# Directorate of Higher Education Reviews

## Programmes-within-College Reviews Report

**Bachelor of Law**

**College of Law**

**Kingdom University**

**Kingdom of Bahrain**

**Date Reviewed: 23-24 February 2015**

HC062-C2-R062

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# Acronyms

| ABA | American Bar Association |
|-----|-------------------------|
| AQAO | The Accreditation and Quality Assurance Office |
| ATS | Adaptive Tech Solution |
| BLaw | Bachelor of Law |
| CILO | Course Intended Learning Outcome |
| DHR | Directorate of Higher Education Reviews |
| GPA | Grade Point Average |
| HEC | Higher Education Council |
| HoD | Head of Department |
| ILO | Intended Learning Outcome |
| KU | Kingdom University |
| PILO | Programme Intended Learning Outcome |
| QQA | National Authority for Qualifications & Quality Assurance of Education & Training |
| SER | Self-Evaluation Report |
| SIS | Students 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 (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 Kingdom University

A Programmes-within-College review of the programme offered by the College of Law of Kingdom University was conducted by the DHR of the QQA in terms of its mandate to review the quality of higher education in the Kingdom of Bahrain. The site visit took place on 23-24 February 2015 for the Bachelor of Law programme offered by the College.

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

Kingdom University (KU) was notified by the DHR/QQA on 27 November 2014 that it would be subject to a Programmes-within-College review of the programmes offered by the College of Law with the site visit taking place from 23-24 February 2015. In preparation for the review, KU conducted a self-evaluation of the one programme offered by the College and submitted the SER with appendices on the agreed date of 11 January 2015.

The DHR constituted a panel consisting of experts in the academic field of Law and in higher education who have experience of external programme quality reviews. The Panel comprised two 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 Law programme. 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 administrative staff and faculty members in the Bachelor of Law programme.

## 1.3    Overview of the College of Law

KU was established in 2001 and started enrolling students in 2004. Currently, KU comprises four colleges, namely the College of Arts, College of Business Administration, College of Architecture Engineering and Design and College of Law. The College of Law comprises two departments, namely the Department of Public Law and Department of Private Law, with their different branches. Currently, the College offers one undergraduate programme, namely the Bachelor of Law programme.

The Bachelor of Law programme was offered first in 2005, and the total number of students registered in it at that time was 22 students. The programme had its first graduate (one student) in 2007. The total number of students enrolled in the programme in the academic year 20014-2015 was 491 and the total number of graduates since the establishment of the College until the date of this site visit is 99 graduates. The number of faculty members in the College is 18 members.

## 1.4    Overview of the Bachelor of Law

The Bachelor of Law (BLaw) programme is offered by the College of Law of KU and the media of offering is Arabic. The programme follows the credit hours system, where a student has to complete 138 credit hours of study to graduate. Theses hours are divided into university requirements, college requirements and specialisation requirements. The programme includes a practical training course and a graduation project course. The BLaw programme was first offered in 2005 with 22 being admitted into the programme and the first student graduated from the programme in 2007. The number of students enrolled in the programme in the academic year 2014-2015 was 491 students, whereas the total number of graduates since the commencement of the College until the time of this site visit was 99 graduates. The College employs 18 full-time faculty members, 17 of whom are PhD holders, in addition to three part-time faculty members.

## 1.5    Summary of Review Judgements

**Table 2: Summary of Review Judgements for the Bachelor of Law Programme**

| 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     The BLaw programme has an academic programme framework that specifies the objectives of the programme, which seeks to graduate a student who has legal skills and cultural knowledge to effectively contribute to the legal field and the community as a whole, be capable of self-learning and responsible and comprehends the morals and ethics of the profession. The links between the programme objectives and college's mission and objectives are clearly tabulated and, in general, there is an alignment between the programme objectives and the college's mission and objectives. Furthermore, the College aims at contributing to the university's mission, vision and strategic plan, which is clearly shown in the above mentioned tables. The Panel appreciates that the programme has clear objectives, which are consistent with college and university's vision and mission statements.

2.2     The BLaw programme adopts the credit hours system with 138 credit hours, divided into 21 credit hours for the university requirements, 21credit hours for the college requirements and 96 credit hours for the specialisation requirements. These in turn are divided into 72 credit hours for compulsory specialisation requirements, 12 credit hours for support compulsory specialisation requirements, and 12 credit hours for elective specialisation requirements, which can be chosen from a number of diverse courses. The Panel notes, with appreciation, that the percentage of Law specialised courses included in the study plan is appropriate. Moreover, the Panel notes that the courses classified as non-specialized Law courses are clearly relevant to the other courses in the programme. In addition, the distribution between compulsory and elective courses is proportional. However, during the site visit, the Panel came to know that the number of elective courses actually offered in each semester is limited, which does not allow for a real choice. Therefore, the Panel recommends that the College offer an appropriate number of elective courses in every semester. The programme study plan spreads over four levels to allow progression from one year to another and from one semester to another in a logical and sequential manner, through which knowledge and applied skills and capabilities gradually develop. Moreover, the programme clearly identifies prerequisite courses of each course, to ensure the academic progression of students. The Panel is satisfied that these prerequisites are, in general, appropriate. Nonetheless, the Panel recommends that the College add the course 'Provisions of Administrative Law' to be a prerequisite for the 'General Finance' course as the general budget of government departments and the general budget of other central organisational entities are the most important components of the 'General Finance' course plan. This necessitates that students should have prior knowledge of the general provisos and concepts of the 'Administrative Law'. The Panel also notes

the absence of a course on professional accountability and career ethics, although elements of the subjects are embedded in various courses in the programme. The Panel is of the view that introducing a course on professional accountability and career ethics, at an advance stage of the programme will improve the quality of the programme, enrich the students' experience when performing practical training and contribute to the achievement of the objectives of the programme and graduates' attributes. Therefore, the Panel recommends that the College should study the possibility of adding an independent course on professional accountability and career ethics in the programme, as these are important subjects for a graduate of a bachelor of law programme. The study plan provides opportunity to create an appropriate learning environment that provides a balance between knowledge and skills, and between theory and practice through the practical training course, the graduation project, the applications of public and private law courses, the Moot court and field trips. During the site visit, the Panel learnt that the BLaw programme has benefitted from a number of internal and external reviews. The study plan was amended, based on the outcomes of these reviews where some courses, such as 'Principles of Legal Research Methodology' and 'Introduction to Economics', were added to the programme. In addition to making the 'Introduction to Economics' course a prerequisite for the 'General Finance' course. These are appropriate changes that support all aforementioned discussions. In general, the Panel appreciates that the curriculum is appropriate for the objectives of the programme and its degree, and its content is consistent with that of similar programmes offered in other local and Arab universities. The Panel also appreciates that the study plan allows for year-on-year and course-by-course academic progression in a logical and consecutive manner enabling knowledge, and applied and practical skills and capabilities to develop and grow.

2.3     There are clear course specifications that include the course syllabi and the academic fields, which were benchmarked with that of similar courses, offered by equivalent colleges in terms of breadth and depth, and reviewed by external reviewers. Furthermore, the curriculum content and syllabi were aligned with similar programmes offered by equivalent colleges, the 2009's Egyptian national academic standards for Law colleges and the American Bar Association standards. The course specifications include the course syllabus, weekly plans, Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs), teaching and learning and assessment methods, textbooks, references and learning resources. From interviews with faculty members and students, and on examining the provided samples of course files, which included course specifications and samples of marked students' work, it became evident to the Panel that the course syllabi, in general, are appropriate to the course nature and level, consistent with the study plan as a whole and satisfy the standards and requirements of the specialisation and the academic degree. The syllabi also take into consideration

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the Bahraini legal environment through adopting references related to the Bahraini Law.

2.4    The BLaw programme has eight objectives translated into a set of 22 Programme Intended Learning Outcomes (PILOs), which are divided into knowledge and understanding, subject-specific skills, thinking skills and general and transferrable skills. The PILOs are mapped to the programme objectives using a matrix that shows the relation between each individual outcome and the objectives of the programme. The Panel studied the PILOs and noted that they are, in general, consistent with the programme and its objectives, and are appropriate for the academic degree awarded. However, the Panel notes that the outcome 'comply with moral and professional ethics' has been listed under the category of general transferrable skills, whereas compliance with the ethics of the profession is a main component needed for developing students' legal mentality, on which understanding and attaining many of the practical and applied courses in the programme depend. Moreover, the Panel notes the large number of PILOs and the overlap between some them, the fact that makes it difficult to measure the achievement of these outcomes. Therefore, the Panel recommends that the College should review the PILOs and state them in a more comprehensive way to facilitate the assessment process.

2.5    As sated earlier, the Panel examined a large sample of course files comprising a large amount of data on individual courses, including the CILOs of each individual course. The CILOs are categorized into four areas, namely knowledge and understanding, subject-specific skills, analytic thinking skills and general and transferrable skills. Moreover, these CILOs are aligned with the subjects and topics listed in each course and it became evident to the Panel that the examined samples are appropriately aligned with the course objectives and level. Interview sessions with faculty members revealed the positive role that they play with course coordinators and the quality assurance representative in reviewing these outcomes periodically, to ensure that they are stated in a way appropriate for the course nature and level and that they are measurable.  The College has developed a skill map, by which the CILOs are mapped to the PILOs. Interviewed faculty members informed the Panel of a number of examples on how they verify students' awareness of the CILOs and their mapping to the PILOs. The Panel appreciates that the CLIOs are consistent with the course content and level, and they contribute to the achievement of the PILOs.

2.6    The BLaw programme has a compulsory practical training course, comprising three credit hours, which students can register in once they have completed 105 credit hours of the programme requirements. This course has specific learning outcomes mapped to the PILOs and is considered an important component of the study plan of the BLaw programme offered by the College of Law. During this course, students work in organizations relevant to legal work, such as lawyers' offices and government

departments, for 200 actual hours. Trainee students have to submit periodic reports on the tasks they carry out during this period, in addition to a final report where students explain the experience, knowledge and skills they acquired. Furthermore, there is a clear assessment policy for this course, which is known by the students and the academic and industrial supervisors. From the interviews conducted during the site visit, the positive role of the internship course became evident in developing students' practical and intellectual skills and their acquisition of expertise required to compete in labour market. Students also expressed their high satisfaction with the practical training experience. The Panel appreciates that there is a practical training component in the programme, which contributes to the achievement of the PILOs.

2.7 The BLaw programme applies the university's teaching and learning policy, which identifies the modes of teaching and learning used and the purpose behind them. The SER and interviews with faculty members and students indicate a number of teaching methods used which are specified in the course specifications and linked to the course ILOs. These are theoretical lectures, seminars (to answer some applied hypotheses, addressed by a group or individually), individual or group assignments (home and class assignments), research papers (and their discussion sometime), class participations, and Moot courts that are utilised occasionally. The two courses 'Public Law Applications' and 'Private Law Applications' provide opportunities to apply the acquired theories, whereas the internship course enhances the chance to practice and apply theories, in addition to encouraging the individual responsibility of learning and developing independent learning skills. This also applies to the 'Principles of Legal Research' course and the graduation project, which encourage the individual responsibility of learning and develop independent learning skills. Interviews with graduates and students confirmed the use of the aforementioned techniques. Nevertheless, it became evident that the heaviest reliance is on lectures. Moreover, and despite the existence of a hall that can be used as a Moot court, the use of this technique is still limited. Therefore, the Panel recommends that there is a need for more emphasis on the use of interactive teaching techniques, and Moot courts, whether at the course levels or as an extracurricular activity, due to the significant results and learning outcomes that can be attained in the cognitive and skills aspects, which outweigh largely the theoretical lecture style.

2.8 The Student Work Assessment policy is used to assess students' performance. The policy specifies the basic functions of the diagnostic, formative and summative assessments, with clear marking rubrics and appropriate mechanisms of awarding fair marks and providing students with feedback about their academic progression and performance, which helps them in furthering their learning. Moreover, the 'Final Examinations Procedures' document identifies all the details followed to ensure the fairness, integrity and rigour of the final examinations. Course specifications include assessment methods and tools used, in addition to marks allocation for each course.

These include class participation, working sheets, reports, quizzes, mid-semester and final examinations. The course specification is discussed with the students at the beginning of each semester, and students whom the Panel interviewed confirmed this practice. They also commended the oral and written feedback provided to them about their performance. By reviewing course files during the site visit, it became clear that model answers are available and feedback is provided, though with varying level of details from one course to another. Furthermore, the policy calls for the use of the 'Turn-it-in' software to identify plagiarism cases, where students are required to submit their work *via* this software. However, it became evident to the Panel from interviews with both academic and administrative staff that the software is used mainly for the graduation project, and it is rarely used to identify plagiarism in class work of other courses. The Panel encourages the College to expand the use of the 'Turn-it-in' software to include other students' work. Moreover, there is a clear mechanism for students' appeal that is known by students. The appeal is addressed through two stages. In the first stage, the student approaches the course instructor with the content of the appeal. If the student is still not satisfied with the outcome, an appeal is submitted to the Appeals Committee in the College, which examines the student's papers and the validity of the grades. The Panel appreciates that there is a clear assessment policy, which is known to faculty members and students, and ensures assessment fairness and transparency. However, the Panel notes that 80% of the total marks for any course, except the internship course and graduation project course, is allocated for written examinations (30% for mid-semester examination and 50% for final examination) whereas only 5% is allocated for worksheets, reports and contract formulation, 5% for class participation and interaction and 10% for assignments. This does not always align with the level of the work required from the student or the course nature and level. Therefore, the Panel recommends that the College should revise the adopted policy of marks distribution in all courses of the programme, to be more consistent with the course nature and level and with the CILOs of that course.

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

- The BLaw programme has clear objectives, which are consistent with the college's and university's vision and mission statements.
- The curriculum is appropriate for the objectives of the programme and its degree, and its content is consistent with that of similar programmes offered in other local and Arab universities.
- The study plan allows for year-on-year and course-by-course progression from one year to another in a logical and consecutive manner enabling knowledge and applied and practical skills to develop and grow.

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- The course intended learning outcomes are aligned to the course content and level, and they contribute to the achievement of the programme intended learning outcomes.
- There is a compulsory practical training course within the curriculum, which contributes to the achievement of the programme learning outcomes.
- There is a clear assessment policy, which is known to faculty members and students and ensures assessment fairness and transparency.

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

- review the programme intended learning outcomes and state them in a more comprehensive way to facilitate the assessment process
- offer an appropriate number of elective courses in each semester, add an independent course on Professional Accountability and Career Ethics in the programme, and add the course 'Provisions of Administrative Law' as a prerequisite to the 'General Finance' course
- increase the utilisation of interactive teaching tools, and expand the use of Moot courts technique whether within the taught courses or as an extracurricular activity
- review the marks distribution policy adopted in all courses of the programme, to be more consistent with the course nature and level as well as its intended learning outcomes.

2.11    **Judgement**

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

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# 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    KU has a clearly stated admission policy adopted by the College of Law for the BLaw programme. The policy is published on the university website and in the Student Handbook. All applicants are subject to a personal interview and an English language placement test, unless the applicant has an IELTS certificate with a score of 5.5 at least, or TOEFL certificate with 550 score or above. Applicants setting the English language placement test and scoring less than 60% have to attend and pass a course in the Basics of the English language (ENG011). Moreover, applicants are divided into two groups, the first are those with high school Grade Point Average (GPA) 65% and above and the second group are those with GPA less than 65%. Applicants from the first group are admitted directly to the programme, while those from the second group are awarded conditional admission subject to passing a preparatory programme which includes three basic courses, namely 'Basics of Law Science' (LAW001), 'Basic Arabic' (GS011) and 'Basics of Arabic Text Formation'. Students transferring from other institutions are accepted into the programme if their GPA in the other institution is not less than 2.0. During the site visit, the Panel was informed that the Equivalency Committee studies the courses already completed by the transferred student and considers the credit hours of those courses equivalent in content to one of the courses of the BLaw programme, provided that the scored grade is 'C' or better. The Panel notes the clarity of the admission policy and the limited contribution of preparatory courses in preparing students to join the programme. Nonetheless, the Panel recommends that College should revise the admission criteria, and specify a minimum score required for admission that is appropriate for the requirements of the programme, in line with the college's vision to be 'one of the best colleges of Law.'

3.2    The SER states that the College adopts several techniques to ensure that the levels of the admitted students match the objectives of the programme. This is achieved through the requirements to pass the personal interview, which all applicants are subject to regardless of their high school GPA, the English placement test that also applies to all applicants and the preparatory programme, which is applicable to students with high school GPA less than 65%. However, it became evident to the Panel from the site visit interviews that the number of rejected applications based on the personal interview is almost none (one application only) and that the main aim of these interviews is to guide the interviewee towards a specialisation appropriate to him/her rather than deciding on accepting or rejecting the applicant. Moreover, the Panel was not provided with evidence on studies or statistics about the performance of students admitted into the programme after passing the preparatory programme in comparison to those admitted directly in the programme. The Panel recommends that the College

should conduct a comprehensive study to evaluate students' progression based on their admission level, to ensure that admitted students are appropriate for the objectives and content of the programme.

3.3     There are clear lines of responsibility to manage the programme, distributed between the administrative and academic staff, starting from the course instructor and ending with the Vice President of Academic Affairs. The Programme Coordinator manages the programme in cooperation with the Head of Department (HoD) of Public Law and HoD of Private Law, under the Dean's supervision, who has the ultimate responsibility for the programme. The academic responsibility of managing and developing the academic courses rests with the course coordinators. The College Council and the Department Council, in addition to the permanent committees at the college level, also contribute to the management of the programme. During the site visit interviews and by reviewing the minutes of meetings of various councils and committees, it became evident to the Panel that there are clear lines to manage the programme, which are known to the academic and administrative staff, a matter that the Panel appreciates.

3.4     The BLaw programme is delivered by 18 faculty members, of whom 17 members are PhD holders, and their academic ranks vary between Professor (1), Associate Professor (8) and Assistant Professor (8). In addition, the College uses part-time faculty members when needed, and they were three members at time of the site visit. The total number of students enrolled in the programme at the time of the site visit was 491 students on full-time basis. This means that the full-time faculty members-to-students ratio is 1:27, which is suitable.  Furthermore, the Panel studied the faculty members' CVs and notes that their academic specialisations and teaching expertise cover the courses offered in the programme well. The Panel also notes that a number of faculty members have practical experience in relevant career fields, legal consultancy and advocacy. The Panel appreciates that the number of faculty members, their academic ranks and professional expertise are appropriate for the requirements of the programme, and there is a good balance between the number of faculty members and the number of students. The faculty members' CVs also indicate that they have published a number of research papers and academic books. Moreover, the College develops an operational plan for scientific research based on the university's scientific research strategy, and the College submits reports on the extent of its implementation. The Panel was informed during the site visit that there are sufficient financial allowances for this purpose as well as financial awards and some faculty members indicated that a Scientific Research Prize was introduced in the University for the first time. The Panel is pleased that there is a clear plan for academic research which the College follows and executes.

3.5     KU has clear pollicises and procedures for faculty members' recruitment, appraisal and promotion applied in relation to the BLaw programme. The Department Council

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prepares an annual recruitment plan and submits it to the College Council and then to the University Council for final approval. The Directorate of Human Resources is the entity responsible for implementing the plan and introducing new staff members to the main university and college policies. On the other hand, the HoD is responsible for inducting new faculty members and introducing them to their academic responsibilities and the university and college's policies pertaining to teaching and learning and programme management. In order to retain its faculty members, the University follows 'open contract' system where faculty members' contracts are renewed annually, unless there are other alternative arrangements from one of the two parties. The College evaluates the faculty member's performance using different parameters including self-evaluation, the immediate administrative supervisor's evaluation, peer class evaluation and students' evaluation. During interviews with faculty members, the Panel verified their satisfaction with the recruitment, orientation, evaluation and retention policies and procedures. There is an academic promotion policy which is benchmarked with the promotion policy of a local university, and clearly identifies the criteria related to promotion, evaluation and decision-making. Two faculty members have been promoted in the College of Law during the last three years from an Assistant Professor rank to an Associate Professor rank. The Panel studied samples of the minutes of meetings of the Promotion Committee, which indicates that the Committee executes the policy in a transparent and clear way. The Panel appreciates that there are clear mechanisms for the recruitment, evaluation and promotion of faculty members that are applied consistently and transparently.

3.6     The SER indicates that KU uses the interactive electronic system 'Adaptive Tech Solution' (ATS) for information management, through which a number of systems are used such as the Students Information System (SIS) and the financial affairs and human resources systems, in order to manage the various daily functions of the programme and its different resources. Touring the Registration and Admission Office, the library and the IT administration offices, and from interviews with faculty members and students, it became evident to the Panel that these systems are utilised to facilitate the programme's management. Furthermore, the College has introduced recently a platform for e-learning, which makes managing information related to courses and communicating with students easier. The platform is also used to document all interactions and exchange of teaching and assessment tools between the students and the faculty member. During interviews with technical staff, it became evident to the Panel that these systems are used effectively for generating reports that inform the decision-making process in relation to the management of the programme and student's academic progression. They are also used for the early identification of 'at-risk' students and providing them with the necessary support. The Panel appreciates that there is a comprehensive management information system that is utilised to support the offering of the programme and its management.

3.7     The SER states that the University has developed a set of policies and procedures to ensure the security and safety of students' records. Students' data are stored in a dedicated electronic system protected by a set of security applications and students and faculty members can use this system by a special user name and password. From interview sessions and the visit to the Registration Office, the Panel confirmed that marks are entered electronically as well as in hard copies in such a way that ensures their integrity, revision and accuracy. Furthermore, the University has information recovery procedures in case of disasters, where the back-up record is updated daily, weekly, monthly and yearly and stored in two separate locations, one on campus and the other in a remote place. The Panel also noted during the campus tour that the University has two secured rooms to archive and store printed copies of students' records and important documents. The Panel appreciates that there are implemented policies and procedures to ensure the security of students' records and accuracy of results.

3.8     The Panel toured the campus, and visited the university buildings and the college venues and notes that the College is equipped with structural resources appropriate for the requirements of the programme. These include classrooms equipped with display units and interactive boards that are appropriate for the needs of most of the teaching and learning techniques used, in addition to computer laboratories with adequate computer machines, software and services. Moreover, there is a multipurpose hall and recreational areas which students use to interact with each other and to work on their study projects. Wi-Fi service is also available throughout the university buildings. The university and college's management confirmed that there is a project to expand the buildings, which will result in a qualitative change in the services provided for students as well as academic and administrative staff members. The drawings of the project are already developed and the University is in the last stages of getting the construction licenses needed. Furthermore, there is a main library in the University, which provides reading areas and 16 computers for electronic references' search and access. The library has a number of printed and electronic books appropriate for the BLaw programme, in addition to academic journals and two electronic databases.  However, the Panel noted the lack of some teaching resources important for the study of Law such as a hard copy of the Gazette and other important legal encyclopaedias, such as 'Al-Sanhoori Encyclopaedia', which are important teaching references in the field of Law. The Panel recommends that the College should increase the number of references in the library to further support the BLaw programme.

3.9     The SER states that the different software systems used in the University and in managing the programme include built-in tracking systems by which the rates of usage of several programme resources can be measured. The University also has an electronic tracking system for the use of laboratories, which allows generating reports

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on the average and length of their use at the university, college and programme levels. Furthermore, the e-learning platform provides information about the frequency of students and faculty members' usage. It also became evident from the library visit and meetings with faculty members that periodic reports are sent to various entities in the University, including the college's administration, about the rates of the use of the library, its electronic and printed resources and the lengths of these sessions. However, the Panel did not find evidence of formal utilisation of these data to inform decision-making. Moreover, the Panel did not see evidence of a comprehensive system that is used by the programme management to support the different stages of the decision-making process. Therefore, the Panel recommends that the College should make use of the reports generated by the tracking systems in a systematic and regular way to inform the decisions related to the programme management and evaluation.

3.10    As stated earlier, the University provides many resources for students such as the library, laboratories and electronic programmes that help them register their course, access their teaching material and progress. Moreover, faculty members are formally assigned to provide academic advising for students during different stages of their academic life. Students and graduates whom the Panel interviewed commended the faculty members' advising and awareness role. The students also explained how faculty members and the library staff assist and help them to utilise the library, where the librarian guides students and facilitates the search process for them. Moreover, there is an administrative staff specialised in e-learning to support students in using the e-learning platform and the electronic programmes that are used in teaching some courses. In addition, there is an English Language Centre, a clinic and an Academic Advising Centre at the university level adjacent to the office of the Students Council, which provides support for students by students themselves. The Student Academic Advising Centre provides advice and follows up the status of academically or socially 'at-risk' students' affairs. The Panel notes the university's efforts to provide effective support, which students benefit from, and it enhances the teaching and learning process.

3.11    The University conducts an orientation day for new and transferred students who join the programme to introduce them to the services available for them and how to deal with the programme and its courses. Students can also communicate with the administrative and academic staff to obtain additional information or instructions needed. As indicated in the SER, the orientation day is organised at the beginning of each academic year, where the Dean and the HoD introduce students to the College, its systems, registration procedures and the plan of the programme. Students are also introduced to the specialisation and courses, in addition to touring the main facilities of the University. Interviewed students were pleased about the orientation day. The Panel is satisfied that there are arrangements in place to introduce new and transferred

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students to the institution and the services available for them, and how to deal with the programme and its courses.

3.12    There are policies and procedures followed by the University with regard to students at risk of academic failure. A student is considered 'at-risk' if his/ her accumulative GPA is less than 2.00. During the site visit, the Panel was informed that the University adopts an early intervention procedure with 'at-risk' students, which starts once the student's GPA drops to the minimum limit. The Registration and Admission Department sends a list of 'at-risk' students to the respective academic advisor who provides the students with the required advice to pass this stage. During the site visit interviews, students praised the role of the academic advisors in this regard, and the effectiveness of early intervention procedure, follow-up and advising in decreasing this problem before escalating beyond remedy. The academic advisor allocates six hours per week for this purpose, which are announced to students. The application of the new e-learning system, which the College has started recently, will contribute more effectively to the early identification of 'at-risk' students when entering their mid-semester marks. The Panel is pleased that there are appropriate procedures for early identification of 'at-risk' students and supporting them academically.

3.13    The University provides appropriate resources to enable students to expand their experience and knowledge. The practical training course also provides an opportunity for informal learning. Recently, the College has collaborated with the Military Court for running a Moot court. Furthermore, the College develops an annual schedule for students' field visits to some external institutions such as courts, the Parliament and ministries, and the College hosts external speakers to give lectures and run symposiums on Law-related issues. In addition, some courses include topics that require students to visit some external professional entities and write reports. Moreover, the Students Council offers a venue to develop students' social and cultural capabilities. Interviewed students and alumni expressed their satisfaction and appreciation towards the efforts the University exerts in this regard. The Panel notes with appreciation the college and the programme team's efforts to provide an appropriate learning environment for the programme.

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

- There are clear lines of responsibility in relation to the management of the programme, which are known to the administrative and academic staff of the programme.
- There is a good balance between the number of faculty members and that of students, and their academic qualifications and teaching and professional expertise are appropriate for the requirements of the programme.

- There are clear recruitment, evaluation and promotion policies for faculty members, which are consistently and transparently applied.
- The University has an electronic information management system that is utilised for delivering and managing the programme.
- The University has policies and procedures in place to ensure the security of students' records and the accuracy of results.
- The College and the programme team are keen to provide an environment that support informal learning.

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

- revise the admission criteria, and specify a minimum score required for admission that is appropriate for the requirements of the programme, in line with the college's vision to be 'one of the best colleges of Law'
- conduct a comprehensive study to evaluate students' progress based on their admission level, to ensure that admitted students are appropriate for the requirements of the programme
- increase the resources available in the library to further support the BLaw programme
- utilise the reports and information generated by the tracking system in a systematic and regular way to inform the decisions related to the management of the programme.

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 BLaw programme has seven specific attributes for the graduates of the programme that include having knowledge about the Bahraini law regulations and theories, being capable of acquiring skills by themselves and having the capability of analytic thinking and to communicate with others. Academic attributes are mapped to the PILOs by a matrix showing the relation between them. During interview sessions, faculty members explained how the acquisition of these attributes is verified by using appropriate assessment tools to measure the CILOs, which are in turn mapped to the PLIOs, to which the graduates' attributes are mapped. The Panel notes with appreciation that there are specific attributes for the graduates of the programme, which are aligned with the programme objectives and its outcomes.

4.2    KU has a policy and a procedure for implementing the benchmarking activities the University performs. The document specifies the modes of benchmarking the University aspires to implement and the main principles of the implementation processes, which include planning, deployment, deriving results, recommendations development and their implementation.  After reviewing some files, and meeting with faculty members, it became evident to the Panel that the College benchmarks the BLaw programme with similar programmes at local, regional and international levels, and the results of these benchmarking processes are used to develop the structure and content of the programme. The national academic standards of the colleges of law sector in Egypt issued in 2009 and the standards of the American Bar Association (ABA) were utilised when benchmarking the objectives of the programme and its outcomes. Moreover, the College has signed memorandum of understanding with similar colleges of Law for the benefit of the benchmarking process. The Panel appreciates that the College has performed benchmarking processes, the results of which were utilised to develop the structure of the programme and its content. However, the Panel notes that these processes did not go beyond benchmarking the programme structure, its content and its learning outcomes. The Panel recommends that the College should expand its benchmarking processes to include all basic elements of the programme such as the admission requirements, students' achievement and teaching and learning resources.

4.3    The University has clear assessment policy and procedures known to faculty members, which was confirmed during the site visit. Students are informed of these policies and mechanisms of marks distribution through course specifications and Student Handbook. The course specifications specify assessment tools and marks distribution in a detailed way, and the examination papers include marks allocation for each

question. The students and alumni whom the Panel interviewed expressed their satisfaction with the assessment processes adopted in the programme, as they are consistent with the announced assessment policy. In addition, the Panel was informed during the site visit that the course instructor writes the examination questions in coordination with the course coordinator in accordance to the course level and content as well as the CILOs to be measured. The examination papers are subject to internal and external moderation, before and after students sit the examination. The HoD is responsible for ensuring the proper administration of the assessment process and faculty members' compliance with implementing the university assessment policies. Moreover, the Teaching and Learning and Assessment Committee at the university level reviews the final examination results before endorsing and announcing these results. The Panel appreciates that there are assessment policies and procedures, which are known to students and faculty members, and their application is continuously monitored.

4.4    The SER states that the course instructor is responsible for ensuring the alignment between assessment tools and the CILOs whose achievement is to be verified, supported by the course coordinator and the feedback from internal and external examiners. The course instructor, in coordination with the course coordinator, develops assessment tools that are consistent with the CILOs stated in the course specification. When writing the mid-semester and final examinations questions, these questions are linked to the CILOs to be verified, after which these are submitted to the internal and external moderators to comment on the alignment between of the questions and the CILOs and based on the feedback from this moderation process, the course instructor reviews the examination questions. Moreover, there is post-evaluation process to verify the rigour and fairness of the assessment process. The Panel appreciates that there are mechanisms to ensure alignment of the assessment process with the learning outcomes of individual courses. However, it was not evident to the Panel from the whole set of documents provided that there is a clear and known mechanism adopted by the College to measure the extent to which the CILOs are achieved by studying the assessed students' work. The Panel recommends that the College should develop mechanisms to verify students' acquisition of the learning outcomes of individual courses, and then the programme ILOs.

4.5    The College has an internal moderation system for mid-semester and final examinations, which was formally implemented in the first semester of the academic year 2014-2015. During the site visit, it became evident to the Panel that the internal moderation process is performed in two stages: before and after the students set the examination. The Teaching and Learning and Assessment Committee in the College moderates the examination paper before running the examination, and provides its comments on it. These are discussed by the course instructor, HoD and course coordinator, and changes are implemented if necessary. The Teaching and Learning

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and Assessment Committee is informed of these changes. However, the Panel notes that the committee's comments are limited to the layout of the examination paper rather than commenting on its content. The Committee also reviews marked papers to check the accuracy of marking and the marks recorded. Nonetheless, the effectiveness of this policy cannot be assessed as the policy has been implemented for one semester only. Therefore, the Panel advises the College to continue with applying its internal moderation policy, measure the effectiveness of the policy and monitor its impact on improving the assessment mechanisms.

4.6     The College of Law follows the university policy and procedure for external moderation, which are applied to the final examinations only and are implemented in two stages. The first stage takes place before the students set the examination, where the external moderator assesses the examination paper and submits his/her comments about the alignment of examination questions with the ILOs of the individual course, its nature and it level, using a form designed for this purpose. During the site visit, the Panel was informed that the HoD discusses the external moderator's comments, if any, with the course coordinator and instructor who makes the required changes and refers the examination paper to the Teaching and Learning and Assessment Committee for approval and printing out the examination in its final form.  The second stage takes place after the examination, where a sample of marked students' answers is sent to the external moderator to measure the extent to which the assessment process has achieved its aims and to utilise the external moderator's remarks in the course development. The Panel acknowledges that there are procedures applied for the external moderation of the assessment process.

4.7     During the site visit, the Panel reviewed a large sample of students' assessed work in different courses and notes that the level of students' achievement is, in general, compatible with the level and type of the programme. The Panel also viewed samples of students' graduation projects and notes that the level of these projects, in general, is compatible with the level and requirements of the programme and its academic degree. It also became evident to the Panel that course instructors use various tools such as written and oral examinations, research papers, class participations, class and home assignments to evaluate students' academic achievement and attainment. However, and despite the various assessment tools available in terms of their topics and their basic evaluative functions, the Panel notes that the questions in a number of the examination papers reviewed were of the same level of difficulty. The Panel notes that although the questions are of different types (theoretical, practical and analytical) and measure the average level required in the course; these are not gradual in terms of difficulty, depth and breadth to measure the subtle differences between students and give prominence for outstanding students. Therefore, the Panel recommends that the College should ensure the assessment procedures and techniques are suitable to differentiate between the levels of students in line with course nature and level.

4.8     The SER states that the minimum score required to pass a course is accumulating 60% of the total marks, which is consistent with programmes adopting the American system of credit hours. It also became evident from tracking the results of the graduates for the last three academic years (2011-2014) that there is a normal distribution of marks, where the average graduates' GPA is 2.81; 2.61; and 2.80 respectively. The total number of graduates in these years is 98 graduates, of whom 14 scored 'Excellent' grade whereas four scored 'Acceptable' grade and 55 scored 'Good' and 25 scored 'Very Good'. By reviewing samples of students' work and the internal and external moderators' reports, the Panel notes that, in general, there is no inflation in the marks awarded to students. In addition, the feedback from institutions where students had their practical training indicates that they were satisfied with the students' performance compared to trainees from other local programmes. The Panel notes that the level of students' achievement is compatible with the programme objectives.

4.9     The SER indicates that the College performs students' cohort analysis and measures their progress and retention rates as well as the length of study.  Statistics indicate high percentages of students' retention rates ranging between 100% and 92%, and the average of length of study is 4.4 years. From the SER and interviews with faculty members, students and alumni, it became evident to the Panel that the number of admitted students compared to the number of graduates is within the local comparable rates. The same is noted about the year-to-year progression, retention rates and length of study. However, the Panel notes that there is a confusion regarding the average length of study and progression rates, due to the non-exclusion of transferred students' impact, who in some years exceed 10% of the total number of the admitted students. Therefore, the Panel advises the College to review this issue. The SER states that the College follows up the first destination of the graduates of the programme, and the statistics provided to the Panel indicate the first destination of 64% of the graduates is unknown, where the percentage of those working in the same field of their specialisation is 32% of the total number of graduates. The Panel recommends that the College should develop more effective mechanisms to follow up the graduates of the programme.

4.10    The programme allocates three credit hours for the practical training course, for which the student has to join one of the legal career organisations whether from the public or private sector. The student is supervised by two supervisors: an academic supervisor, who follows the student by periodic visits at the workplace, and an industrial supervisor, who prepares reports on the student's performance and compliance throughout the training period using a special template designed for this purpose. The student is also required to submit periodic reports every 50 training hours, in addition to the final report in which the student illustrates the knowledge and skills acquired during this period. The content of this final report is discussed with the student by a

committee that includes the academic supervisor. The Panel studied the industrial supervisor form used to evaluate the training students and notes that this evaluation is limited to some parameters that need more details to help the industrial supervisor in the evaluation process, and to achieve more transparency and fairness, considering that supervisors belong to different institutions and are not familiar with student evaluation. Therefore, the Panel recommends that the College should revise the evaluation template of the industrial supervisor to be clearer and include more details. It also became evident to the Panel during interviews with the students and alumni that a good percentage of the students are enrolled in the programme while working in different institutions and that these students are allowed to perform their practical training in the same workplace, provided that it is performed in the legal department or unit. The Panel advises the College to take the necessary actions to ensure that the training period is valuable for students, and provides them with new knowledge, in order to ensure the reliability of the training and its rigour and to ensure the achievement of its aims and objectives.

4.11   The BLaw programme includes a graduation project course, which students can register in after passing 105 credit hours of the programme requirements including the 'Basics of Research' course. There are clear procedures for offering and managing the course, and these procedures were reviewed and updated at the beginning of the academic year 2014-2015. The procedures specify the roles and responsibilities of the supervisor and student, as well as assessment and marks distribution mechanisms. Following the course registration, the student selects a topic, its title and the research plan, and presents them to the supervisor. Afterwards, the student conducts his/ her research under the continuous monitoring of the supervisor. Once the research is finalised, it is submitted *via* the anti-plagiarism system 'Turn-it-in', which enhances the academic integrity. Following that, a committee of three members, one of whom – the Panel was informed - is an external examiner from the labour market, assesses the student's research. The committee awards 60% of the total grade, whereas the supervisor awards the remaining 40% of the grade based on the student's work during the research period. The Panel is of the view that including an external examiner in the discussion committee achieves a number of goals at the course and the programme levels. The Panel examined samples of students' research files, and notes that the level of these researches conforms to the level of the programme, its requirements and its academic degree. It also notes, with appreciation, that the programme team consistently applies the published formal procedures and that the assessment methods used are suitable for the nature of the course.

4.12   There is an active programme Advisory Board that has documented formation and voting policies and clear mandate. The Board includes representatives from the programme, specialised experts in the legal field, employers and alumni. The feedback of the Advisory Board is used systematically to enrich the decision-making process

related to the programme. From the meetings with academic and administrative staff as well as external members of the Advisory Board, the Panel noted that there is an increasing attention given, by the University, to the Advisory Board and its role and that the feedback collected during the board's meetings is utilised to improve the curriculum of the programme and its content. The Panel appreciates the presence of an active Advisory Board for the programme, which includes specialised experts and programme alumni.

4.13   The SER highlights that the College is keen to seek the alumni and employers' views about the programme and its outcomes. The feedback is collected using three different surveys: graduate's survey, alumni's survey and employers' survey. The alumni's survey which was filled by 25 alumni shows that the percentage of their satisfaction with the programme ranges between 80% and 100%, the best of which related to the analytical skills and personal attributes while the weakest are related to research skills and team leadership. In addition, 88% of the alumni included in the survey agreed that the programme has helped them in one way or another to improve their professional status, whereas 12% indicated that the programme did not have any impact on their professional status. An employers' survey was also conducted; however, its results has no statistical value, with only four employers responding to it. During the site, the Panel met with a number of alumni and employers, who expressed their satisfaction with the programme and the level of its graduates. They also commended the positive role the academic staff perform in following up and dealing with students and graduates' affairs. The Panel appreciates that the programme alumni are satisfied with programme and its outcomes.

4.14   In coming to its conclusion regarding the Academic Standards of the Graduates, the Panel notes, *with appreciation*, the following:

- There are clearly stated attributes for the graduates of the BLaw programme, which are mapped to the programme objectives and outcomes.
- The College benchmarks the BLaw programme to verify its equivalency with similar programmes offered by local, regional and international universities, and utilises the outcomes of these benchmarking processes in developing the structure and content of the programme.
- There are assessment policies and procedures that are known by students and faculty members, and their application is subject to continuous monitoring.
- The College follows appropriate mechanisms to ensure the alignment of the assessment tools to the CILOs.
- There are clearly stated and implemented procedures for the graduation project, which specify the student and supervisor's responsibilities and tasks, and the assessment methods used are suitable for the nature of the course.

- There is an active Advisory Board for the programme, which includes specialised experts and programme alumni, and its feedback is utilised in the development of the programme.
- Alumni are satisfied with the level of the programme and its outcomes.

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

- expand the benchmarking process to include all basic elements of the programme such as admission requirements, students' achievement and teaching and learning resources
- develop mechanisms to verify students' acquisition of the course intended learning outcomes, and hence the programme intended learning outcomes
- ensure that assessment tools used are suitable to differentiate between the levels of students in line with the nature and level of the programme
- develop more effective mechanisms to follow up the graduates of the programme
- revise the industrial supervisor's evaluation template by making it more detailed and clearer.

4.16    **Judgement**

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

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# 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    KU has a suite of policies, bylaws and procedures that organises the colleges and departments' operations, and these are documented in the Policies and Procedures Handbook, Staff Manual and Student Handbook. These policies include human resources, financial affairs, admission, registration, teaching and learning, assessment and benchmarking policies, in addition to policies on external and internal moderation and academic programme reviews. Heads of units are responsible for implementing the relevant policies and the Dean and the HoDs are responsible for ensuring the application of these policies, bylaws and procedures at the programme level. During the site visit, the Panel interviewed academic and administrative staff members, who showed good knowledge of these policies and where they are applicable, within the scope of their domain. From the site visit, it became evident to the Panel that the College and Departmental Councils are the forums where these policies are discussed and compliance with them is monitored. The faculty members whom the Panel interviewed explained that they contribute in the development of these policies and procedures through the Departmental Council and different committees. The Panel appreciates that the University has clear policies, which are implemented consistently at the programme level.

5.2    The university structure specifies the main responsibilities of the Dean, HoDs, College Council, Department Council and permanent committees. In addition, the organisational and administrative structure of the College shows the distribution of the programme management responsibilities between the Department of Public Law and the Department of Private Law. The Dean manages the College assisted by the College Council, in addition to a number of committees responsible for executing various tasks as per their mandate. During the site visit, the Panel was informed that while the Dean cooperates with the Programme Coordinator to ensure that the programme is offered at a good academic standard, the Department Council has the highest authority of managing the courses of the programme within the scope of its responsibility. On the other hand, the HoD has the direct responsibility of supervising the performance of faculty members in the Department. Moreover, the permanent committees provide support to the Dean in the management of the programme, and ensure consistency of work between the two academic departments responsible for the delivery of the BLaw programme. The Panel appreciates that the BLaw programme is administrated in a way indicative of an effective and responsible leadership.

5.3     From the SER, attached documents, and interview sessions with academic and administrative staff members, it became evident to the Panel that there is a quality management system at the university level, whose general policies are developed by a central committee of quality assurance at the university level. This Committee submits periodic reports on the quality of the teaching and learning process to the University Council. The Accreditation and Quality Assurance Office (AQAO) has the main role in monitoring and implementing this policy and its procedures, in coordination with the Quality Assurance Committee of the College and its administration. The AQAO conducts internal programme reviews to assess to what extent the BLaw programme implements the university policies in relation to teaching and learning and assessment. It also reviews the course files and submits an official report in this regard that is discussed by the College Council and the Department Council and utilised in the development of the programme. During the site visit, the Panel came to know that the college's Quality Assurance Committee is the linking point between the AQAO and the central Quality Assurance Committee on one hand, and College of Law on the other.  It is responsible for following up the implementation of the general policy of quality assurance and reconciling between the departments' decisions related to the development plans and schedules and the general policy of quality assurance at the university level. Furthermore, the Quality Assurance Committee in the College follows up the department's implementation of the internal and external moderation policies, the annual and periodic reviews of the programme, as well as following up the improvement plan of the programme. Moreover, the Committee communicates with the Staff Professional Development Office to organise workshops and seminars on university policies and quality assurance mechanisms. The Panel acknowledges that there is a quality management system at the university level and the implementation is followed up in relation to the college and the programme's operations.

5.4     The SER states that the AQAO is the entity responsible for spreading awareness of quality assurance among administrative and academic staff and the Office has organised a number of workshops in this regard. Furthermore, the presence of the Quality Assurance Committee in the College, which is composed of five faculty members, contributes to embedding the quality assurance processes in the overall cultural of the College. During interview sessions with members of the quality assurance committees at the university and the college levels, and the AQAO, the Panel noted an understanding of their different roles and their commitment to perform these roles. Moreover, interviewed faculty members expressed their satisfaction with the various workshops they attended and indicated that they have benefited from these workshops in understanding their roles in ensuring the quality of the BLaw programme and its provision. The Panel appreciates that the administrative and academic staff have clear understanding of the quality assurance system adopted by the programme and their role in this regard.

5.5     KU has documented policy and procedures for introducing new programmes, which includes the criteria for introducing a new programme. These require that the proposed programme should be in line with the university's vision and mission, there is evidence on the local labour market need for such programme and that the basic infrastructure and human resources needed are available. The proposal is initiated by the College, which forwards it to the University Council, which – once satisfied with the proposal - requests a feasibility study to be conducted for the programme. If the feasibility study is positive, a committee is formed to study the proposal and submit a detailed plan for the programme taking into consideration the feedback sought from the various stakeholders as well as the benchmarking results. Afterwards, the detailed proposal is forwarded to the College Council and the University Council for approval, and then to the HEC for licensure.  The Panel acknowledges that there are appropriate policy and procedures for developing new programmes.

5.6     The SER states that the College follows the university policy and procedures in reviewing the BLaw programme. The College performs an annual review of the programme, which starts from the Department of Public Law and the Department of Private Law, where the programme is evaluated based on students' feedback, the statistical data of the programme, in addition to the academic staff and the Advisory Board's feedback. These are forwarded to the Programme Review and Development Committee in the College, which translates the outcomes into an action plan, and its implementation is followed up by the HoD and the Department Council. However, when proposing core amendments to the programme, the approval of the University Council should be obtained before activating these amendments. From the study of the minutes of meetings of the Department Council and relevant committees, and from interviews with faculty members, meetings with the faculty members, it became evident to the Panel that there is an appropriate mechanism for the annual review of the programme, which resulted in its improvement.

5.7     The SER and the procedures available for reviewing academic programmes indicate that in addition to the aforementioned annual review administered by HoDs, a periodic review of the programme is implemented every five years. This review is managed by the Dean of the College of Law, under the supervision of the Curriculum Review and Development Committee in the College, the QAAO and the University Council. This review utilises a wide range of documents, the most important of which are those of benchmarking with similar local, regional and international programmes, internal reviews and external reviewers' reports and feedback from the Advisory Board. The College has reviewed the BLaw programme in the academic year 2012-2013. This resulted in a new plan for the programme, which was implemented in the academic year 2013-2014. The Panel appreciates that there are mechanisms in place to review the programme, and their outcomes are utilised in developing the programme.

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5.8    The SER indicates that the College surveys its internal and external stakeholders' opinions, such as the alumni and employers, to collect feedback on the programme, analyse the results and utilise these to improve the programme. Evidence on the implementation of these surveys was provided to the Panel. However, although there is evidence that the programme has benefited from the results of these surveys, the Panel did not find evidence on a formal mechanism in place for conducting these surveys in a systematic way. The Panel also noted that the number of participants in these surveys, especially employers, is law. Therefore, the Panel recommends that the College should develop a systematic approach, by which feedback is collected from all stakeholders, analysed and the outcomes are utilised to inform the decision-making process.

5.9    From the site visit, it became evident to the Panel that an effective system is in place to identify the areas of academic staff development, with appropriate mechanisms to implement and evaluate the outcomes of this system. The Staff Professional Development Office is dedicated to the professional development of the university's academic staff members. For this purpose, the Office develops an annual professional development plan, where the plan's topics are derived from the results of the annual evaluation of the faculty members, which are collated and analysed by the Human Resources Department. At the end of each staff professional training workshop, the Staff Professional Development Office evaluates the effectiveness of the training process by analysing the participants' feedback. At the end of each academic year, a report summarising the results of evaluating the effectiveness of these workshops is submitted to the Deans and HoDs. Faculty members interviewed by the Panel expressed their satisfaction with the workshops they participated in, in particular those on writing and using CILOs and PLIOs and aligning them to the programme and the college's objectives as well as the graduates' attributes, in addition to the course on using e-learning system in teaching management. The Panel appreciates that there is an effective system to identify the performance development needs of the academic staff, with appropriate mechanisms used to implement and evaluate the results of this system.

5.10   The SER indicates that the College organises official meetings with employers to identify the labour market needs. In addition, the outcomes of alumni and employers' surveys indicate that there is some communication, although limited. Moreover, the questions of the surveys do not infer the labour market needs clearly. The SER indicates that the programme Advisory Board includes members working in the legal field. However, the Panel did not find evidence indicating that there is a clear approach with specific objectives and temporal frames by which labour market needs and the legal careers in demand can be identified. For instance, there is no evidence on any formal communication with the Bahraini Lawyers Society, the Judicial and Legal Studies Institute or public departments recruiting legal consultants.

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Consequently, no reliable data exist to identify the legal areas in demand. Therefore, the Panel recommends that the College should conduct a formal study of the labour market to identify the needs of the market and ensure that the programme is abreast with these needs and requirements.

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

- The University has clear policies, which are implemented consistently at the programme level, and academic and administrative staff are aware of those related to their work.
- The BLaw programme is managed in a way indicative of an effective and responsible leadership.
- The academic and administrative staff have clear understanding of the quality assurance system adopted by the programme, and their role in this regard.
- There are mechanisms in place to review the programme, and their outcomes are utilised in developing the programme.
- There is an effective system in place to identify the performance development needs of the academic staff, with appropriate mechanisms used to implement and evaluate the results of this system.

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

- develop a systematic approach to collect feedback from all stakeholders analyse the results and utilise them to inform the decision-making process
- conduct a formal study of the labour market to identify the needs of the market and ensure that the programme is abreast with these needs and requirements.

5.13    **Judgement**

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

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# 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 Law offered by the College of Law of the Kingdom University.**