2015, there were 153 students in the BWM programme. This number, the Panel was informed, depends on the staffing and physical resources available in the Faculty of Engineering, Design, and ICT for the BWM programme. The Panel appreciates that the profile of admitted suits the nature and type of the programme.

- 2.3 BP's organizational chart included in the submitted SER delineates clearly the duties and responsibilities of the management and operational teams. At the management level the Dean of Faculty, the Head of School, and the Programme Manager lead the BWM programme. Their respective job descriptions are defined in the Job Descriptions document. At the operational level, faculty members are referred to as 'tutors' responsible for delivering the courses and reporting directly to their Programme Managers. Other positions in BP such as the Programme Manager Quality and Programme Manager for Work Integrated Learning provide the necessary support to the BWM programme. However, the position of the Work Integrated Learning Manager has not been filled yet. During interviews, the Panel was informed that the Work Integrated Manager's main responsibility is to reach out to industry so that collaboration links are developed. These links should help in identifying job opportunities for students, understand the latest trends in Web media, identify opportunities for industry and community projects that the student could undertake, identify partners who could sponsor student projects in Web Media. During interviews, the Panel noted that there are provisions within the School for the appointment of managers with cross-faculty responsibilities, i.e. the Programme Manager for Work Integrated Learning, the Programme Manager for Short Courses, and the Programme Manager for Flexible Delivery. These positions were still vacant in the School of ICT & Web Academy at the time of this review and the Panel recommends expediting the recruitment process to fill the vacant positions. From interviews, the Panel was informed that there are several entities to support the delivery of the programme such as Web Media Programme Committee which reports to the Faculty Board which in turn reports to the Academic Board and senior management team. Regular meetings are conducted amongst these entities and outcomes are communicated to the Programme Manager after the bi-monthly management meetings. Staff interviewed by the Panel

showed an understanding of the Faculty organizational chart and management hierarchy. They clarified that processes like application leave for conferences, performance evaluation, and professional development planning are directly communicated to the Programme Manager. Additionally, students interviewed by the Panel confirmed the transparency of the organizational hierarchy. The Panel appreciates that the lines of accountability with regard to the management of the Web Media programme are clear and well-established.

- 2.4 Faculty members in the BWM programme have different academic credentials ranging from Bachelor to Doctorate degrees (three PhDs., four Masters', one Post-Graduate Diploma, and one Bachelor degree) which makes a total of nine academics contributing to teach 153 students enrolled as of September 2015. During the site visit, the Panel reviewed the CVs of the faculty members and confirmed that there is an appropriate range of credentials for teaching in the Web Media programme. Research at BP is very limited due to BP's mission that stresses on teaching with no incentives (e.g., promotion) to publish. However, the Panel was pleased to observe that despite the challenges some of the staff were working on research papers as a self-driven objective. From interviews, the Panel learnt that all staff members have taken the Polytechnic Certificate of Tertiary Training and Learning (CTTL). It is worth noting that some faculty members have acquired various industrial experiences prior to joining BP. The Panel is satisfied with the academic and industrial credentials of the faculty members contributing to teaching in the Web Media programme. Nonetheless, the Panel notices the high workload of some faculty members as they contribute to the delivery of other programmes, or engage in other administrative assignments. Despite this load, interviewed staff indicated their overall satisfaction with the cross-programme collaboration as they learn from each other and widen their knowledge and teaching perspective. The ratio of students to staff is generally held at approximately 15:2 and the number of student in a class room is kept between nine to 21. This range is followed to enable staff members to accommodate the problem-based learning approach adopted by BP, which is known to be resource intensive and require extensive interaction between tutors and students. The Panel recommends that the Faculty encourage staff members to conduct applied research in line with the type of the institution.
- 2.5 BP has very clear, well-documented policies for the recruitment of new staff. Being a public institution, BP is required to liaise with the Civil Service Bureau (CSB) and its associated policies and guidelines for staff recruitment. During interview session, the Panel was informed that the institution communicates its recruitment requirements to the CSB, which then sub-contracts the sourcing of candidates to an external consultancy to perform an initial filtering. When interviewed, staff appeared to have had an almost

identical recruitment process indicating a consistency of the recruitment in BP. The Panel concurred with staff members concerns over the length of time between initially applying for a position and being sent an offer. To find a remedy for this issue, all interviewed staff members reported that they received a high degree of flexibility from management in the first few weeks which allowed them plenty of time to find housing, set up bank accounts, and other essentials services. Once they are physically on campus, staff uniformly reported a very high level of satisfaction with the orientation process. Interviewed staff members, reported receiving training in the teaching systems (e.g., Moodle and Banner) as well as general lectures on different topics such as quality assurance policies and procedures, safety, and library resources. The Panel appreciates that BP has a comprehensive induction programme for its new staff members. All staff members at BP are required to enrol on the Certificate of Tertiary Teaching and Learning (CTTL) programme to ensure that a common understanding of problem-based learning is spread and embraced by all staff members which by all accounts is working well and highly appreciated by staff. The Panel appreciates that BP offers the CTTL Programme to all its staff to ensure the quality of its teaching staff. During interviews, the Panel was informed that there is no formal mentorship programme at BP for new faculty and this appears to be conducted in a random and unstructured way. Staff conducting the mentoring do not receive any sort of incentive for this work. The Panel suggests that BP develops a formal mentoring approach to ensure that the new faculty receive consistent guidelines. BP has a formal process for faculty appraisal. Faculty meet yearly with their direct line managers to discuss performance. When interviewed by the Panel, faculty reported a high level of satisfaction with this process and felt they were given opportunities to raise concerns, request funding for professional development activities, and engage in other developmental tasks. One major concern identified by the Panel was the lack of a Promotion Policy at BP and the complete lack of promotion opportunities available to staff members. As discussed previously, BP is required to follow CSB guidelines in this regard, and the concept of 'academic rank' is not recognized. As such, new teaching staff members are hired as 'tutors' regardless of qualifications and experience, which undermines their career development opportunities like promotion. This obviously has an impact on staff's motivation to perform at a higher level. During interviews, it was clarified that BP is currently negotiating with the CSB for a custom promotion policy. The Panel recommends that BP develop a formal policy for academic promotion to ensure that qualified academics are motivated to deliver the programme effectively. Furthermore, the Panel notices that BP has not developed a formal policy for staff retention. Currently, BP follows CSB guidelines that grant foreign staff members, including academics, fixed-term contracts with a maximum length of two years. The Panel initially has concerns that this policy may have had a limiting effect on staff retention, but most staff interviewed

reported very little difficulty in having their contracts renewed. Indeed, most staff interviewed enjoyed the flexibility that two-year contracts provide. The Panel recommends that BP develop a long-term succession plan to ensure that specialised local academics are available and well-trained to ensure the continuity of the programme and its delivery.

- 2.6 BP uses two Management Information Systems (MIS); namely 'Banner' and 'SharePoint' to ensure sound decision-making processes. Staff, in general, and registrar, in particular, use Banner for registration and storage of student records including official grades. Banner is capable of automatically generating reports (e.g., flagging 'at risk' students. During the site visit, this capability was demonstrated to the Panel. Additionally, Banner can generate statistics and graphs as well as academic transcripts. This capability allows staff to make informed decisions on students' academic progress based on their current and past performance. Staff use SharePoint, but the implementation appears to be limited as a 'file sharing' platform only. The Panel is of the view that the 'SharePoint' system is a powerful report generation yet it is not fully utilised by the Faculty. During interviews, the Panel was informed that BP also plans to implement a new reporting tool, 'Argos', so that customised data and reports will be available. However, the Panel was not given any exact date on when 'Argos' will be effective. Moreover, the Panel is concerned that without fully utilising the current reporting resources available to staff members and programme team, adding new reporting tool might not solve the problem. Hence, the Panel recommends that BP develop comprehensive training programmes on SharePoint so that its full capabilities are used.
- 2.7 There are three main policies to ensure accuracy of students' records namely Assessment and Moderation, Results and Reporting, and Student Academic Appeal. BP has a detailed and well-documented business continuity plan that discusses, amongst other things, procedures for ensuring data backup off campus. Whilst it is impossible to verify the efficiency of any disaster recovery plan prior to a disaster occurring, in general the BP policy appears to be comprehensive and well thought out. As per the SER and confirmation received during interviews, prior to entering students' grades into Banner, these grades are signed off by course coordinators and then approved by the Academic Board. All involved parties have different levels of access with unique user names and passwords. During the site visit, the Panel observed that physical students' records were housed in filing cabinets behind staff in the Registration Office. Although the Panel understands that these records are effectively backed up, and that usually digital versions of the records would be used for day-to-day operations, there are still some concerns about record storage. When touring the registrar, the Panel did not observe any physical barrier in the form of a glass window or steel wires, between the lobby and the filing

cabinets. This offers a very real possibility for records to be stolen, destroyed, or physically altered. The Panel advises the institution to introduce new methods to ensure full protection of student data and records.

- 2.8 During the site visit, the Panel toured some classrooms, laboratories, and other facilities. The number of classrooms and laboratories is adequate for the current student numbers but will need to be carefully monitored if student numbers increase. The Panel also toured several staff offices, and considered these to be of a very high standard. The BWM programme has one PC Laboratory, one Mac Laboratory, one Studio Video Studio, iMac room, Wacom tablets, a TV screen, and audio and video equipment. It also relies on another Mac Laboratory assigned to the ICT programme. During interviews with students, they reported that some computers are outdated and that equipment like cameras cannot be borrowed for off-campus use, which forces the students to rent the equipment from other private sources. The Panel recommends that Faculty of EDICT develop a loan procedure for students for off-campus use of Web Media equipment. The Panel notes from statistics in 2013-2014 during the first Semester that the 127 registered Web Media students borrowed 160 items, which is extremely lower than what is expected. Another major limitation is the library's operation hours (weekdays between 8am and 6pm with no weekend access). In practice, the campus closes at 5pm further limiting availability. The Panel recommends that BP urgently review the library resources available to the Web Media field and further investigate ways to extend the opening hours of both the library and the campus in general. Aside from the library, BP offers a large number of informal study areas across the campus. Other IT facilities toured by the Panel appeared to be adequate and interviewed students expressed their satisfaction with these resources. There is a sufficient number of computers and ready access to e-mail and electronic resources and *Wi-Fi* coverage appears to be good throughout the campus. There is also a large auditorium used for large events and expositions. Students have access to an on-campus subsidized gymnasium, which is modern and well-maintained. There is also a court for playing games such as badminton and basketball and students have access to equipment for these. There is also a health centre that is staffed by a registered nurse. When interviewed by the Panel, students expressed knowledge and enthusiasm for these supplementary facilities. The Panel appreciates the supplementary and recreational facilities provided to students on campus.
- 2.9 BP uses different information systems to track the usage of its resources including Banner as a student information system, Celcat as a timetabling system, Millenium as a Library Management System, Moodle as a virtual learning environment, and SharePoint as a document management system. Laboratories and classrooms are electronically scheduled and usage is tracked by Celcat while the use of the Internet is tracked and monitored by

the IT Department. During interviews, the Panel learnt that BP plans to use access cards for all campus laboratories in order to reinforce equipment security and allow their better use. The Panel suggests that BP enhance the current tacking system to electronically track the usage of the laboratories.

- 2.10 The Panel visited the Writing and the Career and Employment Centres (located in the library) which provide support for students with regard to general writing, basic Mathematics, and academic skills as well as career guidance. Students interviewed by the Panel showed high level of satisfaction with the Centres and many indicated that they benefited substantially from using the provided services. BP has also introduced a system called PASS System where students who receive high grades in some papers can support their peers upon the recommendations of their tutors. This allows these students to gain experience in mentoring weaker students and allows them to build their knowledge and confidence of the subject. The PASS System is well- advertised and students interviewed by the Panel demonstrated awareness of it. However, none of the students interviewed by the Panel had used the PASS System, although one was currently acting as a volunteer and spoke highly of the experience. Students with learning difficulties are also supported by providing special software for learning, extra readers/writers during examinations and extra time during examinations. BP has a Student Council consisting of 12 high-GPA students who are elected by the student body. When interviewed by the Panel, the Student Council reported having good support from the senior management. A major limitation of this council, however, is that there is no requirement for members to be from different BP faculties. The Panel suggests that BP Student Council considers developing a constitution outlining membership, procedures for nominations by including students with different range of GPAs. The Panel appreciates that there is a well-managed student support system that includes the Writing Centre, PASS System, Students Council and Health Centre.
- 2.11 BP runs an annual orientation for the newly admitted students and transferred ones. It is comprehensive and organized at the beginning of semester one of each academic year. The orientation programme covers key areas of information (e.g., policies, procedures, and attendance rules) that students would require in order to succeed in their studies. Students are introduced to the programme team and tour BP's facilities. They also receive a copy of the Student Handbook. Staff interviewed by the Panel also had no hesitation in helping students to gain whatever knowledge they needed. Interviewed students whom had attended the orientation programme expressed their satisfaction with its organization. The Panel appreciates the comprehensive orientation programme offered to new and transferred students. Notwithstanding the above, the Panel noted that no provision is given to students who miss the orientation programme as they are

responsible for gaining the knowledge presented during the orientation programme independently. The Panel encourages BP to introduce an alternative arrangement for students who miss the orientation programme to ensure that they are well-informed about the institution policies, procedures, facilities and resources.

- 2.12 BP has a rigorous and robust policy for identifying 'at-risk' students. The students at risk policy is comprehensive and exemplifies the different types of risks students may be identified for, such as academic progress, personal and psychological issues, health and safety related issues, financial issues, and social and behavioural issues. The Panel views this information document as good practice as it specifically guides faculty members on how to identify such students, details some examples of types of support that could be offered (depending on the circumstances) and then sets out the entire process by means of a flow diagram. In conjunction with using Banner to identify at-risk students because of attendance, faculty members are also expected to be pro-active by following up with students who are absent, for example. Moreover, at-risk students are discussed at the monthly Programme Committee meetings which is a standing agenda item. Once a student is identified as 'at-risk' an extensive support system is available in terms of the Library Writing Centre and PASS System (as discussed in Section 2.10). Furthermore, students who could not get the required grades to be successful are recorded as 'in probation' and such students are given reduced workloads until they succeed in lifting the probation. Faculty members are made aware of at-risk students via a summarized staff information document detailing reasons for the student being at risk. Students identified to have academic problems are required to attend weekly sessions with their learning advisor for one to one tutoring and may also have to attend peer tutoring. During interviews, the programme team confirmed that they receive information on how to identify the students at risk and how to refer them to the correct support. The Panel appreciates the current arrangement for identifying students at risk to support them in a timely manner.
- 2.13 Students of the Web Media programme are supported by different means of informal learning. Several seminars are organized by the Career and Employment Centre to enrich students' knowledge. Invitations to attend guest lectures on-and off-campus are always communicated to students. Student seeking assistance can meet their tutors' off-campus. Interviewed students confirmed the easy access to staff on-and off- campus and praised their positive response to their requests or queries even if these queries were irrelevant to the curriculum. This form of informal learning motivates students to be self-learners. Opportunities for engaging in extra-curricula activities like summer work in Web Media agencies and special projects are also made available to students. From interviews with the Web Media staff, only one fieldtrip for students took place in 2014. The Panel

encourages the staff to include more extra-curriculum activities, like fieldstrips to Web Media organizations. Other facilities supporting informal self-learning and enriching students' experiences include the Writing Centre, Career and Employment Centre, and Students' clubs (as mentioned earlier). The Panel is satisfied with the informal learning environment provided to BP students in general and Web Media in particular.

2.14 In coming to its conclusion regarding The Efficiency of the Programme, the Panel notes, *with appreciation*, the following

- The profile of admitted students suits the nature and type of the programme.
- There are clear and well-established lines of accountability with regard to the management of the Web Media programme.
- There is a comprehensive induction programme for new staff members.
- All staff members are offered a Certificate of Tertiary Teaching and Learning (CTTL) programme to ensure that problem-based learning is spread and embraced by all of them.
- BP provides good recreational facilities for students.
- There is a well-managed student support system that includes the Writing Centre, PASS System, Students Council and Health Centre.
- There is a comprehensive orientation programme for new and transferred students.
- There is a functioning system for identifying and supporting at-risk students.

2.15 In terms of improvement the Panel **recommends** that the Faculty should:

- expedite the recruitment process to fill the vacant positions
- encourage staff members to conduct applied research in line with the type of the institution
- develop a formal policy for academic promotion to ensure that qualified academics are motivated to deliver the programme effectively
- develop a long-term succession plan to ensure that specialised local academics are available and well-trained to ensure the continuity of the programme and its delivery
- develop comprehensive training programmes on SharePoint to ensure full use of its capabilities
- develop a loan procedure for students for off-campus use of Web Media equipment
- review the library resources available to the Web Media field and further investigate ways to extend the opening hours of both the library and the campus in general.

2.16 **Judgement**

On balance, the Panel concludes that the programme **satisfies** the Indicator on **The Efficiency of the Programme**.

### **3. Indicator 3: Academic Standards of the Graduates**

*The graduates of the program meet academic standards compatible with equivalent programs in Bahrain, regionally and internationally.*

- 3.1 BP has clearly stated graduate attributes for the Web Media that is embedded within the programme ILOs which are delivered by mapping the course syllabus and their ILOs to the PILOs. This is especially evident in terms of academic progression through the different levels of the programme and the emphasis on the higher order of knowledge, skills, and attitude. The Panel notes that there are mechanisms to ensure the alignment of assessment with outcomes, which enables the achievement of the desired graduate attributes. During interview sessions, staff members showed clear understanding of these attributes and their validation through assessments. The Panel appreciates that graduate attributes are clearly stated and embedded within the programme intended learning outcomes and encourages the Faculty of Engineering, Design and ICT (EDICT) to explicitly link the stated graduate attributes to the PILOs.
- 3.2 The Self-Evaluation Report states that BP adapts the definition of benchmarking of the Arab Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ANQAHE). During interviews with programme team, they clarified that the programme was validated in March 2015 by an external validator and evidence was provided. However, there was no evidence of benchmarking the programme with similar programmes offered by other local, regional or international institutions. Moreover, the Panel noted that there is no formal policy adapted by BP for benchmarking. The Panel recommends that the Faculty develop and implement a formal benchmarking policy to benchmark the programme against good

practice, locally, regionally and internationally.

- 3.3 Bahrain Polytechnic has a comprehensive Assessment and Moderation policy that covers most aspects of the assessment process as stated in the SER. Moreover, there is a clear Assessment and Moderation Guidelines that is communicated to academic staff and students as well as a policy for managing the assessment of multi-section courses. Assessment policies and procedures are implemented, monitored and subject to regular reviews by Curriculum Unit and academic staff. There is also the Web Media Programme Committee that provides monthly reports on any changes in courses, approves assessment plans, and monitors students' progress. These reports are discussed at the Faculty of EDICT Board. All assessment policies and procedures are made available to students in the Student Handbook and on Moodle. During interviews, students confirmed that all assessment methods are documented in the course specification, and that they are satisfied with the assessment tools. During site visit, the Panel was informed that the Faculty of EDICT has clearly stated procedures for internal moderation (more details will be covered later in paragraph 3.5). However, the Panel noted the total absence of external moderation implementation, though a policy exists. Staff interviewed indicated that external moderation has been stopped for the last three years. From the previous samples provided of post-moderation forms, the Panel noted that some forms are restricted to checkmarks without written feedback. The Panel recommends that BP inform moderators to give detailed written feedback on assessments. From interviews, the Panel learnt that Turn-it-in software is used at BP to check students' work against plagiarism. Interviewed students confirmed the use of Turn-it-in by their tutors. The Panel notes that several assessment tools are used such as projects, examinations, and quizzes. The Panel appreciates that the assessment methods and procedures are transparent, monitored and subjected to regular reviews.
- 3.4 A systematic process to align the assessments with Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs) has been developed and implemented by the BWM programme team. Policies and procedures are in place to ensure alignment of assessment to (LOs). The Assessment and Moderation Policy requires that assessments are appropriate for the learning outcomes and reflect the academic standards achieved by students. The Panel notes that the mapping of the LOs lists clearly for each outcome whether the marking of these assessments is formative or summative. These are revised and confirmed by the Web Media Programme Committee to ensure that assessment tasks are designed to accurately measure student learning, in alignment with the level of the (CILOs). External moderation was also utilized in the past to ensure that final examinations properly assess the achievements of the learning outcomes. The Panel appreciates that Web Media team has developed an effective system to ensure the alignment between course intended learning

outcomes and assessment tools.

- 3.5 BP has a formal internal moderation policy stipulating that all course syllabi, final examinations and projects evaluation are subjected to internal moderation. The internal moderator fills a form entitled (Internal Verification of Course Syllabus/Specifications). The feedback of the internal moderator is submitted to the course tutor who in turn is responsible for incorporating any necessary changes prior to distributing the course specification to students. On-site documentation show full details to justify this issue. During interviews, the Panel was informed that the internal moderator checks the final examinations where s/he has to evaluate the appropriateness of the level of the questions session, the structure of question paper and the appropriateness of evaluation tools to measure the achievement of learning outcomes by adhering to a standardized assessment of the Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs) matrix. The internal moderator submits the form to the Programme Manager. Post moderation is conducted by the Internal Moderation Committee which is formed to moderate the results of the final examinations. The Panel appreciates that there is a well-defined procedure for moderation that includes both pre and post-internal moderation and is implemented across the courses.
- 3.6 The SER states that the Assessment and Moderation Policy requires external moderation of courses at least once every five years for each academic programme offered by BP. Moreover, a general moderation plan is in place at BP for 2013–2018. The Panel encourages the Faculty to increase the frequency of the external moderation of the programme courses. During interviews, the Panel was informed that external moderators are nominated by the programme manager. However, according to the SER and confirmation by interviewed staff, no regular formal external moderation of the BWM programme is currently implemented. The Panel acknowledges that plans are in place for the implementation of external moderation process in the near future. After examining samples of the external moderators' reports, the Panel found that external moderation has not been active for the last three years. The Panel recommends that BP expedite the implementation of external moderation of the programme, since this extra level of checking will provide additional assurance that the assessment process is effective.
- 3.7 During the site visit, samples of students' coursework were provided to the Panel. The provided samples included students' projects, industrial projects, quizzes and final examinations. The Panel noted that the level of student work is appropriate to the type and level of the programme and its courses. Due to the nature of the programme, quizzes are not used widely as clarified by academic staff. However, the Panel encourages the programme team to inject more quizzes into their courses to evaluate the theoretical aspects of the Web Media field. During interviews, the Panel was informed that some of

Web Media students participated in regional competitions and others are preparing to submit their projects soon to a competition in the Gulf Region. When touring the facilities, the Panel had the opportunity to view samples of community projects which students were involved in to cater for the local organizations needs. It is worth noting, that these projects were of an outstanding level and clearly reflects students' academic standards and motivation. The Panel appreciates that the level of students' work is appropriate to this type of programme and is consistent with similar programmes offered regionally and internationally.

- 3.8 The SER states that the Faculty of EDICT makes good efforts to ensure that Web Media graduates meet the objectives of the programme and the ILOs as expressed in students' results, advanced course projects of students, and grade distribution. According to the statistics provided, the percentage of students passing the programme in 2013-2014 is (88.89%) which is high and shows a very encouraging results for students' overall achievements. According to statistics presented in, the average GPA of graduates is (3.29). Staff interviewed clarified that the programme aims at graduating students to become professionals in the field of Web Media, especially in creative thinking and professional practical skills. Interviews with employers, confirmed the capabilities of Web Media graduates and their innovative thinking. They highlighted that they are looking for more graduates to recruit. The Panel acknowledges that level of students' achievement is in line with what is expected from this type of programme.
- 3.9 The Panel was provided with cohort analysis for the number of graduates since the inception of the programme. According to the statistics provided in the BP's Profile (seven students graduated in 2013, eight students in 2014 and 16 students in 2015). Statistics included in SER indicate high retention and passing rates. For example, the percentage of retention is (98.4%) in the first Semester during 2013-2014 and (100%) in the second semester with an average of (94.3%) passing rate. Moreover, in 2012-2013 the percentage of retention was (100%) in the first Semester and (100%) in the second semester with an average of (89.6%) and (90.5%) passing rate respectively. The Panel notes that each student with the help of his/her advisor agrees on a pathway for graduating on time. Provided statistics indicated that to date (80%) of the student enrolled in the BWM programme had completed the programme in eight full-semesters, while the rest spent an additional semester. The Panel is satisfied with students' progress in the programme.
- 3.10 The Web Media programme has a work-based learning component presented in Industry projects and community project both have clear guidelines and specification. The internship supervising mechanism stipulates that the Polytechnic supervisor visits the studio and meets students and their mentors. A full-time staff member from EDICT

Faculty is allocated with the responsibility of ensuring the logistics of industry projects by identifying and communicating with organizations that will host students. Moreover, students are visited twice by an appointed industry project coordinator. The supervisor collects information and use them in the meetings to decide if the student is on track and the content and level of the students' work is acceptable and appropriate. Similarly, the supervisor meets with the mentor in the organization to monitor progress. Upon completion of their projects, students present and reflect on the work that they did, they also submit required documentation that ensures appropriate professional practice was carried out. The processes used for the mentoring and evaluation of work-based learning are examples of good practice particularly in terms of meeting the Polytechnic mission of work ready graduates. The Panel appreciates the guidance provided to students during the internship period and the way it is implemented and assessed to ensure achievement of the practical aspects of the programme learning outcome.

- 3.11 The programme has a standing Curriculum Advisory Committee (CAC) that is well integrated into the programme's activities. A formal policy guides the terms of reference, membership, operational guidelines and reporting requirements of the CAC. The formal policy states that the CAC should meet four times a year. However, during interview session, the programme team reported that the CAC meets twice per year. Action plan of the CAC was provided during the site visit and interviewed staff members indicated the CAC plays an important role in ensuring industry feedback and comments on the Web Media programme to ensure its contextualisation to the Bahraini context. During the site visit, however, the Panel was not provided with opportunity to meet the CAC members. The Panel acknowledges the role the CAC plays in providing feedback from industry and encourages the Faculty to ensure that the CAC meets regularly.
- 3.12 The Web Media programme is still relatively young (2010) and only 31 students have graduated from the time of its inception. Alumni and employers surveys have been formulated and are still awaiting senior management team approval [GE83]. The Panel appreciates that there is statistical evidence of good rates of graduate employment or further training after the programme has been completed and employers expressed satisfaction with the level of graduates to the Panel. During the site visit, the Panel had the opportunity to interview graduates as well as employers. Employers expressed their general satisfaction with the BWM graduate, programme's aims and objectives as well as graduates commitment and communication skills. The Panel appreciates the high level of employers' satisfaction towards the achievements of the BWM graduates. Interviewed graduates were also pleased with their studies and the fact that most had been able to find work. The Panel recommends that BP expedite the approval of the surveys, distribute and analyse them to enhance the delivery of the programme.

3.13 In coming to conclusion regarding the Academic Standards of the Graduates, the Panel noted, *with appreciation*, the following:

- Graduate attributes are clearly stated and embedded within the programme intended learning outcomes.
- Assessment procedures and methods are transparent, monitored and subjected to regular reviews.
- Effective system has been developed to ensure the alignment between course intended learning outcomes and assessment tools.
- There is a well-defined procedure for moderation that includes both pre and post-internal moderation and is implemented across the courses.
- Students' work is of an appropriate level and is consistent with similar programmes offered regionally and internationally.
- The internship programme provides students with clear guidelines and is appropriately assessed to ensure the achievement of the practical aspects of the programme learning outcome.
- There is a high level of employers' satisfaction towards the achievements of the BWM graduates.

3.14 In terms of improvement, the Panel **recommends** that the Faculty should:

- develop and implement a formal benchmarking policy to benchmark the BWM programme locally, regionally, and internationally
- inform moderators to give detailed written feedback on assessments
- expand the internal moderation procedure to include all forms of assessment
- expedite the implementation of external moderation of the programme
- expedite the approval of surveys, distribute and analyse them to enhance the delivery of the programme.

### 3.15 **Judgement**

On balance, the Panel concludes that the programme **satisfies** the Indicator on **Academic Standards of the Graduates**.

## 4. Indicator 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.*

- 4.1 There are general policies and procedures pertaining to the management of the programme where the Quality, Measurement, and Analysis Directorate at BP has the overall responsibility for monitoring the implementation of these policies and procedures across all academic programmes. On-site interviews with the Faculty administrative and academic personnel confirm the existence of policies and procedures that provide necessary support for maintaining academic standards and operation of the BWM programme. The Panel had access to several policies and procedures related to teaching and learning such as Assessment and Moderation, Students at Risk, Student Academic Appeal, Evaluation and Review, Academic Quality Assurance Committee (AQAC) Review Process Approval, and Creating Policies. Moreover, the Panel was provided with evidence of the quality-assurance management process that ensures the effectiveness of each policy. From the submitted documents and interviews with administrative, academic, and quality assurance staff, the Panel noted that BP implements policies effectively with the participation of all appropriate stakeholders. The Panel also notes that all policies related to students and staff are available on 'Moodle' and 'SharePoint', respectively. Interviewed students expressed their satisfaction with the availability and implementation of these policies. The Panel appreciates that BP has an effective quality management system that ensures the implementation of all policies across the institution.
- 4.2 The BWM is managed at different levels starting from the institutional level to the course co-ordinator level. Interviews with staff indicated that the Head of School supported by Programme Manager and Course Coordinators leads the delivery of the BWM programme, while the Programme Manager focuses on day-to-day matters including students and staff teaching BWM courses. Academic decisions are taken by the Programme Committee and endorsed by the Head of School, which are submitted to the Faculty Board for final approval. The Panel appreciates that the BWM programme has effective leadership to ensure the quality of its delivery.

- 4.3 The quality assurance system at BP is divided amongst several bodies; Quality Management System (QMS) and (AQAC). The former is responsible to manage all the policies and procedures while the latter ensures consistency in the implementation of these policies across all programmes. At the Faculty level, the Programme Manager Quality is responsible to maintain the standards of the quality assurance across all EDICT programmes. The Web Media Programme Committee plays a vital role in monitoring and evaluating the implementation of all the policies. During interviews, academic and administrative staff show clear understanding and involvement in all quality assurance processes at institutional and programme level. The Panel was provided with evidence showing an action list of the improvement plans for the BWM programme. The Panel appreciates that BP has a comprehensive quality assurance system that is applied, monitored and evaluated.
- 4.4 BP spreads quality assurance culture amongst its staff through training programmes and regular meetings or seminars. For example, all faculty members have to sign up in the Certificate in Tertiary Teaching and Learning programme, which is BP's in-house tutor training programme that lasts 150 hours, to strengthen their understanding of how to integrate quality assurance requirement in teaching. The Panel acknowledges that this policy effectively helps the academic staff to establish sufficient understanding of the quality assurance issues within their teaching practice. During interviews, the Panel was informed that new staff are expected to attend an induction programme to strengthen their understanding of the teaching requirements, including Problem-Based Learning (PBL) and quality assurance practices. In addition, staff are provided with the Quality Manual, which defines BP's quality assurance model, as well as the Standard Operating Procedures manual for the EDICT Faculty, which is intended as a guide for tutors on aspects of moderation, class delivery and assessments. Moreover, interviewed staff confirmed that all courses undergo internal moderation and they are involved in the process. Furthermore, academics and support staff confirmed their participation in several workshops organised by the Teaching and Learning Unit on the aforementioned aspects and they highlighted that quality assurance issues are always discussed during meetings and any updates or changes in the policies are communicated to them *via* email for possible comments and feedback. The Panel appreciates that BP staff are fully aware of the quality assurance requirements and take part in enhancing the ones related to their duties.
- 4.5 There are formal policies and procedures in place for the development of a new programme where essential factors are taken into account. The objective is to ensure that the new programmes are in line with BP's vision and mission. These factors include labour market needs, feedback from stakeholders, learning outcome alignment and internal and

external validations as per the QQA institutional listing standards. Interviewed staff clarified the process of introducing a new programme. This process is demonstrated in the SER mentioning all parties involved such as Faculty Board, AQAC, Academic Board, and Board of Trustees. Nonetheless, during interviews, the Panel was informed that until now no new programmes have been introduced by the Faculty of EDICT. The Panel is satisfied with the existence of policies and procedures to introduce new programmes whenever needed.

- 4.6 There is a formal policy for the annual internal review of the programme which is conducted by the Curriculum Unit and AQAC during which academic tutors, programme managers meet to discuss employers and Academic Advisory Committee's feedback so that suitable actions are taken. The process starts by evaluating each course in detail and concludes with a list of actions to be taken which is translated into a new action plan and areas for improvements. The BWM programme committee and Faculty Board monitor the process throughout the year. Interviewed staff indicated their participation in reviewing each course and developing the action plan. The Panel notes that although the process is clear and followed; yet evidence of actions taken after the revision was not sufficient to provide further enhancement and improvement to the programme. The Panel recommends that the Faculty of Engineering, Design and ICT further utilise the generated data from the annual programme review to improve its quality assurance system and strengthen the delivery of the programme.
- 4.7 Periodic programme review at BP is grounded by policies including Programme Approval, Assessment and Moderation, and Evaluation and Review. According to the Programmes Approval Policy programmes are reviewed every four years where academic staff members and programme managers consider: student progression, moderation procedures, learning outcomes, feedback from employers, and staff needs for professional development. Upon the completion of the review, recommendations are produced in order to improve the quality assurance management. During interview sessions, the Panel was informed that the BWM programme is under full review as of May 2015 and should be completed by December 2015. The Panel is satisfied with the efforts of the EDICT Faculty to conduct a periodic review for its programmes every four years.
- 4.8 BP acquires feedback *via* its Institutional Quality Survey Framework, which includes surveys on tutors, courses, student experience, student services, and alumni. Analysis of these surveys is used to enhance the quality of the programme and its delivery. From interviews, the Panel was informed that alumni and employers' surveys have been drafted and awaiting the approval of senior management. Students surveys are analysed by the Quality, Measurement and Analysis Unit (QMAP) and results are forwarded to the

Dean, Head of School, and teaching staff. Interviewed staff expressed their satisfaction with the results of the surveys as these results led into enhancing their professional development plans and improving the quality of the programme delivery. The Panel recommends that BP expedite the implementation of the alumni and employers' surveys to strengthen the programme and ensure that it caters for the market needs.

- 4.9 Efficient and effective procedures are in place to ensure the effectiveness of staff professional development. This is characterised by identifying staff needs in a bottom-up manner, running series of in-house training sessions, providing opportunities for external training and conferences attendance and completing the Certificate in Tertiary Teaching and Learning (CTTL), which is a 150-hour training programme offered in-house for new members of staff to improve their teaching skills. Moreover, a hierarchical management system across faculty members, Human Resources, and various academic boards/committees provide ample opportunities to create culture of engagement and learning. During interviews, staff expressed their satisfaction with the arrangements in place for professional development and clarified that an evaluation form for each training session is circulated to collect feedback on these trainings. The Panel appreciates the current arrangements in place for staff professional development. Notwithstanding the above, the Panel notices that the component of research is absent from the staff's activities which was highlighted during interviews. Staff indicated that they keep their materials updated regularly to inform students about the latest trends in the Web Media field. Although the Panel acknowledges their efforts; yet staff ought to be encouraged to conduct applied research.
- 4.10 The SER states that BP relies on the view of Curriculum Advisory Committee (CAC) members to provide the industry's feedback to BP to fulfil its mission. Interviewed employers expressed their satisfaction with the BWM graduates and praised their attitude to learning at the workplace. The Panel acknowledges that there are interactions between the quality assurance management and the programme to ensure that it is updated in accordance with inputs from (CAC) on labour market needs. Nevertheless, the Panel concludes that no evidence was seen on a formal process for scoping the labour market. Hence, the Panel recommends that the Faculty introduce a formal mechanism for the continuous scoping of the labour market needs to ensure that the programme is appropriately contextualised and up-to-date with Bahrain's market needs.

4.11 In coming to its conclusion regarding the Effectiveness of Quality Management and Assurance, the Panel notes, *with appreciation*, the following:

- The effective quality management system that ensures the implementation of all policies across the institution.
- The effective leadership that ensures the quality of the programme delivery.
- The comprehensive quality assurance system is implemented, monitored and evaluated.
- Staff members are fully aware of the quality assurance requirements and are involved in enhancing the ones related to their duties.
- There are effective arrangements in place to provide staff with professional development.

4.12 In terms of improvement, the Panel **recommends** that the Faculty should:

- further utilise the generated data from the annual programme review to improve the quality assurance system and strengthen the delivery of the programme
- expedite the implementation of the alumni and employers' surveys to strengthen the programme and ensure that it caters for the market needs
- introduce a formal mechanism for the continuous scoping of the labour market needs.

#### 4.13 **Judgement**

On balance, the Panel concludes that the programme **satisfies** the Indicator on **The Effectiveness of Quality Management and Assurance**.

## 5. Conclusion

Taking into account the institution's own self-evaluation report, the evidence gathered from the interviews and documentation made available during the site visit, the Panel draws the following conclusion in accordance with the DHR/QQA *Programmes-within-College Reviews Handbook, 2014*:

**There is confidence in the Bachelor of Web Media offered by the Bahrain Polytechnic.**