



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

Directorate of Vocational Reviews Review Report

**The Nine Training Center
Manama
Kingdom of Bahrain**

Date Reviewed: 25-29 December 2022

VO119-C4-R031

Introduction

The Directorate of Vocational Reviews (DVR) of the Education & Training Quality Authority (BQA), conducted this review over five days by a team of eight reviewers. For this review, reviewers observed training sessions and other related activities, analysed data about the courses/programmes and qualifications learners achieve, examined learners' written and other work, examined documents and materials provided by The Nine Training Center (The9tc) and collected feedback from learners, employers, trainers, management and support staff.

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

Summary of review judgements		
	Aspect	Judgement
Outcomes	Learners' achievement	2
Programmes and processes	Effectiveness of teaching/training and assessment	2
	Quality of courses/programmes	2
	Learners' support and guidance	2
Management and governance	Effectiveness of leadership, management and governance	2
Capacity to improve		2
Overall effectiveness		2

Provider's overall effectiveness throughout the last three reviews



Outstanding	1	Good	2	Satisfactory	3	Inadequate	4
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Overall Effectiveness: 'Good'

Judgement justifications

- The Overall Effectiveness, Capacity to Improve and all Aspects of The Nine Training Center (The9tc) provision are judged as 'Good'.
 - The9tc strategic planning is driven by the outcomes of a regular self-evaluation process and directed towards enhancing learners' achievement and continuous quality improvement. Although the progress towards achieving the strategic objectives is sufficiently monitored, it is not systematically documented.
 - The9tc offers a range of courses/programmes in several vocational areas and occupational fields based on a careful understanding of learners' skills gaps and the needs of the local labour market it intends to serve. Where requested, courses/programmes are effectively customised to fulfil clients' specific needs.
 - Courses/Programmes are well-planned, clearly structured and reinforced by a range of relevant assessment tools, which are effectively utilised to measure the achievement of the stated objectives/Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs) throughout the course/programme.
- Trainers employ their diversified professional experience and subject-matter knowledge and use a range of effective training strategies and learning resources, to enable a learner-focused and smooth learning experience. However, in a few of the observed sessions, a minority of learners are less engaged, particularly during verbal discussions.
 - Learners acquire pertinent knowledge and develop functional and vocational skills relevant to their chosen courses/programmes. Most of them successfully achieve the stated course objectives/ILOs and the qualifications they aim for in a timely manner.
 - Learners are effectively supported to achieve better outcomes and provided with permanent employment opportunities upon course/programme completion.
 - The Center has fit-for-purpose arrangements to quality assure its provision. Nevertheless, the documentation and follow-up of a number of quality-related processes, including moderation and verification, are not systematic.

Capacity to Improve: 'Good'

Judgement justifications

- The judgement of The9tc Overall Effectiveness and all review Aspects have improved by one grade compared to its previous review.
 - The Center has effective strategic and contingency planning guided by the outcomes of periodic self-evaluation processes and previous review recommendations.
 - The9tc has the necessary physical and human resources to meet its objectives and carry out improvement initiatives. In addition to the current qualified staff, and the pool of highly competent part-time trainers, the Center utilises three external consultants for qualifications development, human resources management and quality assurance. Furthermore, the Center is in the process of recruiting more staff, particularly those involved in training and quality.
 - The9tc has fit-for-purpose quality assurance arrangements relevant to all aspects of the provision and supported by a set of clear and sufficiently detailed policies and procedures. Internal and external verification and moderation processes, particularly those for assessments, are mostly streamlined and sufficiently implemented. However, the documentation and follow-up of a number of quality-related processes are not systematic.
- The number of enrolments has dropped in the year 2020 due to emerging circumstances, yet it is steadily increasing over the later years. Learners' achievement is effectively monitored, and high success rates have been maintained over the past three years.
 - In response to the national initiatives, The9tc is a listed institution on the National Qualification Framework (NQF) and is in the process of placing one of its programmes (Award Level 5 in Virtual Customer Service) on the NQF.
 - To discharge its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), the Center has been actively engaged in a wide range of community service events and succeeded, through its well-established links with clients in the market, in securing permanent jobs for most graduates in the 'Customer Service Excellence for Market Staff-Technical Track' and 'National Open College Network (NOCN)-Train & Place' programmes.
 - The9tc has a valid partnership with several awarding bodies, such as the Highfield Awarding Body for Compliance (HABC) and NOCN. Moreover, the Center has signed Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) for industrial training with a number of local training providers.

The Provider's Key Strengths

- effective acquisition of knowledge and development of vocational skills relevant to the chosen courses/programmes for the majority of learners.
- well-planned, structured and resourced courses/programmes customised to the specific needs of clients and supported with a range of effectively implemented assessment tools.
- well-established links with clients, which are effectively utilised to enrich the learning experience and secure permanent employment opportunities for learners upon course/programme completion, particularly the 'Technical Track' and 'NOCN-Train and Place' programmes.
- effective strategic and contingency planning and monitoring of performance.

Recommendations

In order to improve its provision, The Nine Training Center should:

- further improve the learners' mastering of skills and progress towards acquisition of the course/programme objectives/ILOs.
- further enhance the training methodologies to ensure the productive engagement of less interactive learners throughout the session.
- further improve quality assurance arrangements, particularly the moderation and verification, and documentation and follow-up of relevant processes.

Learners' Achievement: 'Good'

Judgement justifications

- Learners acquire effective knowledge, demonstrate purposeful attainment of the ILOs/objectives, and develop vocational skills relevant to their chosen courses/programmes.
- Learners enrolled in the 'Technical Track' and the 'NOCN-Train and Place' programmes, which represent around 39% of the total enrolment, gain effective functional and employability-related skills that have a positive impact on acquiring permanent employment in their chosen profession.
- The Center utilises the comparison between the identical pre-and post-test results as a tool to measure learners' progress and distance travelled from their starting point. The comparison results show that most learners progress well throughout the course/programme. Nevertheless, with consideration of the relatively low pass mark set by the Center, there is still a minority of learners who neither master the required skills nor demonstrate consistent progressive acquisition of the objectives/ILOs in comparison to others.
- According to the analysis of the Learners' Performance Data (LPD) and the attainment records, the success rates are high over the past three years; most learners successfully achieve the stated objectives/ILOs and meet other course/programme requirements. These rates are reflected in the standards of learners' understanding in the observed sessions and the standards of their produced work throughout the course/programme.
- In the externally accredited courses/programmes, which constitute 11% of the total enrolment, learners achieve the qualifications they aim for in a timely manner in compliance with the awarding bodies' regulations.
- Learners are committed and have a positive attitude towards their learning experience. A minority of them demonstrate a high level of self-motivation during the session by taking the initiative during the in-class activities and reflecting critically on what they have learnt through evaluating their colleagues' answers.
- Fit-for-purpose attendance and punctuality guidelines are in place and relevant records are regularly maintained. Whereas most learners attend regularly, punctuality is an issue in a few cases.
- Learners show the ability to work well independently and collaboratively through their contribution to in-class activities such as case studies, assignments and role-plays. During the On Job Training (OJT) that capstone the 'Technical Track' programme, the majority of learners demonstrate confidence and ability to accomplish the assigned tasks.

Areas for improvement

- mastering the skills and progress towards acquisition of the course/programme objectives/ILOs for a minority of learners.

Effectiveness of Teaching/Training and Assessment: 'Good'

Judgement justifications

- The Centre's trainers are highly knowledgeable and experienced in their field of training as reflected well in their accurate explanations and responses to learners' inquiries. They invigorate learning by citing useful vocational examples and discussing workplace-related cases that link theory with practice.
- Trainers apply a range of effective training and experiential learning strategies, supported by purposeful utilisation of relevant learning resources and online applications/tools for practical activities, which succeed in engaging learners throughout the learning process. However, in a few of the observed sessions, a minority of learners are less engaged, particularly during verbal discussions.
- Trainers utilise a range of formative and summative assessment tools and methods to effectively evaluate learners' understanding and measure their achievement of the objectives/ILOs.
- The used assessment tools and methods include, for instance, various questioning techniques, interactive practical in-class activities including simulations and relevant case studies that vary in level and complexity, in addition to assignments, quizzes, pre- and post-tests, and portfolio-based assessments by the awarding body; where applicable.
- Learners' work is mostly accurately corrected and marked, following clear model answers for the pre- and post-tests. The practical activities are graded following appropriate rubrics, though they do not always include explicit criteria for evaluation. Furthermore, there are few cases in which the correction of short answers, open-ended questions and writing questions in English courses is insufficiently rigorous.
- The Centre implements fit-for-purpose pre- and post-assessment moderation processes. Nonetheless, there are a few cases where the moderation processes are not consistently followed up.
- Trainers effectively plan and deliver the training sessions in accordance with well-structured standardised session plans. Lesson planning is appropriately informed and updated by the outcomes of the useful Training Needs Analysis (TNA) and pre-course assessment results allowing for well-managed and progressive session delivery. However, in a few sessions, time management is an issue.
- Trainers mostly address individual learners' needs and capabilities well by altering the training methods and assessment tools, targeting learners' different abilities with tailored practical activities, in addition to providing further explanations and translating the content where required.
- Trainers effectively stimulate self-learning, higher order and critical thinking skills amongst learners by using extended questioning techniques

in which learners are required to evaluate various scenarios including different employment-related contexts, in addition to using a range of experiential and simulation activities that are directed to reinforce learners' problem-solving skills.

- Trainers maintain and regularly update records on learners' achievement including their

attendance and punctuality. During the sessions, trainers constantly provide learners with constructive verbal feedback that essentially contributes to their development throughout the course/programme. Nevertheless, the provided written feedback on learners' work, varies in terms of precisely indicating where learners need to improve further.

Areas for improvement

- engagement of a minority of learners throughout the session, particularly during verbal discussions.
- pre-and-post-assessment moderation processes.

Quality of Course/Programmes: 'Good'

Judgement justifications

- The9tc offers a range of local attendance, achievement and externally accredited courses spanning different fields and employment sectors either separately or as part of a custom-designed programme. Among these programmes, two are geared toward Bahraini job seekers, which include the 'Customer Service Excellence for Market Staff-Technical Track' and the 'NOCN-Train and Place'.
- The courses/programmes on offer are based on a careful understanding of learners' professional standards, skills requirements and the local labour market needs. The Center offers various effectively customised courses/programmes wherein the stakeholders' feedback and learners' requirements are gathered, analysed and successfully utilised to tailor the

course/programme ILOs and assessment criteria, wherever applicable.

- The local attendance and achievement courses/programmes are well-planned and clearly structured with fit-for-purpose outlines and specifications that indicate the course objectives/ILOs. The assessment structure clearly covers the theoretical knowledge and practical learning skills wherein assessments are planned and scheduled in a balanced manner. The newly customised ILOs and assessment criteria for the English Language courses, however, are not clearly mapped and identified.
- The externally accredited courses/programmes' structure and assessments are in line with the awarding bodies' standards and stipulations.

- The9tc has a detailed policy and mechanism in place to design, verify, review and regularly update the different components of courses/programmes. The mechanism is practised through a series of meetings and correspondences between the internal quality team, awarding bodies, clients and trainers. Nonetheless, the process is not clearly documented to reflect the alignment of each course/programme and the changes made at different intervals of time.
 - Courses/programmes are well-resourced with relevant materials, learning resources and training facilities. These include simulation facilities such as the retail laboratory, online applications and learning platforms to aid training delivery, reinforce learning and control the administration of assessments, where required.
- The Center has general policies that adequately stipulate the admission principles for all courses/programmes. The entry requirements and criteria are defined in the courses' outlines which are appropriately implemented to ascertain learners' eligibility to access their intended course/programme as mandated by the licensing, funding and awarding bodies.
 - The Center conducts placement tests for the 'NOCN-Train and Place' programmes, whereas in the 'Technical Track' programme, an oral interview is conducted alongside the placement test, specifically for the English Language courses. Nevertheless, the placement tests and interview outcomes are mainly utilised as indicators for planning the course/programme content and accommodating learners' needs rather than an indicator for placing learners in the course/programme.

Areas for improvement

- documentation of the process of courses/programmes design, development, reviewing and updating.
- process of implementing the access and entry requirements.

Learners' Support and Guidance: 'Good'

Judgement justifications

- The Center has an effectively implemented mechanism to support and guide learners to overcome their learning difficulties and achieve better outcomes. Trainers and administrative staff are approachable and play a vital role in providing effective and timely technical and academic support to learners through different channels. The follow-up process for at-risk learners, however, is insufficiently documented to measure the impact of the provided support. Furthermore, the support and guidance policies, including those related to complaints and appeals, although sufficiently

detailed, do not reflect all practices in place.

- Learners and stakeholders have access to thorough and accurate information in advance about the courses/programmes through a variety of channels and means of communication including the Center's purposeful social media accounts and up-to-date website. Upon starting the course/programme, learners receive an effective induction to familiarise them with aspects related to their learning enabling them to settle in quickly and confidently.
- Learners receive personalised and focused academic support to assist them in overcoming their learning difficulties and enhancing their performance by providing supplementary training hours, extra remedial sessions, and access to enrichment videos and additional activities to fulfil the course/programme's requirements.
- Learners are provided with continuous and relevant technical support to aid them in adapting to the changes in the mode of delivery and platform used. They are also provided with facilities for borrowing mobile devices and financial support for internet connections throughout the entire training period.
- Learners are provided with a wide range of focused and purposeful extra-curricular activities such as free

webinars, field visits and listening to guest speakers, which effectively contribute to fostering their functional abilities and life skills. Moreover, the Center implements effective arrangements in securing employment opportunities for learners upon course/programme completion, particularly through its 'Technical Track' and 'NOCN-Train and Place' programmes, where most enrolled learners have been placed in permanent posts relevant to their chosen profession.

- The Center maintains effective communications with employers and relevant stakeholders to keep them informed about learners' performance throughout the course/programme. Fit-for-purpose learners' performance reports at the individual and group levels are shared with stakeholders upon course/programme completion. The remarks stated in the individual reports, however, do not always accurately reflect the learner's performance.
- A useful policy and relevant procedures are in place to identify and support learners with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND). Although there are no permanent cases of SEND learners, the Center has implemented proper arrangements to deal with emerging situations such as temporary illness and pregnancy.

Areas for improvement

- details of the support policies and documentation of the follow-up for at-risk learners.
- individual learners' performance reports shared with the stakeholders.

Effectiveness of Leadership, Management and Governance: 'Good'

Judgement justifications

- The9tc has effective strategic planning that is sufficiently informed by the outcomes of regular self-evaluation processes. The strategic objectives and operational targets focus on the key areas of the Center's performance aimed at raising learners' achievement and improving the quality of provision. Although the progress towards achieving the set objectives is sufficiently monitored, it is not systematically documented.
- The Self-Evaluation Form (SEF) submitted for the purpose of this review is informative and reflects a realistic and proper understanding of the Center's strengths and challenges. Furthermore, contingency planning reflects the management's swift response to the challenges imposed by emerging circumstances.
- Considering the nature of the conducted courses/programmes, where the majority are short and very short local achievement courses, learners' performance is effectively monitored and analysed to inform decision-making.
- Trainers' performance is closely monitored through internal and external session observations wherein follow-up observations are effectively conducted to promote continuous quality improvement.
- Staff performance is regularly and effectively monitored through annual performance appraisal. Staff and trainers are provided with ample opportunities for training and development including the technical support needed for the mode of delivery and platforms used.
- The current organisational structure is fit for purpose and is supported with adequate human and physical resources to fulfil the requirements of the provision. The Center employs qualified staff and a pool of highly competent part-time trainers in different disciplines where the majority of them have extensive training and professional experience. In addition, the Center utilises three external consultants for qualifications development, human resources and quality assurance.
- The newly recruited staff and trainers are effectively inducted when they join the Center to ensure that they are well informed about the provision and well-acquainted with their allocated responsibilities.
- Fit-for-purpose quality assurance arrangements are in place; the quality manual includes a set of clear and sufficiently detailed policies and procedures relevant to all aspects of the provision including the requirements of the NQF Institutional Listing Standards. Internal and external moderation processes, particularly those related to assessments, are sufficiently implemented to ensure consistency of assessment design and implementation. Nevertheless, the documentation and follow-up of a number of quality-related processes are not systematic.

- The learning environment is conducive and supported by effectively implemented policies, procedures and practices to ensure the health, safety and well-being of learners and staff. The Center's management adheres to the health and safety regulations stipulated by official bodies including essential measures to address emerging circumstances.
- The feedback and suggestions of clients, learners and trainers about the training and learning experience at the Center are systematically obtained and carefully analysed wherein the outcomes are utilised to guide improvement plans and actions.
- The Center has well-established links with employers and other relevant stakeholders in the sectors which they are delivering courses/programmes or preparing learners for. This includes partnerships and networks with local and international partners and awarding bodies and local community entities, which are effectively utilised to improve the provision.
- As part of its CSR, the Center has been engaged in a wide range of community service events such as virtual training for 700 job seekers, free workshops, webinars, talk shows and awareness sessions.

Areas for improvement

- documentation and follow-up of a number of quality-related processes, particularly moderation and verification.

Appendix: Provider Information

Provider Name (English)	The Nine Training Center					
Provider Name (Arabic)	مركز ذا ناين للتدريب					
Licensing Body	Ministry of Labour					
Year of Establishment	2015					
Age Range of Learners	16 and above					
Number of Learners	Male	1036	Female	471	Total	1507
Learning Areas	Externally Accredited		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hospitality, Business and Commerce (Train and Place) Awarding Body: The National Open College Network (NOCN) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level 1 Certificate in Introduction to the Hospitality Industry Level 1 Certificate in Retail Knowledge Leadership and Management Awarding Body: Highfield Awarding Body for Compliance (HABC) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Customer Service Excellence (CSE) 			
	Local Achievement		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Languages <ul style="list-style-type: none"> General English- Level 1.1 General English- Level 3.1 Health & Safety <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working Safely Leadership and Management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Crisis Management Customer Relationship Management Communication Strategies Customer Service Excellence Customer Service for Retailers Productivity Enhancement Stress Management 			

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Women Empowerment - Inspiring Positive Change - Women in Success - Business and Technical Report Writing • Business and Commerce <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Smarter Retail (Get Smarter in Retail) - Smart Retailer - Smart Tools for Hospitality and Tourism • Customer Service Excellence for Market Staff Programme (Technical Track) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Building Relationships for Success in Sales - Reading Body Language as a Sales Tool - Health & Safety at Workplace - Customer Service Excellence - General English- Level 1.2 - General English- Level 2.1 - Work Ethics - On Job Training
	Local Attendance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership and Management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Effective Team Building - Work Ethics for Business
Available Learning Platform(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zoom • Socrative Software 	
Institution's Listing Status	Listed on the National Qualification Framework (NQF) Listing ID: IL19-005 February 2020	
List of Qualifications placed on/aligned to the NQF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None 	