



هيئة جودة التعليم والتدريب
Education & Training Quality Authority
KINGDOM OF BAHRAIN مملكة البحرين

Directorate of Higher Education Reviews Programme Review Report

**Royal University for Women
College of Art & Design
Master of Design Management
Kingdom of Bahrain**

Site Visit Date: 13 – 15 February 2023

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Acronyms

BQA	Education & Training Quality Authority
CAC	College Advisory Committee
CAD	College of Art and Design
CGPA	Cumulative Grade Point Average
CILO	Course Intended Learning Outcome
DCR	Document Control Register
DHR	Directorate of Higher Education Reviews
DMT	Master of Design Management
HEC	Higher Education Council
HoD	Head of Department
IT	Information Technology
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
PD	Professional Development
PGSC	Post Graduate Studies Committee
PILO	Programme Intended Learning Outcome
QA&E	Quality Assurance and Enhancement
QAAU	Quality Assurance & Accreditation Unit
QAM	Quality Assurance Management
RUW	Royal University for Women
SER	Self-Evaluation Report
SIS	Student Information System
WVU	West Virginia University

I. Introduction

In keeping with its mandate, the Education & Training Quality Authority (BQA), through the Directorate of Higher Education Reviews (DHR), carries out two types of reviews that are complementary. These are: Institutional Reviews, where the whole institution is assessed; and the Academic Programme Reviews (APRs), where the quality of teaching, learning and academic standards are assessed in academic programmes within various colleges according to specific standards and indicators as reflected in its Framework.

Following the revision of the APR Framework at the end of Cycle 1 in accordance with the BQA procedure, the revised APR Framework (Cycle 2) was endorsed as per the Council of Ministers' Resolution No.17 of 2019. Thereof, in the academic year (2019-2020), the DHR commenced its second cycle of programme reviews.

The Cycle 2 APR Review Framework is based on four main Standards and 21 Indicators, which forms the basis of the APR Reports of the Higher Education Institutions (HEIs).

The **four** standards that are used to determine whether or not a programme meets international standards are as follows:

Standard 1: The Learning Programme

Standard 2: Efficiency of the Programme

Standard 3: Academic Standards of Students and Graduates

Standard 4: Effectiveness of Quality Management and Assurance

The Review Panel (hereinafter referred to as 'the Panel') decides whether each indicator, within a standard, is 'addressed', 'partially addressed' or 'not addressed'. From these judgements on the indicators, the Panel additionally determines whether each of the four standards is 'Satisfied' or 'Not Satisfied', thus leading to the Programme's overall judgement, as shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Criteria for Judgements

Criteria	Judgement
All four Standards are satisfied	Confidence
Two or three Standards are satisfied, including Standard 1	Limited Confidence
One or no Standard is satisfied	No Confidence
All cases where Standard 1 is not satisfied	

The APR Review Report begins with providing the profile of the programme under review, followed by a brief outline of the judgement received for each indicator, standard, and the overall judgement.

The main section of the report is an analysis of the status of the programme, at the time of its actual review, in relation to the review standards, indicators and their underlying expectations.

The report ends with a Conclusion and a list of Appreciations and Recommendations.

II. The Programme's Profile

Institution Name*	Royal University for Women
College/ Department*	College of Art and Design
Programme/ Qualification Title*	Master of Design Management
Qualification Approval Number	Higher Education Council Letter No. (2012 /230 - م ت ع) on 20 June 2012
NQF Level	9
Validity Period on NQF	Date of Validation Report: 20 November 2019
Number of Units*	12
NQF Credit	154
Programme Aims*	<p>The programme prepares students for employment in a wide range of design-related businesses that considers the classical role of design in business and the extensions of design field into the areas of design management and communication consultancy, design and advertising, corporate identity, project management, and other design-related services.</p> <p>The programme offers courses that endeavour to develop students' knowledge and skills in a wide range of interdisciplinary studies such as design, management, marketing, media and communication, and information technology.</p> <p>The programme provides students with an understanding of design and communication-oriented management education by:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Preparing students for the interdisciplinary nature of design management that includes product, information and environmental design. 2. Helping students of design and management building up their strengths and create competitive products. 3. Developing student's basic knowledge, understanding and skills related to research, reading, and synthesis of design and management.

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Enabling students to apply taught techniques, knowledge, and personal understanding to real world business and management scenarios. 5. Cultivate the concept that the practice of design is a creative activity that immensely influences business development and growth.
<p>Programme Intended Learning Outcomes*</p>	<p>A. Knowledge and Understanding</p> <p>A1. Identify design problems and articulate ideas in a variety of forms and situations.</p> <p>A2. Research and source appropriate materials to record and utilise information in Design Management Techniques and their application.</p> <p>A3. Demonstrate appropriate knowledge and understanding of various processes, theories and practices for an effective design management.</p> <p>A4. Identify internal aspects, functions, behaviour and culture of organizations and appraise their influence on design environment.</p> <p>B. Subject-Specific Skills</p> <p>B1. Understand different purposes and assumptions of the qualitative, quantitative paradigms of research.</p> <p>B2. Visualise and create design innovation ideas towards effective transmission of design theories into a sustainable educated practice in an organization.</p> <p>B3. Assess the influence of regional legal issues and characteristics of people that influence the designed products.</p> <p>B4. Correlate phases of design management with in-depth research and develop design projects that reflect the contemporary needs.</p> <p>C. Critical Thinking Skills</p> <p>C1. Critically understand the problem situation and evaluate the available data pertaining to design management issues.</p> <p>C2. Apply theory and synthesize findings into an appropriate technical work.</p> <p>C3. Evaluate and critique the quality of design technical work.</p> <p>C4. Develop the ability to use the facts and findings and apply them to theoretical and practical issues in design management.</p> <p>D. General and Transferable Skills</p> <p>D1. Demonstrate effective and professional communication (oral and written) and interact effectively with others through collaboration, collective endeavour and negotiation.</p>

	<p>D2. Apply resourcefulness and entrepreneurial skills.</p> <p>D3. Abide by the ethics of the professions and equivalent codes of practice as well as social responsibility.</p> <p>D4. Encourage group work.</p>
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* Mandatory fields

III. Judgement Summary

The Programme's Judgement: Confidence

Standard/ Indicator	Title	Judgement
Standard 1	The Learning Programme	Satisfied
Indicator 1.1	The Academic Planning Framework	Addressed
Indicator 1.2	Graduate Attributes & Intended Learning Outcomes	Addressed
Indicator 1.3	The Curriculum Content	Partially Addressed
Indicator 1.4	Teaching and Learning	Addressed
Indicator 1.5	Assessment Arrangements	Addressed
Standard 2	Efficiency of the Programme	Satisfied
Indicator 2.1	Admitted Students	Addressed
Indicator 2.2	Academic Staff	Partially Addressed
Indicator 2.3	Physical and Material Resources	Addressed
Indicator 2.4	Management Information Systems	Addressed
Indicator 2.5	Student Support	Addressed
Standard 3	Academic Standards of Students and Graduates	Satisfied
Indicator 3.1	Efficiency of the Assessment	Partially Addressed
Indicator 3.2	Academic Integrity	Addressed
Indicator 3.3	Internal and External Moderation of Assessment	Partially Addressed
Indicator 3.4	Work-based Learning	Not Applicable

Indicator 3.5	Capstone Project or Thesis/Dissertation Component	Addressed
Indicator 3.6	Achievements of the Graduates	Addressed
Standard 4	Effectiveness of Quality Management and Assurance	Satisfied
Indicator 4.1	Quality Assurance Management	Addressed
Indicator 4.2	Programme Management and Leadership	Addressed
Indicator 4.3	Annual and Periodic Review of the Programme	Addressed
Indicator 4.4	Benchmarking and Surveys	Addressed
Indicator 4.5	Relevance to Labour market and Societal Needs	Partially Addressed

IV. 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.

Indicator 1.1: The Academic Planning Framework

There is a clear academic planning framework for the programme, reflected in clear aims which relate to the mission and strategic goals of the institution and the college.

Judgement: Addressed

- The two-year part-time Master of Design Management (DMT) programme has been offered since the academic year 2012-2013 and was developed in collaboration with McGill University in Canada and Middlesex University in the United Kingdom as clarified in the Self-Evaluation Report (SER). The mission and vision statements of both the Royal University for Women (RUW) and the College of Art and Design (CAD) are interconnected and clear. The Strategic Plan 2022-2027 includes the revised mission and vision statements and five strategic themes which sum up ten strategic goals. These goals are shown in the strategy map. An Operational Plan which includes targets and KPIs is linked to the current Strategic Plan.
- As clarified in the SER and confirmed in interviews with senior academic and administrative management, a Risk Management Register for RUW is in place to respond to various risks for the university's functions. The CAD also has a Risk Management Plan (2021-2026) which states the impact of various incidences and connects them with mitigation actions and responsibilities. Risks are divided into student attraction and retention, human resources, physical resources and political, health and natural occurrences. During the Covid-19 pandemic an extensive redevelopment of curricular activities was initiated, implemented and monitored. Measures to mitigate academic risks included online interaction rules, adequate teaching and learning methods and technical support. Since 2018, there is a university-wide Disaster Recovery Policy in effect which deals with physical incidents that can possibly disrupt Information Technology (IT) infrastructure and data security.

- The DMT programme complies with the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) design requirements. Programme Intended Learning Outcomes (PILOs) are clearly documented in the Programme Specifications, and Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs) in the respective Course Specifications; the NQF level is mentioned in these documents. Learning outcomes are aligned with the university's strategic orientation and they are regularly monitored and updated in case of necessity, as clarified from interviews with faculty and senior management. The Panel further learned that at this point in time, the Quality Assurance Unit of RUW is devising a new process and suitable templates to align PILOs and CILOs. The College Council is the appointed mapping panel, and the University Senate is the entity to approve the proposed NQF level and NQF credits.
- The qualification title (Master of Design Management) is descriptive, concise and clearly indicates the level, type and content of the programme. In almost all cases the title is correctly documented as shown in the degree certificate, the Programme Handbook, the Programme Specifications and on the RUW website. However, in the Strategic Plan and some other documents the programme is referred to as 'Master in Design Management'. The Panel advises the CAD to harmonize the title of the programme in all documents.
- The programme aims are clearly defined, appropriate for its type and strive to contribute to the strategic goals of the Institution. The curricular content is research-based and geared towards growing economic and ecologic needs of industry and society and thus needs constant scrutinizing and revision. As mentioned in the SER, the programme was reviewed by RUW's strategic partner, West Virginia University (WVU), in the academic year 2012-2013. The programme was reviewed in 2019 by the University of Portland Pamplin School of Business along with input from the College Advisory Council (CAC), students and faculty reflections. There is no indication that the programme aims have been affected. However, the Panel was informed in interviews with senior management and faculty that two more reviews have been recently undertaken with the University of the Arts in London and Politecnico's School of Design in Milan. According to interviews with senior management, review results are still to be expected and analysed.

Indicator 1.2: Graduate Attributes & Intended Learning Outcomes

Graduate attributes are clearly stated in terms of intended learning outcomes for the programme and for each course and these are appropriate for the level of the degree and meet the NQF requirements.

Judgement: Addressed

- RUW describes graduate attributes as an essential part of their Employability Strategy. All attributes are aligned with the PILOs. The Employability Strategy and Student

Experience Strategy show the connection between graduate attributes and the curriculum. In order to enhance transferable skills and job readiness, the DMT programme provides an extracurricular online offering: the Pearson Assured Certified 'Career Readiness Programme' as part of RUW's Professional Certificates initiative. Additionally, graduate attributes, intended learning outcomes and courses are listed in the Master of Design Management Handbook. The Panel acknowledges the clear formulation of graduate attributes and the alignment with the PILOs.

- The Panel notes that all PILOs, subsumed in (1) knowledge and understanding, (2) subject-specific skills, (3) critical thinking skills and (4) general and transferable skills, are linked to the programme aims as shown in the DMT Programme Specifications. The CAD provided the Panel with a template that connects programme aims and PILOs.
- The PILOs have been drafted in a manner that can be measured and assessed, as documented in the Programme Specification. International review and benchmarking efforts on PILOs, CILOs and course content with WVU, Politecnico de Milano, University of Portland, Middlesex University London and the University of Huddersfield are mentioned in the SER and were confirmed in interviews with senior management and faculty.
- The CILOs are appropriately mapped to the appropriate NQF levels. Aside from that, the wording of the CILOs uses action verbs and considers Bloom's taxonomy. The indicated CILOs comply with NQF level descriptors and are appropriate for the courses' level and content.
- The CILOs and PILOs are clearly interconnected; the CILOs are developed to contribute to the attainment of the PILOs. As the Panel learned in interviews with senior management, a proper mapping process from CILOs to PILOs and the development of suitable templates is currently undertaken with the engagement of the Quality Assurance & Accreditation Unit (QAAU).
- The research-based learning outcomes are consistent with the required learning outcomes of the programme. However, in interviews with faculty and viva examiners, the Panel was informed of necessary improvement efforts in connection with scientific and research methods before students take up their thesis project (see Indicator 3.5).

Indicator 1.3: The Curriculum Content

The curriculum is organised to provide academic progression of learning complexity guided by the NQF levels and credits, and it illustrates a balance between knowledge and skills, as well as theory and practice, and meets the norms and standards of the particular academic discipline.

Judgement: *Partially Addressed*

- The DMT study plan is designed to be completed in four semesters. The sequence and structure of all courses are indicated in the Programme Specifications. They show a semester-on-semester and course-by-course progression as documented in the study plan. A total of six courses (18 credits) must be successfully completed with a Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA) of 2.3 before starting the thesis in the third semester. In order to improve the CGPA, a repetition of up to three courses is possible. The sequence of courses is in accordance with NQF requirements. The 'Research Methods' (DMT501) course is classified as NQF level 8 and the 'Design Leadership and Team Building' (DMT 526) course, which is offered in the second study semester, as well as the Design Management Thesis (DMT599) course, are classified as NQF level 9. The workload is regarded as appropriate, according to statements in interviews with alumnae and students.
- During the interviews, the Panel learned that the review of the curriculum is informed by the input on market needs and current trends received from the members of the College Advisory Committee (CAC) and also annually from employer surveys, graduate exit surveys and alumnae surveys. The surveys' data is collected and analyzed by the QAAU, discussed with the deans and faculty, and then finally improvement plans are devised accordingly. However, the validity of most surveys is limited because of the small number of respondents.
- The DMT PILOs and CILOs reflect a balanced load of theoretical and practical content. Knowledge and understanding outcomes usually require teaching *via* lectures, tutorials, and other in-class activities, while practical applications are taught through tasks/exercises, guest lectures, and workshops, in order to develop and strengthen both theoretical knowledge and transferable skills of students. The SER refers to the 'Design Theory – Visualization and Application' (DM522) course which illustrates the interdependence of design practice, communication, teamwork and theoretical background. The main focus of the study programme is dedicated to general knowledge in the discipline and a smaller percentage of the courses are design-specific, which is appropriate for the DMT profile.
- The succession of courses mirrors the appropriate NQF level descriptors and most course content elements are covered in terms of depth and breadth. However, the Panel notes a lack of management and sustainability content and technological techniques, which was corroborated in interviews with alumnae. The Panel thus recommends that the CAD should strengthen the management and sustainability content within the DMT programme curriculum and incorporate management skills and technological techniques in the programme. The Panel also advises CAD to place more emphasis on deepening the curriculum of discipline-specific content and tackling more real-world problems in close contact with institutions and companies in Bahrain and the Gulf Cooperation Council during the courses, and not only within the thesis project. In close

context with the aforementioned advice, the Panel suggests that interested students are offered a voluntary two-week internship in order to be more informed of current market trends.

- Design, architecture and art related textbooks and learning resources are listed in extensive spreadsheets. Reference materials are also properly indicated in the course specifications. The SER spells out how research competences are built up through sequential courses and suitable course content. In their thesis, students must prove their understanding of research and the use of suitable research methods. DMT students also receive training in the principles and ethics of scientific research mainly in the 'Research Methods' (DMT501) course which has an emphasis on understanding the nature and purpose of research and the assumptions of the qualitative, quantitative and emancipatory paradigms of research. However, the Panel was informed in interviews with Viva Examiners and faculty that knowledge of research methodology and the appropriate use of methods is still insufficient. This can also be observed in faculty reflection statements in course portfolios and in actual thesis work. To face this challenge, the Panel suggests to further improve students' ability to analyze, synthesize, interpret and hypothesize their research data, to ensure more robust conclusions.

Indicator 1.4: Teaching and Learning

The principles and methods used for teaching in the programme support the attainment of programme aims and intended learning outcomes.

Judgement: Addressed

- The Teaching and Learning Policy describes the background of RUW's philosophy of offering a learner-centered approach, providing a multicultural learning environment and striving to go beyond information and skills. RUW's Teaching and Learning Policy also provides general operational guidelines and refers to a range of teaching and learning methods. These teaching and learning methods are in line with RUW and CAD missions, goals and values. They are also informed by current pedagogical findings and facilitate in many cases the achievement of intended learning outcomes. The DMT teaching and learning methods are clarified in the Programme Specifications and in all Course Specifications and comprise among other lectures, seminars, tutorials, videos, case studies, design projects, guest speakers, field trips, reports, and discussions. Despite the existing variety, the Panel recommends that the CAD should integrate more independent learning methods in advanced courses, for example peer learning, self-directed study, or visual scenario development.
- The circumstances of Covid-19 promoted the development of an E-Learning Policy to optimize the learning experiences of students by offering technical support, suitable

teaching material and methods, e-learning resources, online counseling, appropriate assessment methods, plagiarism regulations, online security and safety and others. Part of RUW's online learning and teaching is the use of the Moodle Learning Management System, which has proved to be an effective tool for students' participation in the context of blended learning, as the Panel learned in interviews with faculty and senior management. The Panel notes with appreciation that the E-Learning Policy provides plans and directions not only on e-learning but also on the pedagogical value of the linkage of face-to-face instruction and virtual methods, to support the attainment of intended learning outcomes.

- Students are exposed to professional practice and application of theory through course contents, guest lectures, workshops, and field trips. In particular the courses 'Research Methods' (DMT501), 'Design and Entrepreneurship' (DMT523), 'Contemporary Issues in Design Practice' (DMT552), 'Sustainable Practices in Design' (DMT558) and the 'Design Management Thesis' (DMT 599) are suitable for strengthening students' capabilities in responsible research activities. Courses such as 'Design and Creativity' (DMT524) also motivate students to be creative and promote an understanding of disruptive and developmental innovation. Two more examples of stimulating student creativity are the participation in the Congress Entrepreneur in 2019 and in the second Conference on Women & Society.
- The DMT learning environment promotes the concept of life-long learning by a variety of learning types: formal through classic and e-learning and teaching, and informal and non-informal through a variety of off-campus events. The participation in the INJAZ Bahrain Young Entrepreneurship Competitions and Head Start programme is an example of acquiring real-world learning experiences.

Indicator 1.5: Assessment Arrangements

Suitable assessment arrangements, which include policies and procedures for assessing students' achievements, are in place and are known to all relevant stakeholders.

Judgement: Addressed

- Student assessment is regulated through the RUW Assessment Policy. 'The Policy is based on the Guidelines for Governance and Quality and benchmarked against international best practices and is consistent with decisions and regulations of the Higher Education Council (HEC)', as described in the SER. Academic assessment, according to the Guidelines for Governance and Quality, is subject to annual internal reviews. The Assessment Policy is connected to a number of annexures, for example generic grading rubrics, the CILO Achievement Matrix, and Examination Information and Regulations. The Panel acknowledges that there are appropriate assessment policies and procedures.

- For all academic staff, Assessment Policy and related policies and procedures are accessible through the Document Management System and the Student Information System (SIS). Students are fully briefed on their assessments and use Moodle to get relevant information on course specifications, assessment tasks, assessment criteria, submission deadlines and projected grades.
- Both formative and summative assessments are given to CAD students. Subsequent to grading, feedback on students' achievements and shortcomings is provided individually or in groups by the instructor, which is the precondition for insight to improvement and further motivation. In interviews with faculty, the Panel was informed that during the Covid-19 pandemic, the Moodle Big Blue Button plugin was used for individual feedback and discussions' sessions.
- Comprehensive principles of research activities are listed particularly in the RUW Research Strategic Plan, the Research Ethos and in the document named Definition of Research, Scholarship & Scholarly Activities. Research misconduct in terms of fabrication, falsification and plagiarism in academic research is addressed in the Research Policy. Rules and guideline for the thesis are outlined in the Post Graduate Study Regulations demic supervisor and/or co-supervisor and in the Post Graduate Studies Committee (PGSC).
- The grading of assessments is either based on rubrics or model answers. Aside from generic marking criteria, the rubrics which the SER refers to are used in grading essays, report writing, presentations, participation and engagement. Assessments are documented in the respective course folders and are used for internal and external audit at the end of each semester, in order to obtain feedback on course content and assessment rigor, as shown in the provided evidence. Grades are moderated and approved by the College Council, subsequently sent to the Deans' Council and then to the Registrar who announces the grades to students. Information on assessment and grading is also provided in the Student Handbook.
- Students are informed of academic misconduct in the Student Handbook including plagiarism, cheating, misuse of confidential material, misrepresentation of facts, and misuse of computer software licenses. To prevent deliberate or inadvertent plagiarism, RUW drafted the Plagiarism Policy and the Plagiarism Awareness Handbook, which is given to students in their orientation day and is uploaded on each course homepage in the Moodle platform. In order to detect plagiarism in written reports, RUW uses the Turnitin software. Students are eligible to apply for grade appeal toward any course as documented in the Student Handbook. Detailed subject-related information is given in the Student Grade Appeals Policy. Following a written appeal, a Grade Appeal Committee is formed by the Dean who decides on the appeal and passes the outcome to the Registrar. All grade appeals are discussed in the College Council.

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.

Indicator 2.1: Admitted Students

There are clear admission requirements, which are appropriate for the level and type of the programme, ensuring equal opportunities for both genders, and the profile of admitted students matches the programme aims and available resources.

Judgement: Addressed

- RUW has Admission Procedures that are applied to all its postgraduate programmes as per the provided evidence. Moreover, students' admission to the programme is clearly stated in the Post Graduate Studies Regulations, the RUW website and the Student Handbook. The admission requirements are usually revised when conducting the programme periodic reviews. Since the periodic review has not been conducted, the admission requirements have not been revised. Therefore, the Panel recommends that the CAD should regularly review the admission requirements of the programme in light of student performance and feedback from relevant stakeholders, in addition to national and international benchmarks.
- The SER clarifies that any applicant must hold a recognized bachelor's degree either from the design discipline or from any non-design related field. Students holding a non-design undergraduate degree must complete two foundation courses related to design, 'History and Theory of Art and Design' (PMAD 500) and 'Media and Culture of Art and Design' (PMAD 502) in order to provide a sufficient preparation for them. It is noted that RUW's Admission Policy places a minimum level for English language proficiency (IELTS overall band of 6; TOFEL 550). All applicants must sit for an interview and submit a portfolio if available. The SER makes it clear that credits can be transferred where appropriate as outlined in the University's Access, Transfer and Progression Policy.

Indicator 2.2: Academic Staff

There are clear procedures for the recruitment, induction, appraisal, promotion, and professional development of academic staff, which ensure that staff members are fit-for-purpose and that help in staff retention.

Judgement: Partially Addressed

- As per the SER, RUW has clear and transparent procedures in place for the recruitment, induction, appraisal, and promotion of academic staff. Training needs of staff and the professional development required are noted; and each academic year starts with a staff orientation programme. Furthermore, training in hybrid teaching was provided for all teaching staff during the Covid-19 pandemic.
- The Panel acknowledges the fact that all staff members show a strong interest in developing their research, which is also a key component of any promotion application. The Panel notes from interviews with faculty and the SER that the staff's individual research allocation time has been less than 15% of the workload as indicated in course files (2 hours a week for full-time faculty) and confirmed in interviews with faculty and SER. In the Panel's view, this is less than the percentage allocated for research in many universities worldwide. It was reported verbally that post Covid-19 staffs' research allocation time completely diminished. Consequently, the Panel recommends that the RUW should ensure that research hours be communicated to faculty and implemented as per the existing research time allocation university policy.
- The Panel notes that well-qualified staff are recruited with a range of educational, research and professional expertise, as outlined in the SER and the provided evidence. It was noted that there are 10 academics, seven are full time and the rest are part timers. In terms of staff retention, the SER indicates that the staff retention rate for CAD in the last five years (2016-2021) decreased from 86.6% to 80%, and no clear information was provided regarding this decrease apart from personal reasons. Therefore, the Panel advises RUW to investigate the reasons of staff turnover and introduce incentives to retain its highly qualified academic staff members.
- The Panel notes that the Professional Development (PD) process at RUW is outlined in the Professional Development Policy for Academic Staff, which states that RUW is committed to allocate a minimum of 2% of the total revenue for staff PD, according to HEC regulations. Moreover, the CAD Professional Development Plan 2022-2023 documents all the PD activities. Furthermore, staff are encouraged to attend the Advanced Higher Education Academic SheLeads+ Women Academic Leaders Programme. The SER clarifies that at the end of each semester a consolidated report is produced to document the research activities along with the PD activities and the effectiveness of the PD is discussed by the College Council. Despite the above-

mentioned, the Panel recommends that the CAD should produce a survey to evaluate staff's satisfaction with the PD activities. Furthermore, the Panel suggests that the Research Forum could focus on supporting and sharing individual staff research projects and practices, to help foster a creative research community, rather than focusing predominantly on pedagogical or teaching and learning issues as noticed in the provided document. In addition, the Panel learned from interviews that thesis supervisors are not provided with any professional training on thesis supervision. Therefore, the Panel recommends that the CAD should introduce a PD activity to train its staff on the supervision techniques and skills.

Indicator 2.3: Physical and Material Resources

Physical and material resources are adequate in number, space, style and equipment; these include classrooms, teaching halls, laboratories and other study spaces; Information Technology facilities, library and learning resources.

Judgement: Addressed

- The Panel is of the view that the physical resources of classrooms, laboratories and other teaching and study spaces are of sufficient size to house the number of students on the programme and their activities; and that data on the use of these spaces is gathered centrally as described to the Panel. However, from the video tour, the Panel observed that the studios are not allocated solely for the DMT students as they are also used to conduct workshops. Therefore, the Panel advises that the use of studios be reconsidered, to make them more accommodating for the needs of the DMT students.
- Although the library is compliant with HEC regulations where there are at least three reference or recommended books for each course; the Panel suggests that the CAD could increase the reference books at the library and add the up-to-date materials that are proposed by the programme's faculty, so as to extend the library resources and enhance the delivery of the programme.
- The physical resources of the library include informal spaces to work and are equipped with AV hardware, with good Wi-Fi access and provide welcoming training opportunities for students during the orientation day. Additionally, the programme has adequate software and equipment for the teaching of the programme.
- The Panel confirms that arrangements are in place to ensure that the health and safety of students and staff on campus are adequate, as captured in the provided evidence, and students are also kept informed of these arrangements by means of their handbook.

Indicator 2.4: Management Information Systems

There are functioning management information and tracking systems that support the decision-making processes and evaluate the utilisation of laboratories, e-learning and e-resources, along with policies and procedures that ensure security of learners' records and accuracy of results.

Judgement: Addressed

- RUW is utilising the SIS to inform decision-making at various levels, including student advising, giving feedback on attendance and identifying students at risk of academic failure. Since 2019-2020 Moodle has been added to support students and help academic staff to upload course specifications, teaching materials, assessment documents and any online delivery of classes. The utilization of resources including laboratories and e-learning is also tracked and used to inform decision-making.
- The Panel noted that RUW has established a policy for Security of Students Records that is kept updated and the Office of the Registrar keeps student records secure. Course folders are also kept securely and subject to university protocols when being handled. Moreover, RUW has a policy for Grade Approval. Grades are verified by the Dean and discussed and approved in the College Council, after which final grades are approved by the Deans' Council and sent to the Office of Registrar for publishing, which in turn issues transcripts and certificates in a timely manner. This was confirmed during students and alumnae virtual interviews.

Indicator 2.5: Student Support

There is appropriate student support available in terms of guidance, and care for students including students with special needs, newly admitted and transferred students, and students at risk of academic failure.

Judgement: Addressed

- The Panel noted that students at RUW have appropriate support in all areas including the library and laboratories services. All students are also assigned an Academic Advisor and are encouraged to communicate with their advisors either face-to-face or by email; non-academic concerns are handled by the clinic or a social worker.
- The Panel notes that RUW has an induction programme for its newly enrolled students, which is conducted at the beginning of each semester. The CAD also arranges specific induction for its postgraduate students to inform them about its specific requirements; the students are also introduced to the CAD's Dean, faculty members and their advisors.
- The SER outlines the detailed process of timely intervention to track students at-risk of academic failure and the Panel is satisfied with the process and noticed that the identified cases are related to attendance, and these are being well handled by the programme

team. At-risk students are monitored by instructors, academic advisors and the College Council.

- There is a policy for students with special needs. The Panel suggests that the University consider eliciting more information about students with 'special needs', to support students with non-physical disabilities such as those related to mental health or learning difficulties/differences such as dyslexia.
- From virtual interviews, the Panel learned that the University organizes an annual career fair to expose its students, especially those who are not working to potential employers. Interviewed alumnae and employers verified that both the University and the programme team are fully engaged in supporting students' professional careers during their studies, and postgraduation. Moreover, interviewed students expressed their appreciation towards the cooperative manner of the academic staff and their commitment to supporting students when working on their thesis, which the Panel notes with appreciation.
- With respect to supporting women's needs, the Panel observed that the 'empowerment of women' is instilled in all RUW's activities and is supported and encouraged by both staff and students. The Panel also notes that RUW depends on its Graduate Exit Survey to assess and evaluate its provided services to students. However, keeping in mind the low student response rate, it is unclear how the data has been utilized to improve the programme delivery (see Indicator 4.4).

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.

Indicator 3.1: Efficiency of the Assessment

The assessment is effective and aligned with learning outcomes, to ensure attainment of the graduate attributes and academic standards of the programme.

Judgement: *Partially Addressed*

- DMT assessment methods are clearly documented and aligned to PILOs and CILOs, as stated in the Programme Specifications. Course specifications indicate assessment details such as type of assessment, weight of assessment, CILO addressed, assignment brief, criteria of evaluation and submission date. The Head of Department (HoD) and Dean ensure the consistency and alignment of assessments to the CILOs and the course level. Assessment drafts, prepared by instructors, are reviewed for their appropriateness by the HoD and possible changes are discussed with the instructor. Final assessments are then submitted to the Dean for approval. However, the range and type of assessments do not in all cases mirror the type and the level of the DMT programme such as multiple-choice quizzes. Therefore, the Panel recommends that the CAD should develop and implement mechanisms that ensure that all 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.
- The graduate attributes are embedded in the aims of the programme which are linked to PILOs. PILOs in turn are attained through the respective CILOs. Measurement of students' achievements is done each semester with a CILO Achievement Matrix and a template for mapping assessments to CILOs, which are linked to PILOs. The assessment of the level of achievements of PILOs is done yearly.
- At the college level, mechanisms for monitoring implementation and improvement of the assessment processes are in place. Joint evaluation, second marking as well as internal and external moderation are implemented to ensure fair grading. There are also mechanisms for receiving feedback regarding the improvement of the assessment process, from external examiners and other external advisors. The monitoring process of assessments includes a review of all grades in each semester by the College Council, and final grade summaries are approved by the Deans' Council.

Indicator 3.2: Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is ensured through the consistent implementation of relevant policies and procedures that deter plagiarism and other forms of academic misconduct (e.g. cheating, forging of results, and commissioning others to do the work).

Judgement: Addressed

- RUW has a number of policies and procedures relating to academic integrity, ethics, and research. The Plagiarism Policy exemplifies academic offenses, describes how to detect and prevent them, and what kind of penalties may apply for certain violations. It also refers to all connected policies and templates. More detailed information including a variety of descriptive examples and internet links is disseminated in the Plagiarism Awareness Handbook. In the academic year 2021-2022, the Teaching and Learning Committee conducted informal benchmarking of policies against WVU. As a consequence, plagiarism criteria were added to the existing Plagiarism Policy. Research ethics and misconduct in research are documented in the RUW Research Policy. All relevant information on academic integrity and possible violations are also apparent in the Student Handbook. The Plagiarism Policy is uploaded to the Moodle page of each course.
- The College uses Turnitin to detect plagiarism in written documents. For the detection of visual plagiarism, the faculty uses tinEye.com and other relevant online tools. In addition, the library organizes information sessions on plagiarism, and students are briefed on it by the Office of Registration and the instructors, as confirmed in virtual interviews with senior management and faculty. If more than four incidents of plagiarism are detected in a submission, the case will be transferred to the Disciplinary Committee, currently a part of the Student Affairs Committee.
- Academic offenses can also be reported to the Office of the Registrar and the Disciplinary Committee through a Disciplinary Incident Report Form. The Disciplinary Committee submits an annual report which is discussed in the Senate. In interviews with senior management and faculty, the Panel was informed that, after a rise of plagiarism incidents during the pandemic, the number of academic offenses significantly declined and that students are more aware of academic misconduct.

Indicator 3.3: Internal and External Moderation of Assessment

There are mechanisms in place to measure the effectiveness of the programme's internal and external moderation systems for setting assessment instruments and grading students' achievements.

Judgement: *Partially Addressed*

- The internal moderation of assessments is guided by the RUW Assessment Policy. It covers moderation of course specifications, course assignment briefs, rubrics, internal co-examination, second marking and course folder verification. The HoD and CAD Dean constitute a team of internal moderators for review and approval of assessment procedures. Furthermore, the Head of Postgraduate Studies and the Programme Coordinator review the assessments before approval and any suggestions that arise are considered by the instructors.
- As stated in the Assessment Policy, RUW provides external moderation along with internal moderation. The External Examining and External Verification Policy considers external moderation to be essential in its quality assurance proceedings. The document delineates the philosophy and pertinent procedures and activities of external moderation. Reports from external moderators are discussed in the College Council and the PGSC meetings and archived for curriculum review inputs.
- RUW appoints its external moderators from their network of academic and industry partners. The Panel is of the view that the process through which the external moderators are appointed is not transparent enough, and that the selection criteria of external moderators, including their relevant specialisation, are not clearly captured nor communicated. Therefore, the Panel recommends that the CAD should revise the process of selecting external moderators and ensure the recruitment of highly qualified ones capable of providing constructive feedback leading to the improvement of assessments.
- The second marking for written examinations, internally or externally, is used on the one hand for maintaining academic standards and, on the other hand, for ensuring fair and uniform grades. The Panel learned in interviews with faculty that second marking is applied in 30% of all course work. If the second marking differs more than 10% from the first marking, the HoD and Dean will scrutinize the issue and a report concerning this matter will be discussed in the College Council and used for feasible improvement. The scope of current measures of assessment and review ensures fair grading in line with professional and academic standards. The Panel acknowledges that 30% of students' work is moderated and second marked; however, due to the small size of the cohorts in the programme, the Panel suggests that the work of all students be moderated or second marked.

Indicator 3.4: Work-based Learning

Where assessed work-based learning takes place, there is a policy and procedures to manage the process and its assessment, to assure that the learning experience is appropriate in terms of content and level for meeting the intended learning outcomes.

Not Applicable

Indicator 3.5: Capstone Project or Thesis/Dissertation Component

Where there is a capstone project or thesis/dissertation component, there are clear policies and procedures for supervision and evaluation which state the responsibilities and duties of both the supervisor and students, and there is a mechanism to monitor the related implementations and improvements.

Judgement: Addressed

- The Master Thesis is an essential component of the DMT programme. Students must successfully complete 18 credits with a minimum CGPA of 2.3 before they are allowed to start their thesis. The thesis should be completed within two semesters, while extensions of study time can be granted as described in the Post Graduate Studies Regulations and as confirmed during interviews with faculty. The thesis builds upon the previously acquired knowledge and skills and must present an independent problem solution and a mature correlation between relevant phases of design management, and hence contributes to the achievement of the PILOs.
- Roles and responsibilities of students and supervisors are described in the DMT Programme Specifications, the Post Graduate Studies Regulations and the DMT Programme Handbook. The Post Graduate Studies Regulations describe the roles of all those involved in the Master Thesis: Student, Supervisor and Co-Supervisor, Dean, PGSC and Academic Vice President. The Design Management Report Regulations document is made available to all registered students at the beginning of the academic year. However, the Panel was informed in interviews with alumnae that processes and regulations concerning the thesis stay obscure for a long period of time; as, only when students register for the thesis are they informed of the content, guidelines, process, procedures, plagiarism regulations, and evaluation and assessment related to it. The Panel recommends that the CAD should, early in the programme, clearly communicate to students the organizational structure of the thesis and the expectations associated with it.
- The thesis consists of two parts. The first part requires the selection of an appropriate topic and a written proposal which will be presented to the PGSC and sent to the HEC for approval. Upon approval, students are informed about their assigned supervisor. Part two is dedicated to writing the thesis, the final presentation, and the viva. The Panel

suggests shortening the period during which students identify a proper thesis topic to allow more time to work on the thesis itself.

- The PSGC assigns research/thesis supervisors with the proper expertise. The supervisor should be a full professor, an associate professor, or an assistant professor from RUW. It is possible to assign either an academic or a co-supervisor from the professional world with due experience. Mentors from the industry can also be part of the supervision team. In interviews with alumnae, the Panel was informed of occasional hold-ups in the assignation of supervisors. Therefore, the Panel suggests that there should be no delays in the students being appointed a supervisor to ensure that they complete their studies within the two-year timeframe. Additionally, the Panel suggests that students are not permitted to edit their thesis after the submission deadline. If the work is of insufficient standard, it should be assessed as such. Otherwise, the value and purpose of a submission deadline is undermined. Therefore, the Panel recommends that the CAD should address the main issues creating obstacles for students' completion of their thesis on time, including delays in assigning thesis supervisors and thesis editing opportunities granted to students past the submission deadline.
- Students are required to attend graduate research meetings and seminars with their supervisors. As the Panel learned in interviews with faculty, meetings with supervisors are usually scheduled monthly. The Panel further learned in interviews with students and alumnae that research supervision is conducted in a most constructive way. Supervisors are required to document all meetings with thesis students; these student-supervisor meeting logs are kept with the PGSC.
- When completed and approved by the PSGC, the thesis is ready for submission. The final assessment of the thesis is based on the written report, the presentation and the defense of the thesis in a viva panel. The supervisor approves the validity of the thesis for viva, submits it to the HoD, who shall then, together with the PSGC, devise a viva panel. The panel of three to four members is composed of one internal and one external examiner plus the supervisor(s). The Panel should be, approved by the College Council, Academic Vice President and President along with the HEC one month prior to the thesis defense date. External examiners, being local or from abroad, are appointed as per their individual expertise. Viva evaluation grids and grades are eventually submitted to the Dean by the viva chairperson. The thesis grade consists of the final examination (30%), the midterm examination (30%) assessment one (10%) and two (20%), seminars and presentation (10%). All grading follows the criteria documented in the Post Graduate Regulation.
- The thesis process is monitored by the PGSC, the College Council and the HoD to make sure that RUW complies with HEC regulations. Feedback comes from supervisors and students and, equally important, from internal and external viva examiners, where all

feedback is used to improve the thesis process. The Panel learned in interviews with viva examiners that their recommendations, for example the limitation of research questions in a thesis or the use meeting log sheets, have been implemented in the thesis development.

Indicator 3.6: Achievements of the Graduates

The achievements of the graduates are consonant with those achieved on equivalent programmes as expressed in their assessed work, rates of progression and first destinations.

Judgement: Addressed

- The Panel was provided with course files which contained the course syllabus, the methods of assessment along with marked students' assessments which were in most cases of appropriate standards and show the gradual level of complexity as students' progress. The Panel is also satisfied with quality of the thesis samples that were provided in the evidence.
- The Office of Registrar along with academic advisors monitor students' year-on-year progression. The Panel was provided with a Programme Data Set that shows enrollment and graduation rates along with a Cohort Analysis covering five years. According to the Programme Cohort Analysis, the average duration of study is 4.46 semesters. The Panel notes that the average retention rate in the academic years 2016-2017 until 2020-2021 is 85%, and the average graduation rate is only less than 50%. The withdrawal rate of 6% is due to personal issues as clarified in interviews and the SER. The Panel recommends that CAD should investigate the reasons for the low average graduation rate of DMT students and take the necessary actions to improve it.
- Graduate Exit Survey, Alumnae Tracker and Alumnae Survey are meaningful indicators of graduate and employer satisfaction. Among other insights, the DMT Graduate Exit Survey shows that 77% of the graduates are satisfied with the preparations to create design innovation ideas and 69% are satisfied with the preparations to identify design problems. The updated Alumnae Tracker indicates that 55% of the graduates were employed in their field within six months after graduation. 12% of the graduates pursued professional certificate courses after graduation. 16% of a total of 42 DMT graduates currently work full time, 64% of those work in their field of specialization and 16% created their own business. Employer surveys are done yearly, however the response rate is very low. Involved employers attest that 67% of all RUW graduates possess an understanding of industry standards and have the specific knowledge required for the job. The responses from employers generally certify good knowledge and skills of DMT graduates.

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.

Indicator 4.1: Quality Assurance Management

There is a clear quality assurance management system, in relation to the programme that ensures the institution's policies, procedures and regulations are applied effectively and consistently.

Judgement: *Addressed*

- RUW QAAU manages a Document Control Register (DCR) of all university policies, procedures, templates, guidelines, mandates, and handbooks. It has been noted that RUW has appropriate policies and regulations to govern the delivery of the programme, such as the Academic Quality Framework, the RUW Quality Policy and the Guidelines for Governance and Quality Management. These are well-communicated to all relevant stakeholders such as faculty members and students, who are introduced to RUW's policies and regulations in the induction days assigned for them. During interviews, the Panel was given an opportunity to learn more about how the Quality Assurance Framework is developed, maintained, and implemented.
- The QAAU and the Quality Assurance and Enhancement (QA&E) Committee, a standing committee of the Senate, ensure continuous improvement of policies and procedures and consistent implementation across all colleges. However, during the site visit, the Panel noted the absence of the Quality Assurance Director and due to this vacant position, the Acting Dean was interviewed instead. It was noted from the interviews that RUW needed more staff to support QAAU activities. During the extension visit, the Panel noted that RUW has addressed this issue and appointed a dedicated Quality Assurance Director for QAAU.
- The Job descriptions of all staff and leading positions like Deans, HoDs and managers clearly outline their duties and responsibility including the quality assurance related obligations. At the beginning of each academic year, academic and administrative staff participate in an orientation programme where the Academic Quality Assurance Framework is discussed. Capacity building workshops on quality issues such as developing course specifications, higher education research, assessment design and others complement the quality efforts. Moreover, quality issues are considered in College Council meetings.

- The QAAU has the responsibility for the implementation and enhancement of the Quality Assurance Framework of the Institution; and the QA&E Committee is also committed to ensure continuous improvement, effectiveness, and consistency of implementation of quality assurance processes across the University. Within the documents and from the interviews, it was noticed that there is an awareness and understanding of the ongoing need to effectively monitor, evaluate and improve the quality assurance processes.

Indicator 4.2: Programme Management and Leadership

The programme is managed in a way that demonstrates effective and responsible leadership and there are clear lines of accountability.

Judgement: Addressed

- The Panel was provided with the organisational chart that shows a binding structure suitable for the management of the CAD's four undergraduate and two graduate programmes. The College is headed by the Dean supported by the HoDs, the Programme Coordinators and the assigned Administrative Officers. Each post in the Organisational Chart is combined with a significant job description. Accountabilities and lines of reporting are defined in the organisational chart and more explicitly in the pertinent job descriptions. All faculty members are members of the College Council, which has to approve almost all academic affairs such as external linkages, community engagement, research and other issues. All academic staff members are members in different committees.
- The Dean is responsible for the College's academic and administrative condition and reports to the Senate. All relevant information is shared with faculty in the Department Council and College Council meetings. In the academic year 2021-2022, the position of Head of Programme was introduced for monitoring academic and research quality. During the extension visit, the Panel was informed that RUW has recently appointed a new Dean for the CAD, who is responsible for DMT and another master-level programme. During the extension visit, the Panel also noted a significant increase in student enrollments in the DMT programme and learned about the senior management's plans for further enhancing academic excellence and faculty skill development. Furthermore, during the extension visit's virtual interviews, the Panel was informed that a decision was taken by the CAD to take on a Fulbright Scholar for the DMT programme for one academic year and the candidate will be at RUW soon. Additionally, RUW is actively looking for a full-time assistant or associate professor for the DMT programme. Overall, the Panel is satisfied that the programme management shows effective and responsible leadership along with clear lines of accountability.

Indicator 4.3: Annual and Periodic Review of the Programme

There are arrangements for annual internal evaluation and periodic reviews of the programme that incorporate both internal and external feedback and mechanisms are in place to implement recommendations for improvement.

Judgement: Addressed

- The SER clarifies that as per RUW's processes, internal annual evaluation is carried out by using different resources, such as: Q&A sessions with students, the faculty feedback, the Graduate Exit Survey, Alumnae Survey and the Employer Survey. During the site visit, the Panel noted that the last comprehensive annual review was conducted in 2016 when the programme was reviewed by BQA; furthermore, RUW did not have a policy on annual programme reviews to ensure that the conducted annual evaluation results in comprehensive annual reports that include recommendations and relevant improvement/action plans. In response to the Panel's recommendations that were sent to RUW after the site visit, the RUW's Learning and Teaching Committee developed a new policy in October 2023 on the Annual Programme Review (APR) for the University.
 - During the extension visit, the Panel was provided with an APR that was drafted in the second half of 2023, approved by the College Council, and endorsed by the University Senate. The provided APR included an Improvement Plan with clear responsibilities.
 - As per the SER and the evidence provided during the site visit, RUW has a Periodic Programme Review Policy, which stipulates that each programme should be reviewed every four years. However, the Panel noted that all programmes offered by the College were reviewed by WVU in 2012-2013 and since then, the programme did not undergo any periodic review. During the extension visit, the Panel was informed that the data of the APRs will feed into the periodic programme reviews which will be conducted every three years. The Panel was also informed that a comprehensive Internal Periodic Programme Review Self Evaluation Report is currently being prepared by the programme team.
 - The Panel notes that there is a timeline for RUW's Periodic Programme Review which is in the academic year 2026-2027 for the next DMT review. The Panel is of the view that this would be a long time, considering that the last comprehensive review was conducted in 2012-2013. Therefore, the Panel urges the College to expedite the periodic review of the programme.
- **Indicator 4.4: Benchmarking and Surveys**

Benchmarking studies and the structured comments collected from stakeholders' surveys are analysed and the outcomes are used to inform decisions on programmes and are made available to the stakeholders.

Judgement: Addressed

- RUW has a comprehensive Benchmarking Policy and a supplemental Benchmarking Planning Form in use. The Panel noted that the the DMT programme was benchmarked against the University of the Arts London, the School and Dept. of Design of Politecnico di Milano. Both institutions – Politecnico in particular– provided the DMT programme with detailed and valuable insights for the curricular development. Moreover, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the University of Huddersfield, UK has been signed recently in addition to another MoU with Dar El-Hekma University in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia.
- During the extension visit, the Panel was informed about the most recent MoU signed with Rome University of Fine Arts (RUFA), an institution similar in private funding, size and academic and artistic focus. The Panel noted that the benchmarking of the DMT programme against RUFA was comprehensive, as it tackled areas related to curriculum, PILOs and CILOs, employability and future requirements. The benchmarking exercise was internally discussed and finally approved by the Dean. The Panel is satisfied with CAD's efforts in conducting the benchmarking activities and urges CAD to utilise the benchmarking results in the upcoming periodic reviews of the DMT programme.
- Surveys are used to gather feedback from internal and external stakeholders. A comprehensive list shows the following RUW surveys: Student Satisfaction Survey, Staff Satisfaction Survey, Admission Process Survey and others more. Detailed information is provided on Employer Survey, Alumnae Tracker, Graduate Exit Survey and alumnae survey. The Panel notes that stakeholder surveys are conducted and published in an annual college report. However, the response to the surveys is low; the Alumnae Survey, for example, has had only three participants.
- During the extension visit the Panel noted that RUW and CAD's management took several initiatives to improve their communication with alumnae, which include establishing Alumnae Club activities and meeting them twice a year, in addition to appointing 'DMT Student Ambassadors' and establishing WhatsApp Groups for each course. In addition to other kinds of informal communication. During the extension visit, the Panel was also informed that the QA&E Committee plans to improve the current alumni survey quality and that discussions on better response rates for the Course and Teacher Evaluation survey were also initiated, i.e. the integration in RUW Moodle System.

- During the site visit interviews, the Panel noted that some of the stakeholder groups were not clear on whether and how their recommendations were being implemented. However, the Panel noted that the CAD has various formalized communication channels (i.e. College Council, Q&A Sessions, workshops and others) that are used to inform its internal and external stakeholders about any introduced changes in response to their feedback. Furthermore, CAD is working on improving its communication with alumnae and has established an Alumnae Club.

Indicator 4.5: Relevance to Labour market and Societal Needs

The programme has a functioning advisory board and there is continuous scoping of the labour market and the national and societal needs, where appropriate for the programme type, to ensure the relevancy and currency of the programme.

Judgement: Partially Addressed

- RUW has a CAD Advisory Policy in place as well as a mandate for the CAC. The CAC meets at least once per semester and includes the Dean, HoDs, a senior faculty member from every programme, and six reputable professionals, who are experts in architecture and come from various design areas. Professional members are senior managers, for instance from reputable organizations/ companies in the Kingdom of Bahrain. During the site visit, the Panel noted that representatives from the fields of art or design management are absent from the CAC formation. However, the evidence provided to the Panel during the extension visit showed that CAC has included two DMT alumnae and one highly respected businessperson with affinity to design management.
- The SER refers to the Skills Gap Research study commissioned by Tamkeen and the Employer-led skills requirements and Graduate skills analysis for the Kingdom of Bahrain, undertaken by the HEC. The latest study was conducted at the beginning of the pandemic (2019-2020) by KMPG. During the extension visit, the Panel was informed that KPMG Audit will perform a thorough market study for all the offered programmes at RUW, which will start in April 1, 2024, once the approval of the Board of Trustees is granted. The Panel recommends that CAD should ensure that the DMT programme benefits from the results of the conducted market studies and the feedback received from the Advisory Committee in its upcoming reviews of the programme.

V. Conclusion

Taking into account the institution's own self-evaluation report, the evidence gathered from the interviews and documentation made available during the virtual site visit, the Panel draws the following conclusion in accordance with the DHR/BQA Academic Programme Reviews (Cycle 2) Handbook, 2020:

There is "Confidence" in the Master of Design Management of College of Art & Design offered by the Royal University for Women.

In coming to its conclusion regarding the four Standards, the Panel notes, with appreciation, the following:

1. The E-Learning Policy provides plans and directions not only on e-learning but also on the pedagogical value of the linkage of face-to-face instruction and virtual methods, to support the attainment of intended learning outcomes.
2. The students are satisfied with the cooperative manner of the academic staff and their commitment to supporting students when working on their thesis.

In terms of improvement, the Panel recommends that the Royal University for Women and the College of Art and Design should:

1. Strengthen the management and sustainability content within the curriculum of the Master of Design Management programme and incorporate management skills and technological techniques in the programme.
2. Integrate more independent learning methods in advanced courses, for example peer learning, self-directed study, or visual scenario development.
3. Regularly review the admission requirements of the programme in light of student performance and feedback from relevant stakeholders, in addition to national and international benchmarks.
4. Ensure that research hours be communicated to faculty and implemented as per the existing research time allocation university policy.
5. Produce a survey to evaluate staff's satisfaction towards the professional development activities.
6. Introduce a professional development activity to train its staff on the supervision techniques and skills.

7. Develop and implement mechanisms that ensure that all 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.
8. Revise the process of selecting external moderators and ensure the recruitment of highly qualified ones capable of providing constructive feedback leading to the improvement of assessments.
9. Communicate to students the organizational structure of the thesis and the expectations associated with it.
10. Address the main issues creating obstacles for students' completion of their thesis on time, including delays in assigning thesis supervisors and thesis editing opportunities granted to students past the submission deadline.
11. Investigate the reasons for the low average graduation rate of DMT students and take the necessary actions to improve it.
12. Ensure that the DMT programme benefits from the results of the conducted market studies and the feedback received from the Advisory Committee in its upcoming reviews of the programme.