



هيئة جودة التعليم والتدريب

Education & Training Quality Authority

KINGDOM OF BAHRAIN مملكة البحرين

Directorate of Higher Education Reviews Follow-up Review Report

**Royal University for Women
College of Art and Design
Master of Fine Arts in Drawing and Painting**

Follow-up Visit Date: 15-16 September 2025

Review Date: 13-15 February 2023

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Acronyms

BQA	Education & Training Quality Authority
CAD	College of Arts and Design
CILO	Course Intended Learning Outcome
MDP	Master of Fine Arts in Drawing and Painting programme
PILO	Programme Intended Learning Outcome
RUW	Royal University for Women

I. Introduction

The follow-up visits are part of a cycle of continuous quality assurance review and reporting on improvement conducted by the Directorate of Higher Education and Vocational Institution Performance Review of the Education & Training Quality Authority (BQA) in the Kingdom of Bahrain. The follow-up visits apply to all academic programmes that have been reviewed using the Academic Programme Reviews Framework (Cycle 2) and received a 'No Confidence' judgement.

The review of the Master of Fine Arts in Drawing and Painting (MDP) programme was conducted by the BQA on 13-15 February 2023, and the Review Report was published on 10 October 2023. The judgement of the MDP programme for each Standard is as follows:

Standard 1: The Learning Programme; Not Satisfied

Standard 2: Efficiency of the Programme; Not Satisfied

Standard 3: Academic Standards of Students and Graduates; Not Satisfied

Standard 4: Effectiveness of Quality Management and Assurance; Not Satisfied

The follow-up visit for MDP programme focused on assessing how the College of Arts and Design (CAD) of the Royal University for Women (RUW) has addressed the recommendations within all the four Standards.

The follow-up process incorporated the review of the evidence presented by CAD to the BQA. The evidence base comprises the programme's improvement plan, progress report and supporting materials submitted to BQA by CAD to report on its progress to-date in addressing the recommendations stated in the programme Review Report.

For each recommendation given under the four Standards, the Panel judged whether the recommendation is 'Fully Addressed', 'Partially Addressed' or 'Not Addressed' using the Rubric in Appendix (A). Based on this, a judgement of 'Good Progress', 'Adequate Progress', or 'Inadequate Progress' is given to each Standard using the rubric in Appendix (B).

II. Standards and Indicators

Standard 1

The Learning Programme

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

Recommendation 1: Revise and develop the programme aims in a way that effectively reflect its authentic focus which is on contemporary painting and drawing.

Judgement: *Fully Addressed*

Recommendation 2: Revise the Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs) and their alignment with the Programme Intended Learning Outcomes (PILOs) and graduate attributes as well as the course contents and assessments.

Judgement: *Fully Addressed*

Recommendation 3: Revise the progression, prerequisites, and contents of the courses, to ensure proper progression of students towards graduation and to promote independent learning that is befitting of a master's degree programme.

Judgement: *Fully Addressed*

Recommendation 4: Revise the curriculum content and delivery with the aim of ensuring balance between theory and practice.

Judgement: *Fully Addressed*

Recommendation 5: Ensure that all relevant basic courses of the MDP programme prescribes which media students use, the size of work students uses and how research is undertaken.

Judgement: *Fully Addressed*

Recommendation 6: Revise the practical courses of the MDP programme to reflect the development of a more critical content in relation to the processes of painting.

Judgement: *Fully Addressed*

Recommendation 7: Revise some of the courses of the MDP programme to include art writing and criticism in order to be suitable for a master's degree level.

Judgement: *Fully Addressed*

Recommendation 8: Reconsider the weighting amongst practical aspects, written elements of the programme as well as the exhibition, which presents great professional practice to students.

Judgement: *Fully Addressed*

Recommendation 9: Update the MDP programme major references and select books from University Presses or Academic publishers.

Judgement: *Fully Addressed*

Recommendation 10: Introduce teaching and research methods that suit the nature of the MDP programme.

Judgement: *Fully Addressed*

Recommendation 11: Ensure that students are provided with specific detailed feedback on their assessed work, as this provides a learning opportunity for students to improve their work.

Judgement: *Fully Addressed*

Standard 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.

Recommendation 12: Develop mechanisms to better market the programme, to attract more students.

Judgement: *Fully Addressed*

Recommendation 13: Revise the admission requirements regularly in light of student performance and feedback from relevant stakeholders, in addition to national and international benchmarks.

Judgement: *Fully Addressed*

Recommendation 14: Ensure that research hours are communicated to faculty and implemented as per the existing research time allocation university policy.

Judgement: *Fully Addressed*

Recommendation 15: Hire fine art staff with relevant expertise to support the delivery of the programme.

Judgement: *Partially Addressed*

To enhance the academic delivery of the MDP programme, one faculty member in Fine Arts was appointed. However, to ensure the quality of the programme delivery, the MDP would benefit from recruiting more staff to cater for the specificity of MDP programme as per its needs.

Recommendation 16: Introduce a survey to evaluate staff's satisfaction towards the professional development activities.

Judgement: *Fully Addressed*

Recommendation 17: Introduce a professional development activity to train the MDP programme staff on the thesis supervision techniques and skills.

Judgement: *Fully Addressed*

Recommendation 18: Review the programme dedicated studio space and workshop and maker-space for the MDP programme to ensure that these facilities are in line with regional and international standards.

Judgement: *Partially Addressed*

While initial steps have been taken—including benchmarking infrastructure needs, identifying suitable spaces, coordinating with RUW Facility and Services Manager, and outlining studio design requirements, it is essential to expedite implementation to ensure the studio is fully equipped with the necessary tools, materials, and resources that support varied artistic practices and promote flexible, dynamic learning.

Recommendation 19: Dedicate more space to exhibit student's artwork in one large room.

Judgement: *Fully Addressed*

Recommendation 20: Revise and increase the programme-specific bibliographies.

Judgement: *Fully Addressed*

Standard 3

Academic Standards of Students and Graduates

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

Recommendation 21: Ensure that students' assessments are appropriate for the nature and level of the programme in terms of depth of assessment items, complexity, and involvement of higher-order thinking skills such as critical thinking.

Judgement: *Fully Addressed*

Recommendation 22: Review the effectiveness of the mechanisms used to ensure the alignment of assessments with learning outcomes and improve the assessment process at the programme level.

Judgement: *Partially Addressed*

The College of Art and Design revised its curriculum and CILOs, ensuring alignment with PILOs across all courses. To enhance the measurement of CILO achievement in relation to PILOs, the College now needs to implement the newly developed evaluation tools at the university level.

Recommendation 23: Revise the process of selecting external moderators and ensure the recruitment of highly qualified ones who are capable of providing constructive feedback to improve the assessment tasks.

Judgement: *Fully Addressed*

Recommendation 24: Reconsider the allocated duration for thesis submission.

Judgement: *Fully Addressed*

Recommendation 25: Revise the 'Drawing and Painting Thesis' course to bring it into line with similar postgraduate programmes.

Judgement: *Fully Addressed*

Recommendation 26: Clearly communicate to students the organizational structure of the thesis and the expectations associated with it, early in the programme.

Judgement: *Fully Addressed*

Recommendation 27: Investigate the reasons for the low graduation rate and develop actions to ensure more students graduate.

Judgement: *Fully Addressed*

Standard 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

Recommendation 28: Expedite the process of appointing a dedicated Quality Assurance Director; and strengthen the Quality Assurance Office by adding more staff to support its activities.

Judgement: *Fully Addressed*

Recommendation 29: Appoint a dedicated academic to manage the MDP along with Master in Design Management Programme; and ensure that any extra workload/appointment is being compensated and paid to the concerned academic.

Judgement: *Fully Addressed*

Recommendation 30: Develop a policy on annual programme review and conduct systematic annual reviews of the MDP programme that result in comprehensive annual reports with recommendations and/or relevant improvement along with action plans.

Judgement: *Fully Addressed*

Recommendation 31: Regularly and consistently implement periodic reviews of the MDP programme according to the university policy and address any suggestions or recommendations resulting from them.

Judgement: *Fully Addressed*

Recommendation 32: Increase the College's efforts in benchmarking the MDP programme with local regional and international institutions and use the benchmarking results in the improvement of its various components.

Judgement: *Fully Addressed*

Recommendation 33: Identify a mechanism to attract and increase the surveys' response rates and ensure that the surveys are conducted on a regular basis, and that the findings are analysed for each programme separately, to inform decision making.

Judgement: *Fully Addressed*

Recommendation 34: Investigate appropriate ways to inform its internal and external stakeholders about any introduced changes in response to their feedback.

Judgement: *Fully Addressed*

Recommendation 35: Include at least one representative for the MDP programme in the CAC, to be able to inform and advise the programme about the demands of the emerging national and regional arts and design markets.

Judgement: *Fully Addressed*

Recommendation 36: Consider the results of the KMPG study for its future programme offering.

Judgement: *Fully Addressed*

Recommendation 37: Ensure that the applied mechanisms to scope labour market and societal needs are monitored and reviewed.

Judgement: *Fully Addressed*

III. Conclusion

The follow-up process was conducted based on the programme's progress report and supporting materials submitted to the BQA, which detailed the progress achieved in addressing the recommendations from the review. Furthermore, the process incorporated documents provided during the virtual follow-up visit, as well as evidence collected through interviews with relevant stakeholders.

To address the BQA's recommendations, the College of Art and Design undertook a comprehensive curriculum revision for the MDP programme, refining programme aims and learning outcomes, updating course descriptions, and ensuring CILOs are clearly mapped to PILOs. New course specifications, assessment briefs, and rubrics were developed, and the revised curriculum—aligned with RUW Graduate Attributes and global academic standards—is scheduled for implementation in the academic year 2025–2026.

The follow-up Panel concluded that 34 recommendations were fully addressed, 3 were partially addressed, and none not addressed.

Overall, the evidence showcased the institution's ability and commitment to sustaining the improvements necessary to uphold the programme's quality. As a result, the Master of Fine Arts in Drawing and Painting programme offered by the Royal University for Women received an overall judgement of "**Good Progress.**"

IV. Appendices

Appendix A: Judgement per Recommendation

Judgement	Criteria
Fully Addressed	The institution has demonstrated marked progress in addressing the recommendation. The actions taken have led to significant improvements in the identified aspect(s) and, as a consequence, in meeting the indicator's requirements.
Partially Addressed	The institution has taken positive action to address the recommendation. There is evidence that these actions have produced improvements and that these improvements are sustainable. The actions taken are having a positive, yet limited impact on the ability of the institution to meet the indicator's requirements.
Not Addressed	The institution has not taken appropriate actions to address the recommendation and/or actions taken have little or no impact on the review standards. Weaknesses persist in relation to this recommendation.

Appendix B: Overall Judgement

Overall Judgement	Criteria
Good Progress	The institution has fully addressed the majority of the recommendations contained in the review report, these include recommendations that have most impact on the quality of its delivery and academic standards. The remaining recommendations are partially addressed.
Adequate Progress	The institution has at least partially addressed most of the recommendations contained in the review report, including those that have major impact on the quality of its delivery and academic standards. There is a number of recommendations that have been fully addressed and there is evidence that the institution can maintain the progress achieved.
Inadequate Progress	The institution has made little or no progress in addressing a significant number of the recommendations contained in the review report, especially those that have main impact on the quality of its delivery and academic standards.