

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



Directorate of Higher Education Reviews

Programmes-within-College Reviews Report

**Bachelor of Science in Business Management
College of Business Administration
Kingdom University
Kingdom of Bahrain**

Date Reviewed: 27-29 October 2014
HC049-C2-R049

Table of Contents

Acronyms.....	2
1. The Programmes-within-College Reviews Process	4
2. Indicator 1: The Learning Programme.....	8
3. Indicator 2: Efficiency of the Programme	13
4. Indicator 3: Academic Standards of the Graduates	21
5. Indicator 4: Effectiveness of Quality Management and Assurance.....	29
6. Conclusion.....	34

Acronyms

AACSB	The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business
AQAO	Accreditation and Quality Assurance Office
BSFA	Bachelor of Science in Finance and Accounting
BSFB	Bachelor of Science in Finance and Banking
BSBM	Bachelor of Science in Business Management
CILO	Course Intended Learning Outcome
CCRMC	College Curriculum Review and Monitoring Committee
DHR	Directorate of Higher Education Reviews
GPA	Grade Point Average
HEC	Higher Education Council
ILO	Intended Learning Outcome
KU	Kingdom University
LACS	Library Access Control System
LMS	Learning Management System
PILO	Programme Intended Learning Outcome
QA	Quality Assurance
QAA-UK	The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education – United Kingdom
QMS	Quality Management System
QQA	National Authority for Qualifications & Quality Assurance of Education & Training –Bahrain

SER	Self-Evaluation Report
SIS	Student Information System

1. The Programmes-within-College Reviews Process

1.1 The Programmes-within-College Reviews Framework

To meet the need to have 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 which 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

Criteria	Judgement
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 Indicator 1 is not satisfied	

1.2 The Programmes-within-College Reviews Process at the Kingdom University

A Programmes-within-College review of the programmes offered by the College of Business Administration 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 on 27-29 October 2014 for the academic programmes offered by the College; these are Bachelor of Science in Business Management, Bachelor of Science in Finance and Banking and Bachelor of Science in Finance and Accounting.

This Report provides an account of the review process and the findings of the Panel for the Bachelor of Science in Business Management based on the Self-Evaluation Report (SER) and appendices submitted by Kingdom University (KU), the supplementary documentation made available during the site visit, as well as interviews and observations made during the review site visit.

The Kingdom University was notified by the DHR/QQA on 12 May 2014 that it would be subject to a Programmes-within-College review of its College of Business Administration with the site visit taking place on 27-29 October 2014. In preparation for the review, KU conducted self-evaluation of all the programmes offered by the College and submitted the SERs with appendices on the agreed date on 24 August 2014. The DHR constituted a panel consisting of experts in the academic field of

Business, Accounting, Finance and in higher education who have experience of external programme quality reviews. The Panel comprised four external reviewers.

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

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

It is expected that KU will use the findings presented in this report to strengthen its Bachelor of Science in Business Management (BSBM). The DHR recognizes that quality assurance is the responsibility of the higher education institution itself. Hence, it is the right of KU to decide how it will address the recommendations contained in the Review Report. Nevertheless, three months after the publication of this Report, KU is required to submit to the DHR an improvement plan in response to the recommendations.

The DHR would like to extend its thanks to KU 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 in the BSBM programme and the interviewed staff members of the institution.

1.3 Overview of the College of Business Administration

The College of Business Administration is one of four colleges within the Kingdom University (KU). The College was established in 2001 with a mission to be 'a leading business university in Bahrain, known for its high standards in academic programmes, research and community engagement' as stated in the SER.

The College currently comprises two departments, namely: Department of Business Management and Department of Finance and Accounting. The College offers three undergraduate programmes (Bachelor of Science in Business Management, Bachelor of Science in Finance and Banking, Bachelor of Science in Finance and Accounting).

At the time of the site visit, there were 27 students enrolled in the programmes with 10 faculty members contributing to the delivery of all the programmes.

1.4 Overview of the Bachelor of Science in Business Management

The (BSBM) programme, is managed by the Department of Business Management, and was first offered in September 2004 academic year with 16 students enrolled. The

programme was last reviewed in 2011-2012 and resulted in introducing many changes. A total number of 148 students have graduated since the commencement of the programme. During the academic year 2009-2010 admission to the programme was stopped by the Higher Education Council (HEC). The BSBM programme is delivered in English. There are 10 academic staff contributing to the delivery of the programme and one student was enrolled in the BSBM programme at the time of the site visit.

1.5 Summary of Review Judgements

Table 2: Summary of Review Judgements for the Bachelor of Science in Business Management:

Indicator	Judgement
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
Overall Judgement	Confidence

2. Indicator 1: The Learning Programme

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

- 2.1 Kingdom University has clear mission and vision statements both at a university and college level. These statements are available to and accessible by staff and students on the University Website and the Student Handbook. The Bachelor of Science in Business Management (BSBM) programme framework is aligned to the programme aims, objectives and Programme Intended Learning Outcomes (PILOs) which support the mission and vision statements of the College. The programme has been designed to reflect the local, regional and international market needs. The Panel examined the evidence showing how the programme aims are mapped to the university's and the college's mission and vision statements. The Panel appreciates that the programme aims are clearly stated and contribute to the achievement of the college's and the institution's mission and vision.
- 2.2 The curriculum of the BSBM programme is well-designed to provide academic progression year-on-year and course-by-course through defined pre-request structure, with suitable workloads for students. The BSBM programme is structured to enable students to get their degree in four academic years. It consists of 24 credit hours of university requirements, 93 credit hours of major requirements and 12 credit hours of core elective courses. The programme has gone through a number of reviews last of which was during the academic year 2012-2013. However, changes introduced to the curriculum in the last review are yet to be implemented once there is new intake to the programme. The Panel is satisfied with the way in which progression is apparent in developing the knowledge and skills of student and the achievement of a balance between theory and practice. This is evident in individual course specifications and the explicit statement of learning outcomes. Interviews with staff confirmed that subject specific and thinking skills are progressively developed at levels one and two. At levels three and four, staff indicated that more case studies and case analysis are required of students as these involve some independent learning, individual research using a variety of sources and a greater expectation of personal responsibility for reading before and after classes. In particular, the Graduation Project was highlighted as one of the courses in level four which explicitly combines these requirements and which evidence this progression. Interviews with staff further clarified that the balance between theory and practice is achieved through a variety of means including talks from industry experts and field visits. The Panel enquired about the classification of student workload per semester and staff explained that theoretical and practical aspects along with assessment methods are standardized from level one to level four. The range of the BSBM courses is consistent with similar programmes in Business Management offered at

regional and international institutions. The Panel appreciates that the curriculum is organised to provide academic progression, a balance between knowledge and skills and theory and practice, with suitable workload for students.

- 2.3 The syllabus of the BSBM programme is organized to meet current developments in the field in order to link recent professional practice and research. This is achieved through a formal process, with the aid of an external moderator/examiner and in partnership with practitioners who are members of the College Industrial Council. Course Specifications were provided to the Panel, it was noted that the course specifications outline the list of topics and content, the Course Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs), teaching methods, assessment methods and their alignments to specific CILOs. During interviews with staff examples of developments to reflect current developments in the field included the more extensive use of international case studies in appropriate courses, field visits to industry and student work on business planning when taking the 'Forecasting for Business' course (MGT 475). The Panel interviewed students and alumni and both confirmed that they had benefited from all the above practices. The Panel appreciates that the course syllabus is well-documented and has sufficient breadth and depth to support the delivery of the programme.
- 2.4 The programme has clearly defined Programme Intended Learning Outcomes (PILOs) covering Knowledge and Understanding, Subject Specific Skills, Thinking Skills and General Transferable Skills and an explicit mapping of these to programme aims at the appropriate level of learning. These are documented in the Programme Specifications. Upon reviewing this information, the Panel interviewed BSBM staff who clarified the extent to which all of the programme aims (in particular programme aim no. 8, business research and innovative and creative problem solving) matched PILOs and all of the skills areas noted above. Similarly, the achievement of general and transferable skills occur in research and problem solving courses such as English for Academic Practice (ENGL101 and ENGL102), Business and Company Law (LAW203), Business Ethics (MGT411) and Entrepreneurship (MGT 473). The Panel appreciates that the PILOs are aligned to the programme aims and objectives, cover all major areas of the BSBM programme and are in accordance with its level.
- 2.5 Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs) are clearly stated in the Course Specifications. There is good evidence of effective mapping of the course ILOs to the programme ILOs which in turn, as stated earlier, are aligned to programme aims and objectives. During staff interviews, they emphasised that they focus on developing group work and presentation skills to ensure that graduates acquire the intended learning outcomes and are able to compete in the labour market. A relevant example is the Graduation Project which includes a component for presentation in the

assessment. This was confirmed in interviews with employers who expressed their satisfaction towards the level of the BSBM graduates. The Panel notes that academic staff have embraced the learning outcomes at course and programme levels. Considerable effort has been taken to ensure that appropriate mapping has occurred. In interviews with students, there was appropriate recognition and understanding of the importance of the course learning outcomes. Student interviews confirmed that there was also a good level of understanding that learning outcomes were reflected in their assessments. The Panel appreciates the effective mapping of the intended learning outcomes at course and programme levels.

2.6 The BSBM programme includes a mandatory internship programme consisting of nine credit hours over a period of eight weeks where students are expected to attend 200 hours of on-job training. The Panel is of the view that the credit hours assigned to the internship is on the high side in relation to the amount of work expected from students. The programme team informed the Panel that this has been addressed in the latest revision of the programme. Students are required to complete 105 credit hours before they would be eligible to enrol on the internship programme. The College has a Practical Training Procedure which states the mechanism for undertaking and assessing the course (see 4.10). During interviews, staff indicated that the practical training course is the culmination of the opportunity for students to apply, realise and actualise the skills and knowledge previously acquired in the programme to the actual work context. This is clearly stated in the course specification (MGT490). Interviewed alumni clarified that they learnt a lot from the internship programme and highlighted that they benefited from the reflective practice during their internship as it allowed them to think about how things are done and how to improve further. The Panel encourages the programme team to continue to utilize the reflective practice as it was positively received by students. The Panel appreciates that there is a well-stated procedure for the internship programme and it is effectively implemented to enhance students' learning experience. However, the Panel recommends that the College revise the total number of credit hours allocated for the internship programme.

2.7 The BSBM programme is guided by a University Teaching and Learning Policy which documents the range of teaching principles and methods that suits the delivery of a Bachelor Degree. These methods include interactive lectures, group discussion, seminars, practical work, external web sourced material, case studies and articles. The Panel appreciates that there is an appropriate teaching and learning policy which is applied in all courses to support the achievement of the course ILOs and the programme aims and ILOs. Having reviewed course specifications and associated teaching plans, the Panel appreciates the wide range of teaching methods including the development of case study in the BSBM courses; and notes that the assessment of the BSBM courses reflected these different methods well. During

interview sessions, staff members highlighted that best practices in learning and teaching are disseminated throughout the College, and between and across the programmes. Staff also confirmed that the University implements a peer (classroom) review of teaching and offers incentive schemes based on performance criteria. The Panel noted that the Accreditation and Quality Assurance Office (AQAO) invites international experts in the field to exchange their ideas and professional knowledge with staff. The Panel also noted the opportunities provided to expose students to professional practice and the application of theory into practice. Interviews with both staff and students highlighted the importance placed on field visits, talks by industry speakers and community engagement. Students interviewed by the Panel highlighted that these different teaching methods allow them to link theory with practice. However, the Panel notes that independent learning is not formally and systematically developed within the programme. Therefore, the Panel recommends that the programme team develop more structured opportunities for independent learning tasks to fully achieve the PILOs.

- 2.8 There is a university wide policy for Assessment Procedures and a Students Work Assessment Policy developed by the College of Business Administration. Each Course Specification contains an assessment schedule, assessment methods and weighting for each assessment. In general, the Panel notes that these assessments aim to cover the broad spectrum of the CILOs and PILOs. Staff interviewed indicated there is a transparent mechanism for grading students' work which is fair and robust. The College has policies and procedures for providing timely feedback to students. Moreover, there are mechanisms for internal and external moderation. Staff interviewed clarified that according to university regulations, students have the right to be re-assessed in their final examinations, and to appeal their grades. Complaints related to grades are dealt with through the Grievance Committee of the College. Faculty complete 'Assessment Report Template Form' and provide guidance to students on how to improve their academic performance. The Panel notes that students are fully aware of the assessment policies and procedures and the allocation of marks for all kinds of assessments including class participation, projects, quizzes, assignments and examinations. The Panel appreciates that assessment procedures are transparent and have been established to promote fairness and rigour and that these procedures are known to academics and students. However, the Panel notes that the assessment policy allocates the same weightings of marks across all courses despite the nature and level of the course and the type of CILOs to be achieved. The Panel recommends that the College revise the current distribution of marks for different types of assessments across all the BSBM courses to ensure that these weightings are suitable to the type and level of learning outcomes the students should achieve through each course.

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

- Programme aims are clearly stated and contribute to the achievement of university's mission and vision statements.
- The curriculum of the BSBM programme is organized to provide academic progression, a balance between knowledge and skills and theory and practice, with suitable workload for students.
- The syllabus of the BSBM is comparable to similar programmes, well-documented and has sufficient breadth and depth to support the delivery of the programme.
- There is an effective mapping of the intended learning outcomes at course and programme level.
- Programme intended learning outcomes are appropriately aligned to the programme aims and objectives, cover all major areas of the BSBM programme and are in accordance with its level.
- There is a well-stated procedure for the internship programme and it is effectively implemented to enhance students' learning experience.
- There is an appropriate teaching and learning policy which support a wide range of teaching methods and the achievement of the course intended learning outcomes and the programme aims and intended learning outcomes.
- Transparent assessment procedures have been established to promote fairness and rigour; and these procedures are known to academics and students.

2.10 In terms of improvement the Panel **recommends** that the College should:

- develop more structured opportunities for independent learning tasks to fully achieve programme intended learning outcomes
- revise the total number of credit hours allocated for the internship programme to ensure a match between the amount of work accomplished by students and the assigned credit
- revise the current distribution of marks for different types of assessments across all BSBM courses to ensure that these weightings are suitable to the type and level of learning outcomes the students should achieve through each course.

2.11 **Judgement**

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

3. 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.

- 3.1 Admission to the BSBM programme is in accordance with KU wide admission policy. The policy is published on the University Website and is also available in the Student Handbook and is periodically reviewed. A detailed admission procedure including transferred students is provided in the University Admission Procedure. The policy divides the applicants into two categories. Those with 65% and above from a recognized secondary school and those with less than 65%. The former ones have to pass an interview which aims to test whether the applicant is suitable for the BSBM programme or not. Once passed, the applicant has to pass two admission tests in English and Mathematics to be eligible to register in the programme. If the applicant fails in one of the tests, he/she is given a conditional registration during which the applicant has to undertake English Foundation, Basic Mathematics and University required courses. Applicants with less than 65% have to pass an interview in order to get a conditional registration provided that they undertake an orientation programme consisting of Arabic, English, Foundation Business and Foundation Mathematics to strengthen their skills and background. During interviews with staff, they clarified that if a student score at least 5.5 in IELTS or 550 in TOEFL he/she would be exempted from the English language test. It was evident from the interview sessions conducted with staff and students that they were fully aware of the admission policy and confirmed the procedures taken to enrol on the BSBM programme. The Panel is satisfied that the requirements of the admission policy are suitable and transparent.
- 3.2 The Panel notes that the profile of the admitted students to the BSBM programme matches the programme aims. The Panel notes from the SER that the Department requires all applicants to the BSBM programme to pass an interview regardless of their score in high school whether it was 65% or less along with an English placement test, or enrol in an English language orientation course if the minimum requirement is not achieved. The SER notes that a detailed student profile is generated by the Admission and Registration Department. These profiles incorporate information on educational background of students, as well as any relevant work experience and other training that would indicate a good match with the programme. In interviews with staff, they confirmed that these detailed student profiles were used to inform course instructors, academic advisers and the student counsellor of the details pertaining to each student and that this was used to enhance course delivery and counselling practice. The Panel is satisfied that the profile of admitted students matches the aims of the BSBM programme. Nonetheless, the Panel

recommends that the College conduct a study to evaluate students' performance against their entry profile to further inform admission process and decision-making.

- 3.3 The Self-Evaluation Report provides a diagram indicating the line management structure and the different roles and responsibilities of each staff members. The Panel notes that these roles are clearly identified in the staff's job descriptions. The Panel notes from various interviews with the senior management and academic staff that there is an evident line management structure in operation for the BSBM programme. The programme is managed by the Department Chairperson. Individual courses are managed by assigned staff members; while multi-section courses are managed by assigned Course Coordinators who are responsible to ensure that courses are up-to-date and intended learning outcomes are fully achieved in the courses. There is also a functioning academic committee structure which includes a Department Council, Curriculum Review and Monitoring Committee, Examinations Committee and Grievance Committee. The Panel examined several evidence of the effectiveness of these committees and is satisfied with the current arrangement as it facilitates the management of the programme. The Panel appreciates that the programme is well-managed as there are clear lines of responsibility and accountability embedded in the structures related to the management of the BSBM programme.
- 3.4 During interviews with staff, the Panel noted that the programme is well-served by its staff who offer a variety of appropriate specialisms to deliver the BSBM programme. There are 10 academic staff members contributing to the delivery of the programme. These staff members are also responsible for delivering the other two programmes offered by the College. The student-staff ratio in the BSBM programme is 1:2. The CVs of the academic staff who are teaching on the programme confirmed that there is a diversified range of academic ranks such as Professor (1), Associate Professor (3), Assistant Professor (6) and a part-time Lecturer (1). The average number of years of teaching experience is approximately 20. During interviews with staff, the Panel was informed that KU adheres to the regulation with respect to the teaching load of its staff. Hence, Professorial staff deliver (9) credit hours per week, Associate Professors deliver (12) credit hours and Assistant Professors (15) credit hours. KU's policies provide academic staff with support to present a paper in one conference annually at a regional/international level annually. The Panel examined some of the individual research plans of academic staff and reviewed the type of publications by staff. The Panel notes the staff's long years of teaching experience and the wide range of their specialism which contributed effectively to the delivery of the programme.
- 3.5 The Human Resources Department at KU is responsible for implementing policies related to recruitment, appraisal, retention and promotion of academic staff. The

SER clarified that a proactive approach to sourcing of staff led by an initial manpower plan prepared by the Department Council, consolidated by the College Council and the Deans' Council. The Deans' Council recommendations are then passed to the Human Resources Department for final endorsement and processing. During interviews, staff clarified that the Chairperson of the Department is responsible for developing the work plan and advising on the detailed requirements for programme delivery. KU has a formal appraisal system during which the University adopts 360° performance evaluation system. The appraisal form consists of peer evaluation of classes, self-evaluation and superior evaluation. The Panel noted that regular staff appraisal is undertaken. Interviews with staff clarified that student evaluation of course delivery helped the promotion of teaching staff. There is a clear Promotion Policy that stipulates the criteria needed and the procedures followed for promotion. The Panel was informed that seven staff members had been promoted during the last three academic years. The Panel also reviewed the minutes of the University Promotion Committee. From the interview sessions and evidence provided, the Panel concluded that the University has robust and transparent policies and procedures for ensuring that staff are recruited, appraised, promoted, and retained. Furthermore, KU had developed Staff Development Procedure and Staff Development Policy document. The latter stipulates that all academic staff are eligible to attend at least one international conference each year. Moreover, 20% of the academic staff time is allocated to enable them to work on research and scholarly activities. New staff members are inducted by relevant staff members within a month before their first semester of teaching after which they are assigned to the Department Chairperson who would be responsible for developing their work plan. Staff interviewed showed full awareness and clear understanding of these policies and procedures. The Panel appreciates that recruitment, retention and promotion procedures are sufficient for effective programme delivery on the BSBM programme.

- 3.6 The Self-Evaluation Report details the nature of information provided by the Enterprise Resource Planner (ERP) to underpin decision-making related to Admissions and Registration, Finance, Purchasing Services and the Human Resources. The ERP is accessed through Adaptive Tech Solution (ATS) based on Oracle and Java. During interviews, staff indicated that training is provided to facilitate access and that there is a special account code to control the access of users and level of authorization. The College operates on a Student Information System (SIS) which has five main functions: admission, registration, grading, academic affairs and academic follow-up. The latter includes information about tracking of students, data on student suspensions, course/instructor evaluations and advisory roles and matters relating to overall programme structure, Grade Point Averages (GPAs) and graduations. During the site visit, the Panel had the opportunity to view the operation of the ERP and the SIS and was highly satisfied with the efficacy of these two systems. Based on interviews with staff, there were no reports of any

security incidents as both ERP and SIS systems are protected by tiers of security and firewalls and that front end applications are provided through two separate networks with daily back up. The Panel acknowledges that the ERP is accessible, secure and provides appropriate end user access.

- 3.7 KU has policies and procedures in place to ensure the security of student records. These policies and procedures include a Retention Record Policy, Assessment Policy, Assessment Procedures, Backup procedure and Archiving procedure. The Panel notes that all these represent a comprehensive range of initiatives supported by an effective Adaptive Tech Solution (ATS). The Panel also learned from the interviews that KU has a Disaster Recovery Plan during which data is backed-up periodically to avoid any potential loss of data through disasters such as fire or earthquake. There are two backup systems of records: on-site and off-site. The former is at the university and the latter at another local university campus. Staff interviewed clarified that KU has several procedures with respect to students deemed 'at-risk' and privacy when exchanging information during which a defined authorization mechanism is implemented to protect the security of data. Accuracy of students' results is facilitated by 'Edugate' software which is integrated with ATS. Before marks are approved, they should be reviewed independently by Department Chairperson and thereafter to the College Dean for authentication. A final validation is done by the Admission and Registration Department. Then marks and results are on the system and could then be accessed by students. The Panel is satisfied with the arrangements in place to protect students' records. Mid-term examinations are monitored by the College Examination Committee whereas final examinations are monitored and supervised by the University Examination Committee (both types of examinations are conducted in accordance with the Assessment procedure specified in. Interviews with academic and administrative staff confirmed the implementation of the approval and validation procedures. When touring the facilities, the Panel was informed that KU has two archiving rooms to store and protect learners' records and other important documents. The Panel appreciates that there are policies and procedures, consistently implemented, to ensure security of learner records and accuracy of results.
- 3.8 The site visit demonstrated that the physical and material resources (library, staff offices, 15 lecture rooms equipped with electronic projectors, multipurpose hall for seminars or workshops, a Wi-Fi enabled campus and a bookstore) are all adequate in number, space, style and equipment for the needs of the programme. The Panel notes that the University allocates sufficient social space for students including breakout areas where students can interact with their friends, work on their projects or play tennis table. This engenders a caring and supportive environment for students and staff. Library and learning resources are new and provide a conducive and stimulating environment for study. During the site visit, the Panel reviewed the

range of library resources available to students including books, e-books, journals, databases, audio-visual materials and open-access e-resources. The Panel acknowledges the level of investment in databases such as the Business Source Elite database which provides full access to 1000 business publications. This is a very useful tool for both teaching and research purposes. In terms of physical resources, there are four computer laboratories containing 98 computers, where each laboratory can accommodate 25 students. The physical facilities also included anti-plagiarism software (Turnitin), Google Apps, digital signage and IP TV, as well as a wide range of other generic and subject-specific software. The Panel was satisfied with the range and access students have to extensive e-learning course texts and journal subscriptions. During interviews, the Panel learnt that there is a policy in place that class size should not exceed 38 students to enhance students' learning experience. The Panel acknowledges that the University has sufficient physical and material facilities to resource the programme and enhance students' learning experience.

- 3.9 Laboratory tracking system (LABSTATS) is used to track the usage of laboratories, e-learning and e-resources. Data extracted from the education management system is utilized to monitor the usage of the e-learning platform. LABSTATS generates reports that include data on current supply, use of resources and the need for additional ones whenever necessary. Moreover, these reports provide data on logins per college, per majors, and usage levels for different types of software. Further drilling down provides head counts and generates reports on faculty and student visits to the library and their duration. The University also subscribes to the Library Access Control System (LACS) which provides a headcount of the usage by staff and students from all the colleges including the duration of time of their usage. The education management system has a dedicated coordinator to help students and staff when using it. The system has been developed using the Moodle Open Source platform which can be further developed to design appropriate reporting formats on e-learning usage and to ensure appropriate access. The Panel acknowledges the adequate tracking systems used to determine the usage of e-learning and other e-resources and encourages the College to further utilize the generated reports.
- 3.10 As stated earlier, the library delivers a variety of services to users on lending, reference, photocopies, information literacy, and library orientation. Information literacy sessions are conducted frequently to make users aware of the array of library services and more generally how to effectively find and use information. The library has also prepared subject guides, institutional brochures and user guides. The site visit confirmed that KU library staff are enthusiastic, qualified and experienced in supporting the learning and research environment of the library which is new and spacious in order to house the current and future library collections. The Library subscribes to selective e-resources, wireless internet access and adequate ICT equipment to facilitate learning and research. During the site visit, the Panel learned

that library resources recommended by faculty are always purchased. The site visit also confirmed that teaching classes and computer labs are appropriately equipped. There is also a dedicated and supportive counselling service for students that is adequately resourced. This includes provision for physically challenged students who need special care and access to suitable library facilities, multimedia PCs, display table and accessible shelving. Access for wheel chairs, power chairs and accessible paths are also provided for students with special needs. When touring the facilities, the Panel noted that there is a Medical Care Centre with a dedicated nurse who is available during the day. During interviews, The Panel raised the issue of appropriate cover for evening classes and how accidents might be logged when the nurse is not on site and the Panel was satisfied that alternative arrangements were in place. The Panel appreciates the arrangements in place and the support provided by the library, the Medical Care Centre, and the IT facilities.

- 3.11 At the commencement of each semester the Office of the Dean of Student Affairs offers an orientation programme during which an opportunity is provided for all students including transferred ones to undertake a campus tour to familiarise themselves with the university facilities and to be introduced to the administrative and academic staff. The Panel notes that the Dean of the College, academic staff and the Department Chairperson are all involved in the orientation process. Students are informed about issues related to the registration, code of conduct, elective and core courses, prerequisites of courses, grade distribution, how to calculate their Grade Point Average (GPA) and procedures for adding/dropping courses. All students are introduced to their academic advisors and given Students' Handbook for further information. During interviews, students confirmed the orientation process and praised the efforts of the University in conducting the orientation day. They also highlighted that they are encouraged to make use of the follow-up sessions provided by the faculty members from time to time. The Panel appreciates the current arrangements for the induction programme.
- 3.12 Student progress is tracked continually by Admission and Registration Office, College Dean, Department Chairperson along with students' academic advisors. At-risk students are identified as those with a cumulative GPA of 2.00 or less in any given semester throughout their study period of the BSBM programme. During the site visit, the Panel was provided with a Student at-Risk policy and Student at-risk Procedure both of them clearly state the key responsibilities of students, the Admission and Registration Office, the Dean and the academic advisors in identifying and providing support for at-risk students. During interviews, the Panel was informed that the University policy stipulates that students who completed 75% of the total credit hours would be exempted from dismissal provided that their GPA is not below 1.8. Such students are allowed to register again in the courses they failed to enable them to raise their GPA provided that the duration of their study does not

exceed eight years. The academic advisor has to meet students regularly and keep an updated record of their progress. The Panel reviewed samples of at-risk students' profiles and it was apparent that appropriate actions had been taken. Interviews with students, confirmed their full awareness with student at-risk policy and highlighted that they are always getting the support and advice from their academic advisors and the Admission and Registration Office. It was also noted by the Panel that a new Learning Management System (LMS) is to be utilized by the University to identify students at-risk after 5-6 weeks of commencement of their courses. The Panel is satisfied with the current academic support provided to track students at risk and intervening where needed; yet the Panel recommends that the University expedite the utilization of the Learning Management System (LMS) to enhance the process of identifying students at-risk.

- 3.13 The learning environment at KU is conducive to expanding the student experience and knowledge through informal learning. In particular, the Panel was satisfied by the activities and the priority placed on community engagement and the development of transferable skills embedded in course specification. The Panel considered this as good practice and something which should be continued. There was clear evidence of the use of industry speakers attending the University to enhance the student learning experience. From interview sessions, the Panel noted that the Industrial Advisory Council and alumni were fully supportive and offered suggestions to introduce more informal activities. During interviews, students appreciated the efforts of the University to reinforce informal learning by regular career awareness workshops, scientific visits to key sites and enabling them to participate and get awards from national competitions. Students highlighted that they were encouraged by the Deanship of Student Affairs and the Career Guidance Unit of the University to contribute to social service activities and volunteering. The Panel acknowledges the learning environment provided to enhance students' informal learning experience.
- 3.14 In coming to its conclusion regarding the Efficiency of the Programme, the Panel notes, *with appreciation*, the following:
- The programme is well-managed and there are clear lines of responsibility and accountability embedded in the structures related to the management of the BSBM programme.
 - Procedures on recruitment, retention and promotion are in place to support the delivery of the BSBM.
 - There are policies and procedures, consistently implemented, to ensure security of learner records and accuracy of results.
 - Appropriate support is provided to the BSBM students by the library, the Medical Care Centre, and the IT facilities.

- The orientation programme is well-organized to induct new and transferred students.

3.15 In terms of improvement, the Panel **recommends** that the College should:

- conduct a study to evaluate students' performance against their entry profile to further inform admission process and decision- making
- expedite the utilization of the Learning Management System (LMS) to enhance the process of identifying students at-risk.

3.16 **Judgement**

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

4. Indicator 3: Academic Standards of the Graduates

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

- 4.1 The College of Business Administration has defined 16 graduate attributes (knowledge, skills and behaviours) to enable students to compete and face workplace challenges. These graduate attributes are well-stated and mapped to the programme's aims and ILOs. Graduate attributes are mainly gained through a number of courses such as (MKT312), (MGT322), (MGT202) and (MGT466). Interviews with employers indicated that BSBM graduates are confident, work-ready, knowledgeable and able to face work place challenges. The Panel was provided with a range of evidence showing the varied opportunities for students to develop and achieve the stated graduate attributes, which was confirmed by interviewed students. The Panel notes that valid assessment methods are used to measure the achievement of the ILOs which are linked to the stated graduate attributes. The Panel appreciates that graduate attributes are clearly stated and mapped with the BSBM programme aims and PILOs to provide valuable learning opportunities for students.
- 4.2 The BSBM programme is benchmarked locally, regionally and internationally to ensure that the quality and academic standards of the programme are comparable with programmes offered at various universities. The benchmarking has clearly influenced the design of the programme and courses. The scope of the benchmarking covered areas related to graduate attributes, admission requirements, programme aims, Programme Intended Learning Outcomes (PILOs), teaching and learning strategy, assessment process and methods, curriculum, course syllabi, student workloads, student achievements and progression of courses. The SER states 'the University recognizes the importance of internal benchmarking and seeks to identify and spread best practice in any areas administrative or academic work of the University.' Interviews with staff, clarified that the process of benchmarking is directed by the Dean of College and involves a number of key staff including the Department Chairperson and Head of the university's Quality Assurance Department. It was very apparent during interviews with staff that good progress has been made in this area and that, for examination, the introduction of case-based methods in teaching, learning and assessment and progress in the implementation of reflective practice in the assessment of the internship generally provided evidence of this. The Panel appreciates the staff's effort for these practices and especially that the programme team was able to clearly define the purpose of benchmarking, the choice of what is benchmarked and against what and how the process is managed and how outcomes are used. The Panel also noted that the current selection of institutions for benchmarking demonstrates the ambitions of Kingdom University in line with its

strategic intent. The Panel notes that the University has appropriate internal and external reference points such as the QQA in Bahrain and the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) in the UK. The Panel appreciates the efforts of the College to benchmark its BSBM programme with local, regional and international universities and professional bodies. However, as benchmarking is done informally, these activities are conducted at surface level and reduced mainly to matching some of the programme specifications available on the website. The Panel recommends that the College formalize its benchmarking to fully realize the objectives of doing it.

- 4.3 Assessment policies and procedures on the BSBM programme are in line with the general KU Assessment and Feedback policy. These policies are clearly stated and communicated to students and are subject to review at university and college level committees. The Grade Point Average (GPA) and equivalent ratings in the programme are clearly described in the Student Handbook. During interviews with students, they expressed their satisfaction with the different assessment methods applied by course instructors. Staff further confirmed to the Panel that the assessment procedures are carefully designed to be consistent with course ILOS. Moreover, the assessment methods and procedures are monitored and reviewed by College Dean, the Quality Assurance Department, the Department Council and the Programme Review and Development Committee. Several meetings are held to discuss these issues. The Panel appreciates that the assessment methods and procedures are transparent, consistently implemented and subject to regular reviews.
- 4.4 The Self Evaluation Review noted that considerable effort had been made to ensure a constructive alignment between PILOs, CILOs and assessment methods which test learning outcomes through students' work. Learning outcomes are measured through different methods of assessments including class participation, assignments and case studies, quizzes, mid-term and final examinations. These are checked by internal moderators and external examiners. The Department Chairman has the ultimate responsibility in ensuring that, collectively, learning outcomes which are assessed through the courses cover all the PILOs. The Panel examined Course Specifications and noted that they include the named assessment methods along with their ILOs. Interviews with staff clarified that one of the main purposes for using internal and external moderation is to ensure course assessments are indeed consistent with CILOs in order to support the achievement of programme ILOs. The Panel appreciates that there is a system in place to ensure that assessment is aligned with learning outcomes to meet the academic standards of the BSBM graduates.
- 4.5 The Self Evaluation Report states that there are a number of mechanisms designed to achieve reliability and validity in the setting of assessment instruments and grading student achievement to a comparable standard for the BSc Business Management programme. It states that all mid-term and final examinations are internally

moderated in advance of students sitting the examinations in accordance with the explicit internal moderation procedures. The SER provides a comprehensive overview of the internal moderation in a flow chart. The internal moderation process has to ensure the relevance of the questions to the course level, structure of the question paper, total marks, language, distribution of marks, model answers and the appropriateness of the assessment tools to measure the achievement of the learning outcomes. Internal moderation is done by the Course Coordinator (in case of multi sections) or a member of staff who has the same speciality and members of the College Examination Committee. Feedback from the internal moderation is submitted to the Chair of the College Examination Committee who in turn informs the Departmental Chairperson of the changes and amendments if required. The internal moderation process also reviews a sample of the marked scripts graded as excellent, very good, good and poor to ensure consistency of grading by course instructor. In interviews with staff and in reviewing the evidence, the Panel noted that tools of assessment other than mid-term and final examination papers (case study analyses, quizzes and other tests which contribute a significant proportion of the overall course grade) are not subject to a formal internal moderation. Consequently, the Panel recommends that the College expand its internal moderation system to cover all forms of assessment.

- 4.6 Kingdom University has an external moderation procedure that is executed by the College Examination Committee. The Department of Business Management selects local, regional or international academics to act as external moderators based on their field of expertise. During the site visit, the Panel met with external moderators on the BSBM programme whom clarified that after initial contact from the University, a letter of appointment was sent containing information on the expected role but that the appointment length was not stipulated. They also indicated that their individual roles could be somewhat different so that whereas some were required to verify student grades against final examination papers, others were asked to focus on the course specifications and mapping of CILOs to PILOs. When asked during the interview sessions, the external examiners were not clear whether their input would be required in subsequent years or whether they themselves wished to continue with the appointment. During interviews, the Panel was informed by the external moderators that the programme team had responded to issues raised and evidence was cited as to the changes achieved. The Panel welcomed this evidence of the positive role of external moderation and recommends that the Department clearly states the allocated tasks for the external moderators, induct them on what is expected from them and inform them about the timescale for their appointment. Moreover, the Panel recommends that the programme team reinforces/enhance the role of the external moderators to cover more types of assessments.

- 4.7 The Panel was provided with a limited sample of students work as in the past few years a smaller number of courses have been delivered to a reducing number of students. The Panel scrutinized the student work available from courses in years 2, 3 and 4 of the BSBM programme and noted that student work had been assured through internal and external moderation. The Panel notes that students assessed work is generally of an appropriate standard and consistent with what is expected from similar programmes. However, Graduation Projects did not all contain adequate reference list. During interviews with staff, they clarified that the University and College have introduced a new referencing procedure to improve this area. Additionally, staff highlighted that they follow the university's plagiarism policy and procedures which states that students have to complete a Plagiarism Declaration Form when submitting their work. During interviews, it was confirmed that staff use the plagiarism software (Turnitin). Interviews with students confirmed also that faculty members provide students with feedback (written, oral, and on a one to one basis) on quizzes, mid-term examination, homework and assignments presented in the Assessment Report Template form. The Panel appreciates the faculty's effort in providing constructive feedback on all students work. The SER explains also that most of the academic staff come from across the local and regional higher education sector and they are considered as a reference/check on the standard of work produced by the BSBM students. The Panel acknowledges that, in general, the sample of student work provided is adequate to the level and type of programme.
- 4.8 KU has established a standard for ascertaining student achievement of CILOs and PILOs as 60% and above. The Panel notes that this is not in line with the institution grading system as attainment is normally identified acquiring at least a C grade, which is 70%. The Panel recommends that the College revise this issue. The SER indicates that the University has a system to numerically evidence student achievement of Course ILOs and the Panel was pleased with the University system of Grade Books designed to measure student achievement in each type of assessment (quizzes, assignments, participation and examinations) and its link to ILOs. The Panel studied the grade distribution data provided in the SER which indicated that a high proportion of grades were awarded at Good and Very Good and with 20 % of students in 2012/13 achieving Excellence as compared to an average of around 10% previously. The Panel notes that there is a skew in the average of students' achievement and suggests that the College further investigate the reason for this. Nonetheless, the Panel noted that there was substantial improvement in the quality of assessed work in more recent years through setting more rigorous assessment policies and procedures. During interviews, the Panel was informed by staff that KU distributes surveys to employers and alumni to further assess the level of students' achievements. Interviewed employers showed an acceptable level of satisfaction towards programme graduates. The Panel appreciates the college's efforts in

monitoring the assessment results and grade distributions to assess the achievements of the graduates. Nonetheless, the Panel recommends that the College revise the current allocated percentage (60%) for ascertaining student achievement.

- 4.9 The SER presents detailed statistics about admitted students, progression , graduation rates and length of study from the commencement of the programme in 2006-2007 up to 2008-2009. The ratio of admitted students to successful graduates shows a slight decline from academic years 2006-2007 to 2008-2009 (89.6% in 2006-2007, 84% in 2007-2008 and 82.8% in 2008-2009). The SER indicates that the average study period is nearly four years (3.43 in 2006-2007, 3.5 in 2007-2008, 3.67 in 2008-2009). Progression ratios indicate weaker performance in the first year and fifth year. For example, in 2008-2009 only half of first year students progressed to the second year. In interviews with staff, it was explained that progression ratios could be strongly influenced by the semester of entry of students and where up to 50% of students are admitted in the second semester this will inevitably has an impact on the pass and progression rates. Additionally, working students who are part-time take longer to complete the programme. The Panel suggests that the College revise its cohort analysis methods to have a more clear view on the actual students' progression so that results can inform decision-making.
- 4.10 KU has a Practical Training Procedure that governs students internship programme. The SER indicates that students who have completed 105 credit hours are eligible to undertake practical training where nine credit hours are accumulated over a period of eight weeks. There is a clear assessment policy where 30% of the assessment grade is awarded by an industry supervisor while the remaining 70% is awarded by the academic supervisor. Students have to submit weekly reports to their academic supervisors. In addition, students have to present their final training report in front of a practical training jury selected by the College Council. The Panel was provided with several documents related to the internship including site visit reports and samples of practical training evaluation sheet. The Practical Training course allows those students who are already working professionals to have provision put in place for them to transfer theory to practice to enhance their career prospect. In addition, the College sources organizations willing to assist with the Practical Training course. Interviews with students and alumni revealed that they were very satisfied with the range of work-based learning opportunities on offer in the programme and with the Practical Training Course, with some of them managing to secure jobs in the organizations where they did their training. The Panel acknowledges the arrangements that the College has in place to monitor and assess the work-based learning opportunities and the support provided to students during this period. Staff interviewed clarified that the College works hard to build relationships with organizations and to keep itself updated in terms of current labour market trends. This in turn enhances students' knowledge and skills to secure jobs in

organizations. The Panel appreciates that work-based learning is well-structured and emphasized in the programme.

- 4.11 The BSBM programme has a mandatory project component in the final year of study (MGT499) and there are clear policies procedures and guidelines explaining the process. Students can register for the Graduation Project after completing 90 credit hours. The SER specifies the responsibilities and duties of the supervisor, the student, internal and external examiner and the College Research Committee and the associated paperwork and mechanisms to ensure progression and monitoring. All submitted Graduation Projects including the written report which generates 80% of the grade and the presentation generating 20% are put through (Turnitin) software to be checked for plagiarism and there is also a Plagiarism Declaration Form which has to be submitted by students to the Department Chairperson before the oral presentation. Two examiners along with the supervisor are required to assess students' work. During the site visit, the Panel heard from staff that student projects were highly valued and had ample supervision time where supervisors provide effective and regular (weekly) support. This was confirmed by interviewed students and alumni. The library facilities provide a good conducive environment to support students' projects with adequate resources, including access to academic journals and quiet learning spaces. In reviewing samples of Graduation Projects, it was noted that over the time of the review, the more recent reports demonstrated a considerable improvement in terms of referencing to literature and critical thinking. The Panel notes the department's effort in improving the standard and quality of the graduation project and encourages the Department to continue its current practice. Moreover, the Panel appreciates that policies, procedures and guidelines are in place to organise, monitor and ensure the quality of students' Graduation Projects.
- 4.12 The College of Business Administration has a College Industrial Advisory Council to provide advice and feedback to aid programme development. Terms of reference are clear and members of the Council make relevant and effective contributions to programme planning. The Industrial Advisory Council consists of experts from industry, employers, alumni, Dean of the College, Chairpersons of different departments and senior faculty members nominated by the Dean. The Council meets once per semester where members provide advice on curriculum development and are willing to further assist in the development of programmes. In 2013-14 members of the Advisory Council met twice and provided their feedback on the College operational plan, research plan and curriculum. Feedback from the Industrial Advisory Council is discussed in the College Council and Curriculum Review and Monitoring Committee meetings before its deployment in the improvement of the BSBM programme. During the site visit, the Panel met with members of the Council and confirmed that the Council played an important role in developing the programme and enhancing the relationship between the College and the business

sector. The Panel appreciates the existence of an active Industrial Advisory Council and its efforts to enhance the delivery of the BSBM programme.

- 4.13 Two annual surveys are conducted by KU to measure the level of satisfaction of its alumni and employers. These surveys are analysed to provide feedback on the quality of the BSBM programme and the academic standards of its graduates. The Curriculum Assessment Study which was prepared by the Accreditation and Quality Assurance Office (AQAO) and BSBM staff and conducted by a consultancy company revealed a positive evaluation of the quality of the graduates and strong appreciation of the student experience gained. The alumni survey presented data on how courses were perceived by graduates in terms of preparation for the workplace. The Panel appreciates the effort of the University for conducting these surveys and recommends that this valuable information from stakeholders is used when reviewing the BSBM programme. During the site visit, the Panel conducted interviews where employers confirmed their satisfaction with the standards of the graduate profile and this was also discussed further with stakeholders as part of the Industry Advisory Council. In these interviews, a high level of satisfaction with the quality of graduates was in evidence. Additionally, alumni expressed their satisfaction with what they learnt and highlighted that their experience was that the College responded to their suggestions. The Panel appreciates the high level of employer and alumni satisfaction with the BSBM programme and its delivery.
- 4.14 In coming to its conclusion regarding the Academic Standards of the Graduates, the Panel notes, *with appreciation*, the following:
- Graduate attributes are clearly stated and mapped with the BSBM programme aims and programme intended learning outcomes to provide valuable learning opportunities for students.
 - The BSBM programme has been benchmarked with local, regional and international programmes and quality assurance agencies.
 - The assessment methods and procedures are transparent, consistently implemented and reviewed.
 - There is a system in place to ensure that assessment is aligned with learning outcomes to meet the academic standards of the BSBM graduates.
 - The college's efforts in ensuring that assessment results and grade distributions are well-examined to successfully assess the achievements of the students.
 - The faculty's effort in providing constructive feedback on all students work.
 - Work-based learning is well-structured and strongly emphasized in the programme.
 - There are policies and procedures in place to organise, monitor and ensure the quality of students' Graduation Projects.
 - Employers and alumni are highly satisfied with the BSBM programme and its delivery.

4.15 In terms of improvement, the Panel **recommends** that the College should:

- formalize the benchmarking activities to fully address the objectives stated in its benchmarking policy
- expand the internal moderation system to cover all forms of assessment
- clearly state the allocated tasks for the external moderators, induct them on what is expected from them and inform them about the timescale for their appointment
- reinforce the role of the external moderators to cover more types of assessments
- revise the current allocated percentage (60%) for ascertaining student achievement of the intended learning outcomes to ensure the appropriate level of attainment
- consider the data collected from different stakeholders when reviewing the BSBM programme.

4.2 **Judgement**

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

5. 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.

- 5.1 Kingdom's University management system consists of a range of policies, procedures and regulations on university, college and department levels that all academic staff are familiar with and are implementing those that are relevant to their duties. Examples of existing policies and procedures include a University Teaching and Learning Policy, Teaching and Learning Procedure, College Teaching and Learning Strategy, Student Work and Assessment Policy, Assessment Procedure, Assessment Appeal Procedure, Benchmarking Policy, Benchmarking Procedure, Students at-Risk policy and Examination Procedure. During the site visit, the Panel interviewed some of academic and administrative staff, including representatives from the Accreditation and Quality Assurance Office (AQAO), who confirmed that these policies and procedures are reviewed, applied and well-disseminated to all staff members and students. Staff interviewed clarified that they were well-involved in developing and revising these policies and procedures. The Panel appreciates that KU staff members are familiar with these policies and are involved in revising and developing those that are relevant to their duties.
- 5.2 The BSBM Programme is managed by the Department Chairperson. The Self-Evaluation Report clarifies that the structure supporting the Department Chairperson to manage the programme consists of the Department Council, College Curriculum Review and Monitoring Committee, College Examination Committee, Student Council and Course Coordinators. As mentioned earlier several internal bodies including University, College and Department Councils are utilised to ensure that the programme is effectively delivered and each party is responsible for its role. During the Panel's interviews with some academic and administrative staff and members from Accreditation and Quality Assurance Office (AQAO), it was evident that all of them had a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities in order to enhance the BSBM programme. The Panel appreciates that the BSBM programme is managed in a manner that demonstrates effective and responsible leadership.
- 5.3 The Accreditation and Quality Assurance Office (AQAO), has an overall responsibility for ensuring that the programme adheres to the requirements of the KU's quality assurance system. The SER clarifies a number of ways in which the Department ensures that the Quality Management System (QMS) in relation to the BSBM programme is monitored and evaluated. During interviews, the Panel learned that the College has developed a Business Quality Manual to enhance the delivery of all academic and administrative operations. There was clear evidence during the site

visit that the University and College have paid considerable attention to the key roles in quality assurance. Examples included the job description of the assistant to the President for accreditation and quality assurance, the job descriptions of the Accreditation and Quality Assurance Office (AQAO) coordinator and the senior technician for AQAO documents. Moreover, the Panel also reviewed the terms of reference and minutes of the university and college quality assurance committees. Together, these indicated a strong commitment to quality assurance. This commitment was also reinforced by the consultancy company report on the College which reflected well on its desire to benchmark its procedures. In areas ranging from monitoring student progression and retention to programme review, the programme team has implemented the university's quality assurance policies and procedures in a transparent and effective manner. The complete process for confirming assessments is carried out by the Chairperson and Dean of College. The Panel appreciates that the University has developed a comprehensive system of quality management arrangements which is implemented consistently.

- 5.4 As AQAO, at KU has an overall responsibility for quality assurance and improvement, and is responsible for reinforcing the quality assurance processes and monitoring the professional development of staff. The Panel interviewed members from AQAO during which they clarified that their primary responsibility is to embed a quality culture across academic and administrative staff. The Panel notes that the staff appear to have benefited greatly from the many training workshops on quality assurance in areas such as course design, intended learning outcomes, and course review. Staff interviewed highlighted that all quality assurance policies and procedures are available online for easy access. During interviews, academic and administrative staff were fully aware of their role in ensuring the quality of the provision and they all showed a clear understanding of the quality management systems at KU. The Panel appreciates the commitment of the AQAO to disseminate the culture of quality amongst academic, administrative and support staff.
- 5.5 Kingdom University has developed a policy for the development of new programmes. In terms of the policy, proposals for introducing new programmes go through internal approval by the University Council after which it is submitted to the Higher Education Council (HEC) for licencing. The former starts with the New Programme Development *Ad-hoc* Committee, after which the proposal is presented to the College Council and then to the University Council to get its approval. The Panel notices that no new programmes have been introduced recently. The Panel acknowledges the procedure KU has in place for developing and approving new programmes.
- 5.6 The SER stated that KU has two kinds of internal reviews for the BSBM programme. One is done annually while the other one is done periodically every five years. At the

end of the semester, each course is reviewed by students and the instructor. The annual review is done by the Department and supported by the Accreditation and Quality Assurance Office which keeps records of all the reviewed programmes and the outcomes. The SER demonstrates a detailed explanation of the review process along with three flow charts. From these charts, it is clear how decision-making is undertaken in relation to programme review, with clear roles set out for the Department Chairperson and the College Curriculum Review and Monitoring Committee (CCRMC). The Panel notes that as far as internal review of programmes is concerned, the University and College have good structures in place for undertaking minor reviews of the curriculum. Internal programme review involves a range of stakeholders including graduates, employers, staff and current students. The Panel interviewed students and alumni who confirmed that they were given the opportunity to voice their opinion on various aspects related to the quality of the provision. During interviews, staff highlighted that a number of key parameters influence the review process including peer review, staff profiles, exit surveys, benchmarks and interaction with research and community engagement. The Panel is satisfied with the annual internal programme review arrangements.

- 5.7 The CCRMC at KU is responsible to review the BSBM programme at least once every five years. During interviews, staff indicated that the last periodic review was done in 2013 in preparation for this external review in 2014. The periodic review process starts by the CCRMC gathering feedback from academic staff, students, employers and alumni of each batch to ensure that the BSBM programme is up-to-date, relevant and that the PILOs are well-aligned to the college vision and mission statements. The Panel acknowledges the current arrangements of the periodic review.
- 5.8 The SER clarifies that KU conducts several kinds of surveys to collect feedback from students, alumni and employers. Evidence was provided during the site visit of samples of these surveys such as Course Evaluation Surveys, Student Satisfaction Surveys, and Senior Exit Surveys, Alumni Survey and Employer Survey. Interviewed students and alumni indicated that the programme team had taken their suggestions into consideration. Examples included providing additional support in research methodology for the graduation project, enhancing the practical training programme and increasing the use of case studies. The Panel notes that the Accreditation and Quality Assurance Office (AQAO) takes an active role in ensuring that improvement plans are followed thoroughly and implemented with due attention paid to the views of the various stakeholders of the programme. This is achieved along with the CCRMC and decisions reached are recorded. During interviews with employers, the Panel was informed that the BSBM provides its graduates with leadership, interpersonal and teamwork skills. The Panel viewed samples of alumni surveys and noted that there was a comment on the graduation project that they needed more support when composing it. The Panel is satisfied with the college's efforts in

conducting different kinds of surveys. The Panel recommends that KU enhance its surveys procedure by systematically collecting, analysing and responding to stakeholder surveys in order to inform them about actions taken to address their recommendations.

- 5.9 There is a Staff Development Office at KU which oversees the professional development of the academic and administrative staff and is responsible for evaluating all training programmes offered at KU. Several policies and procedures are in place to enhance staff development needs (mentioned earlier in 3.5). For example, Staff Development and Training Procedure covers issues related to providing financial support for conference attendance and release time for academic staff to enhance their qualifications. During interviews, the Panel was informed that the Staff Development Office ensures that continuous development plan is in place for both academic and administrative staff. Attending conferences and workshops and participating in professional training sessions are of high importance to all faculty members. Furthermore, KU has an appraisal system (mentioned earlier in 3.5) to evaluate staffs' performance. The Panel acknowledges that KU is keen to involve its administrative staff in workshops whenever related to their duties.
- 5.10 The BSBM programme depends on its internal and external stakeholders to gather intelligence about the local market needs. The College Industrial Advisory Council members have extensive years of experience in Bahrain's labour market needs. Furthermore, Alumni Survey and Employer Survey are considered as vital tools when discussing the structure and the content of the BSBM programme. The Panel notes the college's efforts. However, the Panel was not provided with evidence of systematic formal methods used to assess labour market needs. The Panel recommends that the College develop and implement a formal mechanism for scoping labour market needs to enhance the BSBM programme design and its delivery. Furthermore, the Panel recommends that the College enhance its surveys procedure by systematically collecting, analysing and responding to stakeholder surveys in order to inform them about actions taken to address their recommendations
- 5.11 In coming to its conclusion regarding the Effectiveness of Quality Management and Assurance, the Panel notes, *with appreciation*, the following:
- Staff members are familiar with all the University's and College's policies and procedures and are involved in revising and developing those that are relevant to their duties.
 - The BSBM programme is managed in a manner that demonstrates effective and responsible leadership.
 - A comprehensive system of quality management arrangements is in place and is implemented consistently.

- The Accreditation and Quality Assurance Office is committed to disseminate the culture of quality amongst academic, administrative and support staff.

5.12 In terms of improvement, the Panel **recommends** that the College should:

- enhance the surveys procedure by systematically collecting, analysing and responding to stakeholder surveys in order to inform them about actions taken to address their recommendations.

5.13 **Judgement**

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

6. 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, 2012*:

There is confidence in the Bachelor of Science in Business Management of the College of Business Administration offered by the Kingdom University.