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Education & Training Quality Authority
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Directorate of Higher Education Reviews

Programmes-within-College Reviews Report

Confidential

Master in Measurement and Evaluation

College of Arts

University of Bahrain

Kingdom of Bahrain

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Acronyms

| | |
|-------|--|
| BQA | Education and Training Quality Authority |
| CGPA | Cumulative Grade Point Average |
| CILOs | Course Intended Learning Outcomes |
| DHR | Directorate of Higher Education Reviews |
| HEC | Higher Education Council |
| HoD | Head of Department |
| ILOs | Intended Learning Outcomes |
| MIS | Management Information Systems |
| NQF | National Qualifications Framework |
| PILOs | Programme Intended Learning Outcomes |
| QAAC | Quality Assurance and Accreditation Centre |
| QAO | Quality Assurance Office |
| SER | Self-Evaluation Report |
| UoB | University of Bahrain |

The Programmes-within-College Reviews Process

A. 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 Education & Training Quality Authority (BQA) has developed and is implementing two external quality review processes, namely: Institutional Reviews and Programmes-within-College Reviews, which together will give confidence in Bahrain's higher education system nationally, regionally and internationally.

Programmes-within-College Reviews have three main objectives:

- to provide decision-makers (in the higher education institutions, the BQA, 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 | |

B. The Programmes-within-College Reviews Process at the University of Bahrain

A Programmes-within-College review of the University of Bahrain (UoB) was conducted by the DHR of the BQA in terms of its mandate to review the quality of higher education in Bahrain. The site visit took place on 5-9 November 2017 for the academic programmes offered by the College of Arts, these are: Bachelor in Mass Communication, Bachelor in Tourism, Master in Mass Communication, Bachelor in Sociology, Bachelor in History, Master in Psychological Counseling and Master in Measurement and Evaluation.

This Report provides an account of the review process and the findings of the Panel for the Master in Measurement and Evaluation programme based on the Self-Evaluation Report (SER) and appendices submitted by UoB and the supplementary documentation made available during the site visit, as well as interviews and observations made during the review site visit.

UoB was notified by the DHR/ BQA on 6 March 2017 that it would be subject to a Programmes-within-College review of its College of Arts with the site visit taking place in November 2017. In preparation for the review, UoB conducted its college self-evaluation of all its programmes and submitted the SERs with appendices on the agreed date on 8 June 2017.

This Report provides an account of the review process and the findings of the Panel for the Master in Measurement and Evaluation programme 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 the UoB will use the findings presented in this Report to strengthen its Master in Measurement and Evaluation. The DHR recognizes that quality assurance is the responsibility of the higher education institution itself. Hence, it is the right of UoB to decide how it will address the recommendations contained in the Review Report. Nevertheless, three months after the publication of this Report, UoB is required to submit to the DHR an improvement plan in response to the recommendations.

The DHR would like to extend its thanks to UoB for the co-operative manner in which it has participated in the Programmes-within-College review process. It also wishes to express its appreciation for the open discussions held in the course of the review and the professional conduct of the faculty and administrative staff of the Master in Measurement and Evaluation.

C. Overview of the College of Arts

The College of Arts was originally established as a part of the University College of Arts, Science, and Education, which was founded by the Amiri Decree No. (11) in 1978. In 1986, the Amiri Decree No. (12) was issued to establish the UoB by merging the Gulf Polytechnic and the University College of Arts, Science and Education. The UoB included at this time: the College of Arts & Science, College of Education, College of Business Administration, and College of Engineering. In 1990, the Board of Trustees of UoB issued a decision to divide the College of Arts & Science into two separate colleges: the College of Arts and the College of Science. Currently, the UoB includes ten colleges. The College of Arts includes five departments, which are: the Department of Arabic Language and Islamic Studies, Department of English Language and Literature, Department of Social Sciences, Department of Psychology, Department of Mass Communication, Tourism and Fine Arts. The College offers Bachelor degree programmes across its five departments alongside postgraduate programmes at the master level. The mission of the College is focused on preparing intellectual and enlightened leaders equipped with mental and critical competences that strengthen their Arab and Islamic identity, the climate of freedom, cultural pluralism and respect

for citizenship, and help in building knowledge, technology, culture and practical skills, as well as, supporting scientific research and community services. At the time of the site visit, the College was employing (128) full-time faculty members, (69) part-time members, supported by (29) administrative staff. The total number of enrolled students was (5719) students.

D. Overview of the Master in Measurement and Evaluation Programme

The Department of Psychology was established in 1978, and it was transferred to the College of Arts in 2008. The Department currently offers the Master in Measurement and Evaluation programme and the Master in Psychological Counseling programme. The first cohort of students was admitted to the Master in Measurement and Evaluation programme in 2002; it included five students who graduated in 2005. The programme was modified and major changes in courses were conducted, such as the research project, which was replaced in 2007 by a master thesis. Consequently, a decision was issued in 2008 by the university management to adopt the current version of the programme; and the admission was opened until the last cohort was accepted in 2015. The total number of the programme graduates since its establishment was 37; the number of the enrolled student was seven at the time of the site visit; and there are three academic members contributing to the delivery of the programme.

E. Summary of Review Judgements

Table 2: Summary of Review Judgements for the Master in Measurement and Evaluation Programme

| Indicator | Judgement |
|--|---------------------------|
| 1: The Learning Programme | Satisfies |
| 2: Efficiency of the Programme | Satisfies |
| 3: Academic Standards of the Graduates | Does not satisfy |
| 4: Effectiveness of Quality Management and Assurance | Satisfies |
| Overall Judgement | Limited Confidence |

1. Indicator 1: The Learning Programme

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

- 1.1 The programme is managed as per the planning framework of academic programmes at UoB. The philosophy of the programme, as indicated in the SER, refers to the dissemination and consolidation of the culture of measurement and educational evaluation that is founded on scientific and systematic bases. Additionally, the programme aims to qualify specialists in measurement and educational evaluation to work in various sectors in line with labour market needs. The objectives of the programme are linked to the college mission components concerning introducing outstanding education and providing graduates with practical skills and professional ethics; these objectives are also linked to the university goals and its three functions, namely: teaching, scientific research and community engagement. The programme objectives are generally consistent with the nature of the discipline and its scientific degree. The Panel appreciates that the programme objectives are aligned with the mission of the College, as well as the main functions and goals of the University; and these objectives are compatible with the nature of the discipline and the scientific level of the qualification.
- 1.2 The curriculum of the programme consists of 36 credit hours; and courses are organized in a gradual manner, starting with 12 credit hours foundational courses that aim to develop a scientific research base. This is followed by 18 credit hours of study that are spread over (3) courses per semester, with nine credit hours. These courses are specialized in educational evaluation, starting with modern topics in classroom assessment, the construction of educational measurements and standards, the principles of classical and modern measurement theories, adaptive computerized tests, and qualitative evaluation procedures. The master thesis is undertaken in the 4th semester, through which the student begins to work on his/ her selected subject, based on the directions of his/her instructor, and after successfully completing the courses that cover knowledge and various skills in measurement and educational evaluation, throughout the three previous semesters. The student's workload is equivalent to what is expected in similar master programmes offered by regional universities; the Panel also noted that the curriculum provides an appropriate balance between theory and practice. The Panel appreciates that the curriculum provides course-by-course progression, and the workload is suitable for the students. The current structure of the curriculum does not contain any elective courses, from which the student can choose courses matching his/her interest in the field of measurement and educational evaluation or in interrelated fields that are relevant to the programme. However, the Panel learned that the programme is currently under a holistic review that takes into consideration feedback from different committees assigned for review and internal

audit. The Panel recommends that the College should study the possibility of including elective courses in the curriculum to enable the student to develop his/her knowledge and skills in specific trends of measurement and evaluation.

- 1.3 The specification of the programme courses is documented through a standard form issued by the University Quality Assurance and Accreditation Centre (QAAC). This specification form includes the course content and its distribution throughout the semester, course objectives, the Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs), a matrix of the mapping of CILOs to the Programme Intended Learning Outcomes (PILOs), teaching methods, assessment approaches and scientific references. It was noted during interviews with the faculty members, that they have lately improved the content of the courses through an informal benchmarking, in line with the Quality Assurance Manual of UoB, and as a response to the feedback of the programme graduates. By reviewing some courses, the Panel noted an overlap between some of the taught topics (e.g. past literature review, tools building and its extracting psychometric specialization), which are found in the two courses: 'Basic Research Approaches' (EVALU550) and 'Internship in Evaluation' (EVALU552). Additionally, there are topics that have not been covered in an in-depth manner that is appropriate for master degree courses, as in the 'Statistical Approaches and their Computer Applications in Education and Psychology' (EVALU551). The Panel is of the view that there is a need to expand the study of variance analysis models, to include repetitive measurements and associated variance, in addition to regression analysis models. This will enable the student to obtain a higher level of knowledge and skills that will be integrated to meet the requirements and standards of the specialization. There is also a need to introduce different practical trainings in some courses, to cover various skills in the field of measurement and educational evaluation. The Panel also noted that there is a need to develop practical applied tasks that enable the student to build an integrated project relating between the courses of the semester in which he/she is studying. Moreover, the Panel noted that references, upon which the courses are based, are neither adequately distinguished nor updated to keep up with the recent scientific output. Furthermore, a number of courses are based on study materials prepared by an academic member without referring to the recent applied research practices associated with the use of information technology. Additionally, by reviewing the course files, the Panel noted that the CILOs documented in the specification of some courses, differ from those that are presented in the SER (e.g. the 'Qualitative Assessment' (EVALU558) course). Accordingly, the Panel recommends that the College should review the specification of the courses to ensure that it is updated, accurate, free of content overlapping or repetition, consistent with the master level, rely on the results of recent educational research, and utilize professional practices specialized in the topics of measurement and educational evaluation. This is in order to inform the teaching process and further develop the content of the courses.

- 1.4 There are eight PILOs, classified into four categories: knowledge and understanding, skills related to specialization, critical thinking skills, and general transferrable skills such as communication skills, self-development, and professional skills. The PILOs are consistent with the general objectives of the programme in terms of enabling its graduates to acquire knowledge and skills related to the field of measurement and evaluation, which include basic knowledge, the work practices related to the discipline, the awareness of professional, educational and social responsibilities. These objectives also include the capability of using modern technical methods and the contribution to solving educational problems in a way that serves the Bahraini community, in addition to enhancing the graduates' ability to communicate effectively with others and continue to conduct research in the field of specialization. Furthermore, the PILOs have been appropriately linked to the educational outcomes of the University. However, the Panel notes that some of the PILOs need to be reviewed in order to be more accurate and measurable, as these outcomes have not been often written in a way that reflects the expected level of the programme graduate. The SER and interviewed faculty members indicated that the programme is currently undergoing a comprehensive review, which includes rewriting and upgrading the level of the Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs), to be aligned with the advanced level of the master degree. Therefore, the Panel recommends that the College should expedite the review of the PILOs to be measurable and appropriate to the expected level of the scientific degree, in line with similar programmes offered by other regional and Arab universities.
- 1.5 There is a set of ILOs for each course of the programme that are documented in its specification, and the programme sought to align the CILOs with the National Qualifications Framework (NQF). The Panel appreciates that the CILOs are clearly stated, and benefit from the NQF level descriptors, to include knowledge, specialized skills, and general skills, which are appropriate to the level of the course. In addition, there is a matrix that outlines the mapping of the CILOs to PILOs, through which the Panel noted that the PILO 'practice works related to the specialization in the educational and professional sector' was mapped with two outcomes only. One of these two outcomes is listed in the 'Scientific Research Methods' (EVALU550) course, and the other is one of the outcomes of the 'Master Thesis' (EVALU590) course. Although, the content and CILOs of some courses are appropriate to achieve the outcomes of the programme, the Panel notes a degree of exaggeration in mapping some CILOs to the PILOs, which may reflect an overlapping between the contents of the courses (as referred to in paragraph: 1.3). For example, the PILO 'know the different skills and capabilities in the field of measurement and educational evaluation' has been mapped with the all the ILOs of the courses, except for the 'Statistical Approaches and Computer Applications in Education and Psychology' (EVALU551) course, as only three of its outcomes have been mapped to this PILO. Hence, the Panel recommends that the College should review and modify the matrix

outlining the mapping of the CILOs to the PILOs, to ensure the accuracy of the mapping, avoid over mapping, and keep the most relevant CILOs.

- 1.6 The programme has an internship component, achieved through the 'Internship in Evaluation' (EVALU552) course, for which the student registers at the beginning of the second semester. It has (3) credit hours, which are equivalent to (40) training hours during one semester, according to the SER. The student is expected to conduct a specialized project, in which he/she applies the theoretical knowledge and skills acquired from the courses of the programme, and he/she is given the opportunity to choose the training institution, under the supervision of an academic member of the programme in line with the college policy for internship. The course has clear learning outcomes, which are properly linked to the objectives of the internship programme. However, the matrix of mapping these outcomes to the PILOs needs to be revised (as detailed in paragraph: 1.5). The specification of the course stipulates the assessment approach used in evaluating the performance of the student in the course, according to five basic evaluation standards. These are: the student commitment level during the internship, his efficiency in preparing evaluation methods, his practical skills in applying these methods, the statistical analysis and explanation of the evaluation results, and the quality of the final evaluation report. Nevertheless, the Panel noted that the student commitment level during the internship has no matching CILOs or course objectives. Furthermore, the mapping between the evaluation criteria and the CILOs is not clear. Hence, the Panel appreciates that there is a course for the internship, which has specific outcomes contributing to the learning process of the programme. However, the Panel recommends that the College should review the mapping of the evaluation standards to the ILOs of the internship course.
- 1.7 UoB has a student-centered philosophy in terms of education and learning strategy that ensures the achievement of the learning outcomes of the academic programmes, and the learning objectives, through the teaching and learning process, which is based on a variety of teaching and learning methods, as shown on the university website. During interviews conducted with students and faculty members, it was revealed that there are many teaching methods used in the programme (e.g. lectures, group discussions, brainstorming sessions, and self-learning, etc.). These methods contribute to the achievement of the ILOs and the graduate attributes of the Master in Measurement and Evaluation programme. The faculty members also confirmed their use of computer software in teaching some courses (e.g. SPSS in the 'Statistical Approaches in Education and Psychology' (EVALU551) course), in addition to other software that are available in the computer laboratory of the Department, and serve topics of the computerized measurement. Furthermore, students achieve learning outcomes that has a practical nature through submitting, presenting and discussing assignments, associated with the course, in front of their colleagues, which develop the students' self-learning and communication skills. From interviewing students and

graduates, the Panel noted a general satisfaction with the teaching and learning methods used in the programme. They also emphasized that the practical activities are adequate, and contribute to raising the level of their efficiency and ability to apply theoretical information. Thus, the Panel appreciates that there is a variety of teaching and learning methods in the programme, which are appropriate to the practical nature of programme and contribute to the achievement of its ILOs, in addition to encouraging students to participate in the learning process and develop self-learning skills. The e-learning is described in UoB Teaching and Learning Strategy, and in spite of the existence of an e-learning platform, during the tour in the computer laboratory, and from the interviews conducted with the faculty members and students, the Panel found that the e-learning is not effectively implemented in the programme. The e-learning platform has been used in a few courses as a mean of saving the study subjects. Therefore, the Panel recommends that the College should apply the procedures that contributes to using the e-learning properly, according to the teaching and learning policy of the University, and measure the effectiveness of these procedures in the achievement of the PILOs.

- 1.8 The assessment policy adopted by the University and approved by its Council (Decision No.pno 545 /2015) states the need to use various assessment tools, as the utilized assessment approaches must achieve in a clear manner the functions of both formative and summative assessments, as well as, the learning outcomes that are intended to be measured. The course specifications demonstrate that the faculty members of the Master in Measurement and Evaluation programme are generally committed to using different assessment tools within the courses. Moreover, students are informed -through the course specification distributed to them at the beginning of the semester- about the assessment tools used in the course and their proportions of the course final grade. Furthermore, interviewed students emphasized, during the site visit, that faculty members have adhered to what is incorporated in the course specification. They also expressed their satisfaction with the fairness of the assessment, and indicated that they can review their work and their assessed examination papers, as well as, their grades with the course instructor during the semester. The student also has the right to submit an appeal to the Admission and Registration Department, if he/she wants to object about a certain given grade. The appeal can be implemented after the end of the semester, according to specific and regulated procedures. Furthermore, the interviewed students indicated during the site visit that they receive an oral feedback when discussing their corrected examination papers and that there is a sufficient degree of accuracy and justice in this area. Moreover, during interviews the Panel confirmed that students and faculty members are aware of the assessment policies and procedures, which are available on the university website and in the student manual. Faculty members are also informed with any adjustments in the university policy related to the assessment through the department meetings and the directions of the university administration in this regard. The Panel appreciates that

there are clear policies for the assessment of students achievement that are suitable for the Master in Measurement and Evaluation programme, and both the academic members and the students are aware of these policies. However, through meetings conducted by the Panel with the students, it was noted that they received the feedback after a long time, sometimes at the end of the semester in some of their courses. The Panel also noted the lack of commitment to applying the university policy of verifying the academic plagiarism in all students' work. Thus, the Panel urges the College to ensure the implementation of the university policies and procedures related to providing feedback and verifying the academic plagiarism in the programme properly, to ensure the achievement of the programme objectives (see recommendation in paragraph: 3.3).

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

- The programme objectives are aligned with the mission of the College, as well as the main functions and goals of the University; and these objectives are compatible with the nature of the discipline and the scientific level of the qualification.
- The curriculum provides course-by-course progression, and the workload is suitable for the students.
- The course intended learning outcomes are clearly stated, and benefit from the NQF level descriptors, to include knowledge, specialized skills, and general skills, which are appropriate to the level of the course.
- There is a course for the internship, which has specific outcomes contributing to the learning process of the programme.
- There is a variety of teaching and learning methods in the programme, which are appropriate to the practical nature of programme and contribute to the achievement of its Intended Learning Outcomes, in addition to encouraging students to participate in the learning process and develop self- learning skills.
- There are clear policies for the assessment of students' achievement that are suitable for the Master in Measurement and Evaluation programme, and both the academic members and the students are aware of these policies.

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

- study the possibility of including elective courses in the curriculum to enable the student to develop his/her knowledge and skills in specific trends of measurement and evaluation
- review the specification of the courses to ensure that it is updated and accurate, free of content overlapping or repetition, consistent with the master level, rely on the results of recent educational research and utilize professional practices specialized in the topics of measurement and educational evaluation

- expedite the review of the programme intended learning outcomes to be measurable and appropriate to the expected level of this scientific degree, in line with similar programmes offered by other regional and Arab universities
- review and modify the matrix outlining the mapping of the course intended learning outcomes to the programme intended learning outcomes, to ensure the accuracy of the mapping, avoid over mapping, and keep the most relevant course intended learning outcomes
- review the mapping of the evaluation standards to the Intended Learning Outcomes of the internship course
- apply the procedures that contributes to using the e-learning properly, according to the teaching and learning policy of the University, and measure the effectiveness of these procedures in the achievement of the programme intended learning outcomes

1.11 Judgement

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

2 Indicator 2: Efficiency of the Programme

The programme is efficient in terms of the admitted students, the use of available resources - staffing, infrastructure and student support.

- 2.1 The programme has a clear admission policy that follows the university admission regulations, and it is stipulated clearly in the graduate studies regulation. Based on this policy, students who hold a bachelor degree in the disciplines of Psychology and Education (science and mathematics) are accepted directly in the programme of Master in Measurement and Evaluation, while bachelor's degree-students from other disciplines are accepted on the condition of studying three remedial courses firstly. Moreover, it is required for the admission to the programme that the student takes English language examination, as well as, the aptitude examination and the personal interview, to ensure the success and retention of students admitted to the programme. However, by examining the evidence, the Panel found that there are no special, formal, or common rating scales for the personal interview that can be used to compare between applicants of the programme. Therefore, the Panel recommends that the College, in coordination with the University, should develop clear requirements and standards for admission, as well as, clear rating scales, to ensure transparency and fairness in comparing among applicants who will be admitted to the programme.
- 2.2 Students admitted in the programme are subject to the announced requirements for admission, and the admission procedures are announced by the Deanship of Graduate studies *via* the website, in addition to other means such as text messages. The programme deals with the different abilities of applicants when applying for admission, by offering alternatives for them such as remedial courses and courses to strengthen their English language. By examining the files of remedial courses, the Panel found that there was no precise specification or clear identified learning outcomes of these courses; therefore, there is no evidence indicating that these courses are suitable for the different needs of students, and ensuring the development of their knowledge and skills in line with the programme needs. Thus, the Panel recommends that the College should provide specifications for the remedial courses that clearly describe the role of these courses in preparing admitted students according to the programme needs. The Panel did not find evidence about the academic progression of the students in the programme or clear specifications of the students admitted to it, in order to acknowledge whether the admission policy is applied regularly or not. For example, there are no data about the test grades of students, and personal interviews, or any reports related to them. The Panel was not provided with evidence demonstrating that the programme follows clear mechanisms for analyzing student performance in terms of their levels when they are admitted, to ensure that the profile of the admitted students is appropriate to the needs of the programme. The Panel urges the College to analyze the performance of students' cohorts and analyze the data

related to the qualifications of admitted students and their academic progression, to ensure that they are suitable for the programme's objectives and available resources (see paragraph: 3.9).

- 2.3 According to the presented evidence, there is an appropriate organizational structure for the programme management, as the programme coordinator is assigned with defined tasks, and he/she follows the Head of the Psychology Department, in the management hierarchy, who in turn, follows the Dean. There is also an appropriate organizational, administrative, and academic structure, in addition to a specific deanship for graduate studies at the university level, which supervises the organization and coordination of postgraduate studies affairs at the university and college levels. At the department level, there are several committees that carry out various tasks concerning the academic affairs of the programme, which in turn, forward their recommendations to the Department Council, and then the College Council and finally to the University Council, upon request. The programme coordinator also works continuously with the Head of the Department (HoD), advisory councils, sub-committees and others to facilitate applying the administrative system of the academic programmes in the University. Furthermore, there is a clear description of responsibilities and duties, and the Panel was informed, during the site visit interviews, that both the staff and the students are aware of it. Therefore, the Panel appreciates that there is a clear and appropriate organizational structure for the programme management.
- 2.4 The programme courses are taught by (3) faculty members who are PhD holders, including (1) professor and (2) associate professors, alongside faculty members from other departments and colleges at the University. By reviewing the profiles of the faculty members, it was noted that some of them have professional experience related to the practical aspects of the programme. The SER indicates that the faculty members to students ratio is appropriate, and in fact, this is due to the limited number of students in the programme (7 students). However, the Panel is of the view that this number is not compatible with the actual needs of the programme, as interviews with students revealed that they are studying several courses with the same faculty member. The provided evidence also indicates that there are cases in which an academic member teaches a subject that is not of his/her specific specialization. Moreover, the Panel found that the responsibilities of faculty members include teaching, scientific research, community service, as well as, academic advising for students, and supervising research and master thesis, in addition to their duties as members of a number of academic and administrative committees. Hence, the Panel advises the College to adopt a clear plan to increase the number of faculty members specialized in measurement and evaluation in order to reduce the academic workload, and achieve the institution goals related to conducting scientific research, and

community partnership, in addition to ensuring that the academic member teaches courses within his specific specialization.

- 2.5 UoB has procedures for the recruitment of its faculty members, which are published, implemented, and available for faculty members, as per the Regulation of Faculty Members, and the policy and procedures of the Civil Service Bureau in the Kingdom of Bahrain. The recruitment processes follow specific procedures beginning with advertising job vacancies on the university website, then studying the applications forwarded by the Department to the College, and then to the University. After that, they compare between the candidates, and the faculty member is appointed according to the vacant posts. The faculty members, interviewed by the Panel during the site visit, confirmed that recruitment procedures were carried out in a consistent and transparent manner. The Regulation of Faculty Members explains their rights and duties, and methods of appraisal and promotion. There is also a system to evaluate the performance of the faculty member that is filled up electronically and regularly by the students. The HoD also evaluates faculty members based on several aspects: the academic activity, the teaching performance, their relationships with their colleagues, their cooperation with the HoD, as well as their research and scientific activity, alongside services provided by them to the University and the community. Moreover, the Panel noted, through the presented documentations and interviews with the faculty members that, in general, there is a high retention rate among the faculty members. During the site visit, the interviewed faculty members expressed their satisfaction with the current working conditions, which help in their retention. The Panel appreciates that there are clear and transparent procedures for the recruitment process and evaluation of the academics performance, and there is evidence that their retention rates in the programme are high. The University also has the Academic Promotion System for promoting academic staff, including the criteria for establishing the committees of academic promotion at the department, college, and university levels, alongside the mechanisms of these committees as well as the requirements and standards of academic promotion. With regard to the induction of new academics about the University, its system, services, and resources, the Panel was informed during interviews with faculty members that this activity is implemented at the department and the college levels in an informal manner. Thus, the Panel recommends that the College should organize a formal induction programme for new academics at the department, college, and university levels to introduce them to the university policies, regulations, resources, and various services, and evaluate the effectiveness of the induction programme.
- 2.6 UoB has a modern Management Information System (MIS) that includes the online registration system, academic advising, timetables, and human resources. These systems are compatible with the programme objectives and type. During the site visit and from the provided evidence, it became clear to the Panel that the academic and

administrative staff have online access to information regarding salary slips, attendance reports, overtime hours of administrative staff, and other needs of administrative and academic staff. These online services are also available for the students to register their courses and pay tuition. There is also an available access to the records of the enrolled students in the programme, their timetables, and the name of the academic advisor assigned for each student. In addition, interviews with faculty members revealed the availability of recording absence and monitoring grades online. Furthermore, the E-learning Centre provides reports about the utilization of its services for the academic departments, and the library provides reports about the available resources for the College and its use. Despite the availability of an MIS that is aligned with the programme objectives and type, it is used on a limited basis in the management of the programme, students, and various resources. The Panel did not find any evidence of using the MIS to enhance the decision making process in a holistic and strategic manner. Thus, the Panel appreciates that the MIS is adequate and suitable for the programme objectives and needs; yet the Panel is of the view that it can be more useful by developing it. Therefore, the Panel advises the College to expand the utilization of the MIS in order to enhance decision-making process at the strategic level of the programme.

- 2.7 UoB has clear policies and procedures that are in place, to ensure the security and safety of all the records and information of students in the College, in addition to procedures and policies for risk management. There is an information server at the university campus, and another one outside the University, with replicas of data and information stored on the main server to ensure that it is not damaged for any reason. Moreover, the access to students' data is only allowed to the authorized people according to specific procedures to ensure the confidentiality and security of information. There are also gradual authorizations for each faculty member to access students' data. Regarding the process of entering grades, it is assigned only to the course instructor and approved by the HoD. Grades can be modified formally, upon request, and after the approval of the HoD and the Dean. The Panel appreciates that there are policies and procedures that are applied in the programme to ensure the integrity of information of the programme's students, and to maintain its security and accuracy.
- 2.8 During the site visit, the Panel had a tour in the University and the College, through which the Panel learned that the Master in Measurement and Evaluation programme, which is one of the programmes offered by the Department of Psychology in the College of Arts, uses classrooms in the building of the College of Physical Education to deliver the programme. The Panel noted that these classrooms are appropriate. Moreover, the University provides places for the students inside the campus such as sports halls, besides several spaces available for students to practice their activities (e.g. the club of arts and music, theatre, chess, media, the cinema of arts, gym, wellness

centre, and offices for the students' council). There is also an available (Wi-Fi) service at the College of Arts and the laboratories, in addition to the provided emails to students and faculty members, as well as, sufficient individual offices for the academic members, equipped with computers, and adequate for work and meeting students. Moreover, there are online systems (Blackboard & Moodle) provided by Zain E-learning Centre and enabling instructors to present some parts of their courses online, although the use of these systems are limited in the programme. The Panel also noted that the number of laboratories is adequate for the needs of the programme; however, it was noted that the programme uses limited software. During the tour in the library, the Panel found that it is provided with books, references and proper electronic resources that serve the programme students and faculty members. In addition, the library provides sufficient and modern electronic databases, which are accessible by students and faculty members. It also provides classrooms, supportive services, and study halls for groups. During interviews, students and staff members expressed their satisfaction with the available facilities and services that support the programme. Thus, the Panel appreciates that the available resources of the programme are adequate for its needs, in addition to providing printed and soft copies of books and references to meet the needs of both students and faculty members.

- 2.9 UoB has a tracking system to track the use of its different resources; the Panel observed during the site visit that the timetables for the use of classrooms and laboratories are generated by the Deanship of Admission and Registration and are posted at the doors, and any request to change these timetables is implemented by the Deanship. Zain E-learning Centre provides a platform for e-learning courses incorporated within the e-learning system, where the system collects data about the use of its resources and generates several reports on the size and forms of usage. Moreover, the library has a rigorous system to monitor and track its operations. The Panel also learned, during the site visit interviews that it is possible to generate reports for the Department and the College concerning the students and tracking their academic affairs, as well as, reports about the usage of the provided services by the programme. The presented evidence and interviews conducted during the site visit refer to the actual implementation of these services, but in different intensities, as the programme uses the e-learning platform in a very limited manner, while there is an adequate use by students and faculty members for the databases available in the main library of the University. The Panel acknowledges that there are tracking systems to evaluate the utilization of different resources, but no evidence was provided on using these systems by the programme management to inform decision making regularly and periodically. Therefore, the Panel recommends that the College should further utilize the tracking reports and the updated data of the tracking systems in enhancing decision making that contributes to improving the educational process.

- 2.10 UoB has several administrative bodies of supportive nature serving the academic process, which assist in providing students with support to facilitate their learning. The University has a written handbook for the induction purpose, including regulations and instructions that must be followed and adhered to by the students. Furthermore, during the site visit and from the provided evidence, the Panel was informed that there is an appropriate support provided for the students in laboratories, the library, and e-learning whether through the infrastructure or available computer applications, in addition to interpersonal support such as the assistance provided by laboratory technicians or specialists in the Library. As for the academic advising, there is a system to help students in choosing the appropriate subjects for them. In addition to several supports that are provided to students who have special needs such as helping them in courses registration and providing them with equipped car, as well as support services provided by volunteer students. The library also provides special services for them by dedicating a room for visual disabilities with a computer especially equipped for these cases. The Career Guidance Office of the Vice President for Community and Graduate Services prepares the students for the challenges of the labour market by providing them with several services such as the Career Day, CV pickup and delivery service, job nominations service and on campus employment. Moreover, the Department of Advice and Guidance of the Deanship of Student Affairs guides and advises students through specialized social workers. It was revealed during interviews with students, that they are satisfied with the different support services provided to them. The Panel reviewed the satisfaction surveys of the expected graduates and noted the lack of evidence on the use of these surveys in improving different services provided to students to support them. The Panel appreciates the various support services provided by University to the students, and urges the University to expand the distribution of the satisfaction surveys to include all undergraduate students, and to make use of the results in improving the available support in the programme in a periodic and regular manner.
- 2.11 The University has an induction programme for the newly enrolled students, which is organized by the Deanship of Students Affairs. During the Induction Day, students are prepared to be involved in the University to facilitate their adaptation, and are provided with the needed data and information about the University. They are also provided with a booklet that includes the rights and duties of UoB students, and a handbook that includes instructions for the new students in the College of Arts. The Deanship of Graduate Studies participated in the Induction Day by providing students with a special booklet that contains information about the regulations, the way to register in the courses, the procedures related to the master thesis and other relevant information. During interviews, faculty members indicated that all information about the induction programme are available on the website for any student who could not attend it. During interviews, students expressed their satisfaction with the Induction

Day and its effectiveness. However, the Panel was not provided with any evidence indicating that those in charged with the induction programme had measured the extent to which students are satisfied with the programme. The Panel appreciates the arrangements taken by the University management to introduce the newly admitted student to the programme and the provided services and activities. The Panel also advises the College to evaluate students' satisfaction with the Induction Day in a systematic manner and utilize the results in enhancing the induction programme.

- 2.12 UoB has an academic advising system, which is detailed in the handbook of the academic staff members, stating that the HoD should appoint an academic advisor for each student enrolled in the programme, and inform the Deanship of Admission and Registration to add the name of the academic advisor to the student's electronic page. The academic advisor works according to a stated policy, as he submits an annual report to the HoD about the core problems, which will be presented to the Department Council and the University Council, upon request. As per chapter (9) of the Study Regulations for Postgraduate Students, the student receives an academic warning if he/she did not get a minimum Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA) of (3.0) out of (4.0). The student will also be dismissed from the University, if he/ she did not reach the minimum required CGPA in the two semesters subsequent to receiving the academic warning. The academic advising system is supposed to monitor the at-risk students who received an academic warning, as he/ she meets the academic advisor to help and give him/her the appropriate advices to raise his/ her CGPA. Moreover, the Panel found that there is an academic support available for students who are poor in English language *via* the National Geographic Centre, which has been recently opened at the University. However, no evidence was presented to the Panel indicating to the effectiveness of these mechanisms in addressing cases of academic failure. Accordingly, the Panel acknowledges that there are mechanisms for academic advising, and advises the College to evaluate and measure the effectiveness of these mechanisms, and their contribution to improving the academic performance of the student.
- 2.13 UoB provides various opportunities to expand the knowledge and experience of the students, through supporting activities, including participation in the student activities, in cooperation with college associations and clubs, and student exhibitions. Interviewed students expressed their satisfaction during the site visit and it was clear to the Panel that students are allowed to participate in a wide range of informal learning activities organized by different entities at the University. These activities include cultural and social activities, sports events, seminars, various workshops, the Career Day, and peer-teaching programme. Moreover, the organizational professional skills of students are enhanced through accomplishing the master thesis, and bringing external examiners for the *viva*. During interview sessions, students expressed their satisfaction towards the opportunities offered by the University and the College to

expand their learning experience. The Panel appreciates that there is a learning environment in the College contributing to expanding the knowledge and learning experience of students, which supports informal learning activities.

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

- There is a clear and appropriate organizational structure for the programme management.
- There are clear and transparent procedures for the recruitment process and evaluation of the academics performance, and there is evidence that their retention rates in the programme are high.
- The Management Information System is adequate and suitable for the programme objectives and needs.
- There are policies and procedures that are applied in the programme to ensure the integrity of information of the programme's students, and to maintain its security and accuracy.
- The available resources of the programme are adequate for its needs, in addition to providing printed and soft copies of books and references to meet the needs of both students and faculty members.
- There are various support services provided by the University to students.
- There are arrangements taken by the University management to introduce the newly admitted student to the programme and the provided services and activities.
- There is a learning environment in the College contributing to expanding the knowledge and learning experience of students, which supports informal learning activities.

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

- develop, in coordination with the University, clear requirements and standards for admission, as well as, clear rating scales, to ensure transparency and fairness in comparing among applicants who will be admitted to the programme
- provide specifications for the remedial courses that clearly describe the role of these courses in contributing to preparing admitted students according to the programme needs
- organize a formal induction programme for new academics on the department, college, and university levels to introduce them to the university policies, regulations, resources, and various services, and evaluate the effectiveness of the induction programme
- further utilize the tracking reports and the updated data of the tracking systems in enhancing decision making that contributes to improving the educational process.

2.16 Judgement

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

3. Indicator 3: Academic Standards of the Graduates

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

- 3.1 UoB developed ILOs at the University level including: communication skills, skills of information technology, skills of analytical and critical thinking, professional and moral responsibility, and continuous self-learning. As per the SER, there are clear attributes for the graduates of the programme outlined within its educational outcomes and objectives, which have been mapped to the CILOs. However, the Panel observed the inaccuracy of these outcomes and its inconsistent documentation. The Panel urges the College to address this matter (see paragraph: 1.4 and paragraph: 1.5). Nevertheless, the Panel noted that, the CILOs mentioned in the SER are generally reflecting the required attributes of the graduates, as well as, covering the discipline knowledge and skills, in addition to critical thinking skills, and general transferable skills. By reviewing the courses outline, it was revealed that the ILOs are written in sentences that can be often measured and represent the main indicators of performance in each course. The Panel appreciates that there is an appropriate level of common understanding of the required attributes of the graduates, which are reflected in the CILOs. However, the Panel is concerned about the lack of rigorousness in the assessment tools in general, as discussed in the following paragraphs. The Panel did not also find evidence about the utilization of the assessment results or the course outcomes assessment form in verifying the achievement of graduate attributes. In addition, the PILOs are written in a non-measurable way (see paragraph: 1.4); this limits the prospect of measuring the achievement of graduate attributes integrally at the programme level. The Panel urges the College to address this matter quickly.
- 3.2 UoB has a formal benchmarking policy adopted in 2015 by the University Council, and it includes appropriate actions for conducting the benchmarking process, as well as, determining its scope of application. The SER indicates that the programme management has conducted an informal benchmarking with Master programmes in Measurement and Evaluation that are offered by two regional universities. The benchmarking was limited to the courses of these two programmes in terms of 'content and published specifications', in addition to the total number of credit hours required for graduation, the teaching and learning methods, and the assessment tools in general. The Panel considers that these practices of benchmarking are not consistent with the policy of UoB in this regard, as the programme has been only informally benchmarked with two regional programmes. The Panel was also not provided with the rationale of selecting these two programmes. The Panel was informed, during the site visit meetings with the faculty members and the programme managers that the benchmarking process did not include the academic standards, and it did not benchmark in detail the assessment tools or the actual teaching and learning methods

used in the programme. In addition, the Panel was not provided with evidence demonstrating how the results of these benchmarking processes have contributed to the programme development. Hence, the Panel recommends that the College should implement the benchmarking policy of the University and conduct the external benchmarking in a formal and comprehensive manner, covering all aspects of the programme with other similar programmes offered by regional and international universities, in addition to utilizing its results in improving the programme.

- 3.3 The programme adopts UoB Assessment Policy and the quality committee of the Department, the Quality Assurance Office (QAO) of the College, and the University QAAC monitor and moderate the assessment process. The students confirmed during interviews that they are aware of the updated methods of assessment through the form of course specification that is distributed to them by the course instructor. The form is discussed at the beginning of every academic semester; and it includes a description of assessment tools and methods used. The assessment results and students' course work are posted by the faculty members before the final examination. Furthermore, the Panel learned during interviews that the QAAC of the University and the College QAO have conducted a periodical internal moderation for the course files, and developed recommendations for improvement. However, although UoB Assessment Policy requires providing students with feedback, the interviewed students informed the Panel, during the site visit, that they receive the feedback of faculty members in some courses only and after a long time, which extends to the end of the semester and limits their benefit from such observations in improving their academic level. The Panel also noted that the plagiarism policy is not applied in all the students' works. Thus, the Panel recommends that the College should ensure that the university policies and procedures related to the provision of feedback and the detection of academic plagiarism are applied properly in the programme to ensure the attainment of its objectives. Moreover, the Panel found that the moderation system for examinations and student assessment is not applied effectively in the programme, and urges the College to address this issue (see paragraph 3.5 and paragraph: 3.6).
- 3.4 The SER indicates that the Department implement certain mechanisms to ensure the alignment between the assessment and the CILOs, as the academic staff member evaluates the CILOs through the CILO assessment form, and links them with the student achievements to measure the attainment of the CILOs. During interviews with the faculty members, it was revealed that they have clear understanding of these procedures and they confirmed that these forms are incorporated in the course files. However, the Panel observed in some cases that there is inconsistency between the assessment tools and the level of assessment on one hand, and the learning outcomes that are intended to be measured on the other hand. The provided evidence indicates that the University has formed a team to internally moderate and audit all the programmes offered by the College of Arts. As part of its task, the team verified the

alignment between the assessment tools used in these programmes and the ILOs. However, the Panel did not find any evidence on taking actions by the programme to address the recommendations of the team of internal moderation and audit. Thus, the Panel recognizes that there are mechanisms to ensure the alignment between the assessment tools and the CILOs. The Panel also recommends that the College should evaluate the effectiveness of the utilized mechanisms in the programme to ensure the consistency between the assessment tools and the CILOs.

- 3.5 UoB has a moderation system for examinations and students assessment, including specific moderation requirements, pre-moderation and post- moderation of examinations, which focuses on the moderation of course grades. As indicated in the SER and the provided evidence, the Department of Psychology has formed a committee to ensure the integrity of the final examinations and review them before being printed and distributed to the students. However, there is no evidence provided about the activation of this committee. Moreover, the Panel found - through reviewing the course files - evidence confirming the ineffectiveness of the internal pre-moderation process in ensuring the quality of the assessment tools. The Panel found that in several courses, there is a lack of commitment to the specifications of the examination paper, typographical and linguistic errors, as well as, the repetition of the same questions in both the midterm and final examinations. The midterm and final examinations are also limited to objective questions, which is not in line with the System of Study and Examination; this is besides the inconsistency between the test time and the questions type. Furthermore, the Panel observed the lack of detailed assessment rubrics for the students' assignments, and the lack of evidence on providing observations by the department committee of examinations' verification to address all these issues. In addition, the provided evidence refers to the cooperation between the QAAC and the QAO of the College in reviewing the course files, to ensure the alignment between the level of the examination questions and the CILOs. However, this moderation process has been conducted after the assessment process and not before it, and it has not been conducted by specialized instructors, in addition to not providing adequate evidence on addressing the recommendations mentioned in the programme audit report. Therefore, the Panel recommends that the College should activate the university procedures related to the internal moderation of assessment tools at the programme level, assess its effectiveness, and conduct the internal moderation process by specialized professors.
- 3.6 UoB has a moderation policy for examinations and student assessments; it was approved by the University Council in 2015 and includes the requirements of the internal and external moderations and mechanisms of pre- and post- moderations of examinations. Although article (9) of the university regulation for the moderation of examinations and student assessments requires external moderation for examinations, as well as, for student assessments in the undergraduate and postgraduate academic

programmes, but it has not been put into practice. The Panel learned from the provided evidence and interviews with the faculty members that the formal procedures for external moderation of assessments have not been applied in the Master in Measurement and Evaluation programme. Therefore, the Panel recommends that the College should implement formal procedures that are suitable for the external moderation of the assessment, where feedback from external moderation contributes to programme development and course improvements.

- 3.7 The Panel examined the course files, which include course specifications, examination model answers, grade sheets, and samples of students' works and theses. The Panel noted that the CILOs have been assessed by a set of appropriate assignments, which require the development, implementation and analysis of measurement tools, as well as, conducting the research projects. However, the midterm and final examinations in a number of courses mainly include multiple choices, matching, true and false, and open-ended questions, which do not require significant writing. This limits the ability of these examinations to provide evidence reflecting whether the level of the students' work is consistent with the type and level of the programme. In addition, the repetition of questions in the midterm and final examinations obscures the actual level of the students' work (see paragraph 3.5). Furthermore, the Panel noted that the level of students' achievement is not often compatible with the granted grades, as there is no clear assessment rubrics provided for assessing most of the student works. The distribution of marks is limited to the availability of general criteria such as the introduction and the content without outlining specifications for these criteria, which often leads to grade inflation, or higher success rates that are not compatible with the level of students' work. Moreover, some master theses were not up to the expected level, as these theses were limited to displaying the conclusion of research findings without incorporating a chapter for discussing these findings. Hence, the Panel recommends that the College should review the distribution of grades in different courses, to ensure that grades reflect the actual level of the student, and that the level of students' works including the master thesis is appropriate to the programme level, and its learning outcomes.
- 3.8 The SER states that the programme follows specific procedures to verify the graduates' achievements and the fulfilment of the programme aims and learning outcomes. These procedures include two main mechanisms. The mapping of the graduates' achievement with the objectives and outcomes of the programme is the first mechanism. The interviewed faculty members confirmed during the site visit that the quality assurance committee of the Department has discussed the attainment of the CILOs and provided recommendations in this regard. However, the Panel noted that these recommendations are general and do not provide an accurate analysis of the reasons for not attaining the required learning outcome, or specific recommendations for each outcome. Furthermore, there is no evidence of tracking the achievement of

these outcomes across different semesters and years, or about the strictness of these recommendations. The programme has also collected a feedback from (7) students of the programme to measure their satisfaction towards the achievement of PILOs. The Panel was not provided with evidence about how the programme has benefited from this survey in its development and in improving the satisfaction of the students with its outcomes, especially those related to 'the use of modern technology in the preparation of assessment tools' and 'the contribution to solving educational problems and the community service'. As for the second mechanism used by the programme to ensure the graduates' achievements and the fulfilment of the aims and learning outcomes of the programme, it is the moderation of the results of the students and the distribution of the grades. However, the lack of an approved and documented mechanisms of internal and external moderation of the graduates' achievements, as well as, the lack of consistency in applying the procedures of detecting academic plagiarism, and the inflation of the students' grades, limit the ability of the College to verify that the graduates' achievements fulfil the aims and outcomes of the programme. Thus, the Panel appreciates that there are direct and indirect mechanisms to ensure the consistency of the graduate achievements with the programme objectives and outcomes, and recommends that the College should measure the effectiveness of the applied mechanisms that are used in verifying the actual level of the graduates' achievement, and how it meets the programme objectives and learning outcomes.

- 3.9 The SER includes limited statistics of the student cohorts analysis for the academic years from 2013-2014 to 2015-2016. The statistics indicate that a very limited number of students is enrolled in the programme, and that the admission to the programme has been suspended since the academic year 2014-2015. Moreover, the provided statistics show that the average number of years that students need to complete the programme is (4) years, which is consistent with the fact that they are part-time students. Furthermore, the withdrawal cases are very limited, as there are only two students, who were not able to complete the programme, out of (30) students who were admitted in the academic years (2008-2014). The Panel was not provided with information or analysis about the reasons for not continuing their study in the programme. The Panel was also not provided with evidence that the programme has formally tracked the different destinations of its graduates. Thus, the Panel recommends that the College should utilize the available statistics about the student cohorts to conduct a detailed analysis about these cohorts and utilize it in developing the programme.
- 3.10 The programme includes an internship course (EVALU552) with (3) credit hours, which are equivalent to (40) hours of actual training, to enable the student to apply the acquired theories and knowledge of the courses. As per the SER, the student selects the institution where he/she will be trained, in line with the course objectives, and under the supervision of an academic staff member from the programme. The Panel

noted during the site visit interviews and from the SER, the lack of clear policies and procedures for managing students' work that are based on practical applications. Moreover, a large part of supervision and communication has been conducted orally and without documentation, and as a result, there is no clear evidence about the level of supervision received by the students and its effectiveness. It was evident by the responses of students, the faculty members and the employers that the stakeholders have an inconsistent understanding of their duties and responsibilities. Furthermore, students and employers referred to the need of documenting the work-based assignments of the students, to ensure the achievement of fair and transparent assessment for the course. Therefore, the Panel recommends that the College should develop clear mechanisms to manage the work-based learning component of the Master in Measurement and Evaluation programme, monitor the consistent implementation of these mechanisms, and measure their effectiveness.

- 3.11 The study plan of the programme includes six credit hours for the master thesis, that student can register for after completing all the courses of the programme. The programme follows the Postgraduate Studies System of UoB, which includes the procedures of scientific theses. Chapter (10) of this system states several requirements related to selecting the supervisors and their academic ranks, in addition to selecting topics of the theses. Chapter (11) of this system includes the criteria of selecting the members of the *viva* committee. Furthermore, there is a clear mechanism for the implementation of the procedures stipulated in the system through the committees of postgraduate studies that are established at the college and the department levels. The Panel noted that all these procedures and policies are available on the website of the Deanship of Postgraduate Studies. Moreover, the Panel conducted interviews with students and faculty members who confirmed their awareness of these policies and procedures, as well as, their compliance with these policies when they register to the thesis, and when forming the *viva* committee. The Panel appreciates that there are clear policies and procedures for supervising the master thesis stipulating the responsibilities and duties of both the student and the supervisor, and that both faculty members and students are aware of them. By reviewing a sample of master theses, the Panel found that some of them lack main parts such as dedicating a separate chapter for the discussion of the research findings, as these theses only display a summary of the results. The Panel urges the College to develop a mechanism to ensure that the level of students' work presented in the theses is appropriate for the Master degree (see paragraph 3.7). In addition, the Panel did not find evidence indicating that the detection of plagiarism within the scientific theses is applied consistently, which was confirmed during the meetings with students and alumni. The Panel urges the College to ensure that university policies and procedures, related to detecting academic plagiarism in the master thesis, are properly applied, in order to ensure the achievement of the programme's objectives (see paragraph: 3.3).

- 3.12 The programme has an advisory board consisting of employers, specialized professors, and relevant institutions. The SER states that the advisory board has clearly stated responsibilities including the submission of feedback regarding the professional needs of the programme and the labour market, in addition to identifying graduate attributes. However, the provided evidence indicated that the external members of the advisory board did not all attend its meeting in the last year. Moreover, interviewed members of the advisory board referred to the lack of clear planning for the meetings, as well as, the lack of clear agenda, when inviting the members for a meeting, which is required to direct efforts toward discussing and enhancing the programme development. Most of the advisory board members have been recruited recently and attended one meeting only. Hence, the Panel recommends that the College should ensure the role of the advisory board is effective, follow a clear approach, identify topics that will be presented and reviewed by the board, and determine the mechanism to deal with the comments raised in relation to the programme.
- 3.13 The SER indicates that the programme measures the satisfaction of the graduates with the programme and its outcomes. The Panel was not provided with evidence indicating that these surveys were applied periodically over a number of years, or that the results were utilized efficiently. There is a lack of a precise documentation or methodology of the utilization of alumni and employers' opinions about their satisfaction with the programme in developing the programme objectives and evaluating its appropriateness from their point of view. Alumni and employers who were interviewed during the site visit expressed their satisfaction with the programme and its outcomes in general. However, alumni emphasized during their meeting that they need an intensive training to help them to be more effective in their work. The Panel urges the College to implement effective procedures to measure the satisfaction of alumni and employers with the level of the programme graduates in a periodical manner, as well as the achievement of the programme objectives and learning outcomes (see recommendation in the paragraph: 4.8).
- 3.13 In coming to its conclusion regarding the Academic Standards of the Graduates, the Panel notes, *with appreciation*, the following:
- There is an appropriate level of common understanding of the required attributes of the graduates, which are reflected in the course intended learning outcomes.
 - There are direct and indirect mechanisms to ensure the consistency of the graduate achievements with the programme objectives and outcomes.
 - There are clear policies and procedures for supervising the master thesis stipulating the responsibilities and duties of both the student and the supervisor.

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

- implement the benchmarking policy of the University and conduct the external benchmarking in a formal and comprehensive manner, covering all aspects of the programme with other similar programmes offered by regional and international universities, in addition to utilizing its results in improving the programme
- ensure that the university policies and procedures related to the provision of feedback and the detection of academic plagiarism are applied properly in the programme
- evaluate the effectiveness of the utilized mechanisms in the programme to ensure the consistency between the assessment tools and the course intended learning outcomes
- activate the university procedures related to the internal moderation of assessment tools at the programme level, assess its effectiveness, and conduct the internal moderation process by specialized professors
- implement formal procedures that are suitable for the external moderation of the assessment, where feedback from external moderation contributes to programme development and course improvements
- review the distribution of grades in different courses to ensure that grades reflect the actual level of the student, and that the level of students work including the master thesis is appropriate to the programme level and its learning outcomes
- measure the effectiveness of the applied mechanisms that are used in verifying the actual level of the graduates' achievement, and how it meets the programme objectives and learning outcomes
- utilize the available statistics about the student cohorts to conduct a detailed analysis about these cohorts and utilize it in developing the programme
- develop clear mechanisms to manage the work-based learning component of the Master in Measurement and Evaluation programme, monitor the consistent implementation of these mechanisms, and measure their effectiveness
- ensure the role of the advisory board is effective, follow a clear approach, identify topics that will be presented and reviewed by the board, and determine the mechanism to deal with the comments raised in relation to the programme.

3.15 **Judgement**

On balance, the Panel concludes that the programme **does not satisfy** the Indicator on **Academic Standards of the Graduates**.

4 Indicator 4: Effectiveness of Quality Management and Assurance

The arrangements in place for managing the programme, including quality assurance and continuous improvement, contribute to giving confidence in the programme.

- 4.1 UoB has policies and institutional systems covering different academic and administrative aspects, including: examinations, students, scientific research, continuous learning, community engagement, graduates, administrative affairs, information technology, security, safety, health, faculty members, the academic promotion system, the academic advising system, scholarships, and the continuous development for faculty members. In addition, there are regulations for the postgraduate programmes such as the System of Postgraduate Studies of UoB and its appendices, the UoB Theses Writing Manual, and the Procedures of Appointing Academic Supervisor, the Formation of the *Viva* Committee and Granting the Degree. There are also policies related to quality such as the University Policy for Quality Assurance, the Quality Assurance Enhancement Policy of Programmes, the Benchmarking Policy, and the System of Offering the Academic Programmes and Courses, etc. The Panel is of the view that these policies and systems meet the programme needs. They are available on the official website of the University for all academic members, who indicated during interviews that they are aware of these policies *via* different channels including newsletters of the university management. Moreover, faculty members express their views about those policies through the official councils. UoB ensures the implementation of these policies and systems through the following structure: the QAAC at the university level, quality assurance offices at the level of colleges, alongside the quality assurance committee consisting of some faculty members of the Department of Psychology. The college deans, as well as the department heads, participate in applying these policies and systems at the programme level. Furthermore, senior management stated that these policies are subject to periodical review every five years, and some faculty members participate in this review, as well as quality assurance officials at the university, colleges and departments levels, as per the System of Suggestion, Review and Development of Policies. With respect to reviewing the policies and regulations of postgraduate programmes, the Panel learned that it is done through the postgraduate studies committee at the department level, which raises its suggestions to the Department Council, then to the College Council, and finally to the University Council. Consequently, the Panel appreciates that the documented policies and institutional systems are in place to meet the programme's needs, and faculty members are well informed about these policies. However, the Panel observed that the implementation of some policies is not achieved as required, such as the policy of teaching workload, moderation, plagiarism, benchmarking, communication with alumni, advisory

councils, and others (as mentioned in some paragraphs of this Report). The Panel urges the College to ensure the implementation of university policies consistently on the programme level, as indicated in different paragraphs of this Report.

- 4.2 The decree-law of establishing and organizing the UoB regulates the management of the academic programmes at the University. According to the SER, the Master programme in Measurement and Evaluation is managed by the Department of Psychology of the College of Arts. There is a number of programme committees such as the postgraduate studies committee, the committee of scientific research, conferences and academic development, the culture committee, the quality assurance committee, and the academic promotion committee. These committees have meetings over different periods as per the work requirements, and raise their recommendations to the HoD, who in turn takes the necessary actions, and forwards those recommendations to the university management *via* communication channels with the Dean of the College, or takes the appropriate action within the Department. As per the interviews conducted by the Panel, the academic responsibility of the programme is assigned to the HoD in collaboration with the faculty members and the programme coordinator. The Department Council takes into account the compatibility of its decisions and recommendations with the university rules and regulations. The Deanship of Postgraduate Studies and Scientific Research of the University monitors the implementation of the systems and regulations of the postgraduate studies; and there are clear lines of responsibilities. The guidebook of faculty members outlines the responsibilities and roles of the faculty members, the Dean, and the President of the University. Accordingly, the Panel acknowledges that there is a responsible leadership for the programme management.
- 4.3 There are clear policies and procedures of quality assurance at the university, college, and department levels. The QAAC of the University tracks the work of the quality assurance units of the colleges, and the QAO of the College - related directly to the Dean of the College - monitors the quality system in the programmes, in addition to the quality assurance committee at the department level that includes the programme coordinators. The Panel considers that this committee is adequate to meet the needs of the quality system in the programme. Hence, the Panel appreciates that there are formal policies and procedures that are appropriate to the quality assurance at the university and college levels. The faculty members of the programme mentioned during interviews that they participate in the quality assurance activities organized by the QAO of the College, and indicated that they introduced some improvements in the programme, such as putting the course assessment form into practice. The QAAC has also formed a committee to implement an audit process for the academic programmes of the College of Arts in 2016. It also provides a quality manual that clearly stipulates the related policies and procedures, in addition to the roles and responsibilities of the relevant stakeholders. However, the provided evidence refers to the inconsistency in

applying policies and quality assurance mechanisms in the programme and in spite of using the course assessment forms in most courses, there are files that do not include these forms. This is in addition to the comments made by the Panel in different parts of this Report about benchmarking and moderation, alongside what was mentioned in the report of the academic audit generated by the College in June 2016. Hence, the Panel recommends that the College should improve the used mechanisms to monitor and assess the management system of quality assurance in the programme and measure its effectiveness.

- 4.4 In general, faculty members attend training courses and workshops that strengthen their awareness of the quality concept, and build their capabilities to achieve the quality requirements in the academic programmes, in addition to forming the quality culture, and enhancing the understanding of faculty members of the quality assurance system. During the interviews with the director of the QAAC of the University, the director of QAO of the College, and the faculty members, they all confirmed that faculty members have full-awareness of policies and procedures adopted by the university management, the College, and the Department. Moreover, the Panel confirmed through the interviews with the faculty members that they have an understanding and awareness of their roles in quality assurance. However, by reviewing the course files, the Panel found that the quality concept is not effectively reflected in the work of faculty members, as they have often focused on achieving requirements of the quality system of UoB in terms of form rather than substance. Thus, the Panel appreciates that both the academic and the administrative staff are aware of the quality mechanisms and requirements, as well as, the efforts of the programme management to disseminate the quality culture among them. The Panel also advises the College to continue embedding this culture, to become a routine self-practice, which ensures a high level of achievement of the programme content and outcomes.
- 4.5 UoB has the System of Offering and Developing Academic Programmes and Courses, which was approved in 2013, and is available on its website. The system includes a description of how to offer and develop the academic programmes and courses, and how to stop or suspend them; there are also forms for all the functions of this system. The Panel reviewed this system and found, after a precise examination, that developing a new programme or improving a running programme must take into account the needs of the labour market, which is represented in public and private institutions and professional associations, in addition to surveying opinions of the stakeholders such as the expected students and others. The decision-making mechanism ranges, according to this system, from the Department Council, then to the College Council, and finally the University Council. The Panel is satisfied that the University has a documented policy that is suitable for developing and offering new academic programmes.

- 4.6 The SER indicates that the management of the Master in Measurement and Evaluation programme has reviewed and improved the programme according to UoB policies and procedures for the quality enhancement of the programme. These procedures require the Department to evaluate the programme and present an SER to the QAAC of the University. This report includes the evaluation of students' achievement and the learning objectives of the programme, in addition to utilizing the feedback of the stakeholders after analysing it, preparing an improvement plan, and monitoring its implementation. However, there is no evidence of conducting the annual assessment for the programme in a regular manner, as the evidence indicates that the QAAC conducted an academic audit of the programme in 2016. Subsequently, the programme submitted an improvement plan and the QAAC conducted one review for monitoring its implementation, which indicated that the plan was not fully implemented. Furthermore, there is no provided evidence to indicate that the programme continuously utilizes the feedback of students, alumni, and employers for its improvement. It was revealed to the Panel, during interviews, that the QAO of the College has moderated the course files to ensure that they contain the required information and documents, in addition to moderating the quality and strictness of the assessment tools. The QAO also provides recommendations for developing the courses' content and the assessment tools of the programme. However, the Panel is concerned about the effectiveness of this moderation (see paragraph: 3.5). Although, there is evidence of developing the programme and its courses, the Panel noted during interviews with the faculty members and the programme managers that there is a confusion between the holistic periodic review for the programme, and its on-going annual reviews. Moreover, the provided evidence and information obtained by the Panel, during the site visit interviews, indicate that the Department and the College have not adopted clear documented mechanisms about conducting an annual regular review for the programme. The Department did not conduct self-evaluation for the programme from 2012 to the date of preparing the SER for this review, in addition to the lack of evidence referring to providing annual plans for the programme improvement. Hence, the Panel acknowledges the efforts of the programme managers and the faculty members in improving the programme, and advises the College to take the necessary arrangements to implement annual reviews for the programme at the department and the college levels, as well as, to enhance the mechanisms of monitoring the implementation of its improvement plans.
- 4.7 The Policy of Quality Assurance and Enhancement of the Programmes in UoB stipulates that the academic programmes should be undergoing a periodical review, to ensure the achievement of the learning outcomes, effectiveness of the curriculum, and utilization of the stakeholders' feedback in the review process. As per the internal Quality Assurance Manual issued by the QAAC of the University, these reviews cover the programme objectives, PILOs, CILOs, course specifications, teaching methods, and the practical training, in addition to reviewing the criteria of students admission, as

well as, the regulations of studying remedial courses. Moreover, the review policy includes the surveys of students, employers, ministries, and institutions related to the programme outcomes. This manual also refers to the process of monitoring recommendations and decisions taken based on the review, which are conducted by the QAAC in coordination with the QAO at the College. Although, in 2016 the QAAC conducted a review for the programme, and generated a report in this regard, the Panel noted that it did not cover all the programme aspects, and the feedback from external parties was very limited. In addition, there is a lack of evidence referring to the implementation of these reviews in a periodical and regular manner; and the mechanisms used in monitoring the implementation of the improvement plans are ineffective. Moreover, all members of the review panel were from the university staff, without including any external member, as per the UoB policy in this regard. Therefore, the Panel recommends that the College should implement the university policy for the periodic review of the programme comprehensively and continuously, and develop mechanisms for tracking and monitoring the implementation of improvement plans.

- 4.8 The Policy of Quality Assurance and Enhancement of the Programmes in UoB stipulates clear procedures to collect and analyse the opinions of the stakeholders about the academic programmes periodically, and the QAAC of the University utilizes a number of surveys for this purpose. The Master in Measurement and Evaluation programme uses different methods to collect the feedback of its stakeholders, which include students' course evaluation surveys, faculty feedback and alumni surveys. This is in addition to the outcomes of the meetings of the advisory committee of the students and the advisory board of the employers, as well as, the meetings with employers in ministries and institutions that are concerned with the outcomes of the programme. The interviewed employers confirmed during the site visit that the programme has communicated with them to collect their opinions about the quality of the programme and its graduates. However, the Panel noted that the meetings of the advisory board are not conducted regularly, in addition to the lack of evidence about implementing or utilizing the results of surveys in improving the programme, in a regular and continuous manner. Moreover, the small number of alumni who responded to these surveys limits the statistical value of the survey results. Therefore, the Panel recommends that the College should continue to develop its mechanisms to survey the opinions of all stakeholders, especially external ones, analyse the results on a periodical regular basis, and inform all internal and external stakeholders about these results.
- 4.9 The Evaluation System of the Academic Staff states that the academic staff member has to submit an annual report of his/ her achievements, to be evaluated by the HoD. The appraisal is based on the achievements outlined in the report and his/her evaluation by the students, and accordingly, the HoD develops a plan for developing

and improving the performance of the academic staff member in a regular manner. The criteria of the annual appraisal include teaching, supervising the students, research, publishing, and university and community engagement. As per the SER and interviews with faculty members, the Panel noted that the University has established the Unit of Excellence in Teaching and Leadership skills to develop the academic staff professionally. The unit offers a postgraduate programme in academic practice for new faculty members and as a part of the continuous academic development programme for senior faculty members. During interviews, the faculty members confirmed that they have benefited from these programmes, and that the Unit has measured their satisfaction at the end of each activity. Moreover, the QAAC of the University has conducted several training courses, short workshops, and lectures, to embed the quality culture and improve the programme outcomes. In addition, the Centre of Academic Measurement, Evaluation, and Development of the University conducts workshops to present specialized topics related to constructing aptitude tests and evaluation methods, in addition to other introductory and professional courses in different topics. The Centre aims to utilize the best assessment approaches for assessing the student performance at the university level and the programme academic staff members have attended and participated in its training courses and workshops. The Panel appreciates the efforts of the University in providing several opportunities including the establishment of the Unit of Excellence in Teaching and Leadership to develop the teaching and professional practices of the new and senior faculty members. Nevertheless, the Panel observed that identifying the current needs of professional development of faculty members is not implemented in a systematic and regular manner, and it is not linked to the formal appraisal, as per the policy of the University. Therefore, the Panel advises the College to identify the needs of professional development of faculty members as per the results of the appraisal, and implement a mechanism to evaluate its impact on the performance of academic staff members.

- 4.10 The SER indicates that the college management is keen to develop the study plan of the programme to keep up with the needs of the labour market, and this is done through visits conducted by the QAO to the employers' institutions. However, the Panel was not provided with any evidence referring to the results of these visits, and their contribution in ensuring that the programme and its outcomes are keeping up with the labour market needs. Moreover, there was no sufficient evidence provided to the Panel indicating that the College has conducted the employers' surveys regularly and continuously. In addition, these surveys do not provide information about the long-term needs of the labour market. Furthermore, the Panel did not find evidence of conducting holistic periodical studies to scope the labour market needs, in spite of their importance in improving the academic programmes, taking into account the very limited capability of this programme to attract new students for admission, and its main reliance on the scholarships of the Ministry of Education (see paragraph: 2.2).

Hence, the Panel recommends that the College should conduct rigorous holistic studies to scope the short-term and long-term labour market needs, and utilize these studies in developing the programme.

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

- There are documented policies and institutional systems in place to meet the programme needs, and faculty members are well informed about these policies.
- There are formal proper policies and procedures for quality assurance at the university and the college levels.
- The academic and the administrative staff are aware of the quality mechanisms and requirements, as well as, the efforts of the programme management to disseminate the quality culture among them.
- The University provides several opportunities including the establishment of the Unit of Excellence in Teaching and Leadership, to develop teaching and professional practices of the new and senior academic staff members.

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

- improve the used mechanisms to monitor and assess the management system of quality assurance in the programme, and measure its effectiveness
- implement the university policy for the periodic review of the programme comprehensively and continuously, and develop mechanisms for tracking and monitoring the implementation of improvement plans
- continue to develop its mechanisms to survey the opinions of all stakeholders, especially external ones, analyse the results on a periodical regular basis, and inform all internal and external stakeholders about these results
- conduct rigorous holistic studies to scope the short-term and long-term labour market needs, and utilize these studies in developing the programme.

4.13 **Judgement**

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

5. Conclusion

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

There is limited confidence in the Master in Measurement and Evaluation Programme offered by the University of Bahrain.