Directorate of Higher Education Reviews

Programmes-within-College Reviews Report

Bachelor of International Logistics Management

Faculty of Business

Bahrain Polytechnic

Kingdom of Bahrain

Date Reviewed: 22-24 September 2014

HC035-C1-R035

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Acronyms

APR	Annual Programme Review
AQAC	Academic Quality Assurance Committee
BILM	Bachelor of International Logistics Management
BPQF	Bahrain Polytechnic Qualifications Framework
CAC	Curriculum Advisory Committee
CEC	Career and Employment Centre
CILOs	Course Intended Learning Outcomes
CILT	Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport
CSB	Civil Service Bureau
CTTL	Certificate in Tertiary Training and Learning
DHR	Directorate of Higher Education Reviews
HEC	Higher Education Council of the Ministry of Education, Kingdom of Bahrain
ILO	Intended Learning Outcome
IT	Information Technology
LLC	Library Learning Centre
MIS	Management Information Systems
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
PAD	Programme Approval Document
PEP	Performance Enhancement Process

PILOs	Programme Intended Learning Outcomes
QIP	Quality Improvement Plan
QMAP	Quality Measurement Analysis and Planning
QMS	Quality Management System
QQA	National Authority for Qualifications & Quality Assurance of Education & Training-Bahrain
SER	Self-Evaluation Report
SMT	Senior Management Team
WIL	Work Integrated Learning

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1. The Programmes-within-College Reviews Process

1.1 The Programmes-within-College Reviews Framework

To meet the need to have a robust external quality assurance system in the Kingdom of Bahrain, the Directorate of Higher Education Reviews (DHR) of the National Authority for Qualifications & Quality Assurance of Education & Training (QQA) has developed and is implementing two external quality review processes, namely: Institutional Reviews and Programmes-within-College Reviews which together will give confidence in Bahrain's higher education system nationally, regionally and internationally.

Programmes-within-College Reviews have three main objectives:

- to provide decision-makers (in the higher education institutions, the QQA, the Higher Education Council (HEC), students and their families, prospective employers of graduates and other stakeholders) with evidence-based judgements on the quality of learning programmes
- to support the development of internal quality assurance processes with information on emerging good practices and challenges, evaluative comments and continuing improvement
- to enhance the reputation of Bahrain's higher education regionally and internationally.

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

Indicator 1: **The Learning Programme**

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

Indicator 2: **Efficiency of the Programme**

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

Indicator 3: **Academic Standards of the Graduates**

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

Indicator 4: **Effectiveness of Quality Management and Assurance**
The arrangements in place for managing the programme, including quality assurance, give confidence in the programme.

The Review Panel (hereinafter referred to as 'the Panel') states in the Review Report whether the programme satisfies each Indicator. If the programme satisfies all four Indicators, the concluding statement will say that there is 'confidence' in the programme.

If two or three Indicators are satisfied, including Indicator 1, the programme will receive a 'limited confidence' judgement. If one or no Indicator is satisfied, or Indicator 1 is not satisfied, the judgement will be 'no confidence', as shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Criteria for Judgements

Criteria	Judgement
All four Indicators satisfied	Confidence
Two or three Indicators satisfied, including Indicator 1	Limited Confidence
One or no Indicator satisfied	No Confidence
All cases where **Indicator 1** is not satisfied	

1.2 The Programmes-within-College Reviews Process at Bahrain Polytechnic

A Programmes-within-College review of the Faculty of Business was conducted by the DHR of the QQA in terms of its mandate to review the quality of higher education in Bahrain. The site visit took place on 22-24 September 2014 for the academic programmes offered by the college, these are: Bachelor of Business (BBUS); and Bachelor of International Logistics Management (BILM)

This report provides an account of the review process and the findings of the Panel for the Bachelor of International Logistics Management (BILM) based on the Self-Evaluation Report (SER) and appendices submitted by the Bahrain Polytechnic (BP), the supplementary documentation made available during the site visit, as well as interviews and observations made during the review site visit.

BP was notified by the DHR/QQA in October 2013 that it would be subject to a Programmes-within-College reviews of its Faculty of Business with the site visit taking place in 22-24 September 2014. In preparation for the review, BP conducted its college self-evaluation of its two programmes and submitted the SERs with appendices on the agreed date in May 2014.

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The DHR constituted a panel consisting of experts in the academic field of Business and International Logistics Management, and who have experience in external programme quality reviews. The Panel comprised 3 external reviewers.

This Report records the evidence-based conclusions reached by the Panel based on:

(i)   analysis of the Self-Evaluation Report and supporting materials submitted by the institution prior to the external peer-review visit
(ii)   analysis derived from discussions with various stakeholders (faculty members, students, graduates and employers)
(iii)   analysis based on additional documentation requested and presented to the Panel during the site visit.

It is expected that the BP will use the findings presented in this report to strengthen its BILM. The DHR recognizes that quality assurance is the responsibility of the higher education institution itself. Hence it is the right of BP to decide how it will address the recommendations contained in the Review Report. Nevertheless, three months after the publication of this Report, BP is required to submit to the DHR an improvement plan in response to the recommendations.

The DHR would like to extend its thanks to BP 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 in the BILM.

1.3   Overview of the Faculty of Business

The Faculty of Business was established in 2010. It comprises the School of Business: which offers the Bachelor of Business, and the School of Logistics and Maritime Studies which offers the Bachelor of International Logistics Management. In the academic year 2013-2014, the number of students enrolled in the college were 1100. The number of academic and administrative staff totaled 65. The School of Logistics & Maritime Studies was established in November 2010 to meet the challenges of Bahrain 2030 Vision, within which it states that 'a transport and logistics hub' is to be established in Bahrain. The School has eleven academic staff supported by a management team that comprises a Head of School, and a small team of administrative staff. In addition to Faculty support, the School also avails of significant support from other Polytechnic departments, such as the Faculty of Humanities, Registry, Academic Development, Students Services, Human Resources and Finance.

1.4 Overview of the Bachelor of International Logistics Management

The Bachelor of International Logistics Management (BILM) has been designed to meet the requirements of establishing a 'transport and logistics hub' with the potential of specializations in Maritime Logistics, Aviation Logistics, Transport and Security, and Supply Chain Management. In the academic year 2013-2014, there are 304 students enrolled in the BILM programme. From its early stages of development, it was decided to not purchase a logistics programme from an overseas institute. The rationale for this decision was that logistics is a local, regional as well as internationally based discipline and instead a course unique to Bahrain and the GCC was developed. To provide the BILM with international recognition, CILT (Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport) courses of study are embedded within the degree and students earn a CILT Certificate in Logistics as part of a successful first year of study. In December of 2013, the BILM was awarded full degree recognition by CILT International. In June 2013, the BILM graduated its first students and has now managed three cohorts of students through their final-year industry placement.

1.5 Summary of Review Judgements

Table 2: Summary of Review Judgements for the Bachelor of International Logistics Management

Indicator	Judgement
1: The Learning Programme	Satisfies
2: Efficiency of the Programme	Satisfies
3: Academic Standards of the Graduates	Satisfies
4: Effectiveness of Quality Management and Assurance	Satisfies
Overall Judgement	**Confidence**

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2.   Indicator 1: The Learning Programme

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

2.1   The Bachelor of International Logistics Management (BILM) was developed to assist in fulfilling Bahrain's 2030 Economic Vision of investing in the logistics sector to support a post-oil economy. The programme has a clear academic framework indicating the rationale for providing the programme, overall programme structure, programme aims, as well as intended learning outcomes. The programme aims are aligned with Bahrain Polytechnic's mission to *'produce professional and enterprising graduates with the 21st Century skills necessary for the needs of the community locally, regionally and internationally'*. During interviews with senior management, the Panel came to know that the BILM programme addresses the skills shortages in the logistics and transport industry in Bahrain. The Panel notes that the BILM programme adopts a problem-based learning approach and is contextualised to Bahrain's economic circumstances. The Panel appreciates that the BILM programme has a clear academic framework outlining the broad programme aims and how they contribute to the achievement of the Institution's mission.

2.2   The BILM curriculum comprises courses developed specifically for the programme by academics, industry specialists as well as the Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport (CILT). The curriculum is organised to provide academic progression year-on-year and course-by-course through the use of appropriate pre-requisites, in line with institutional policies. In addition, the mapping of courses to the UK's NQF and Bahrain Polytechnic Qualification Framework (BPQF) ensure that BILM courses are at the appropriate level. The Panel finds the students' workload to be appropriate with full-time students enrolling in four courses per semester (60 credits) and no student is allowed to take less than 15 credits or more than 75 credits. This was confirmed in site visit interviews with BILM students. The Panel notes with appreciation that the embedded CILT courses enable the students to earn a Certificate and Diploma in Logistics which ensure the development of relevant skills within the graduates and assist their employability, not only in Bahrain, but also internationally. The BILM courses provide a balance between knowledge and skills, and between theory and practice. During interviews, the Panel noted that the range and mix of expertise of the teaching staff in areas such as maritime, aviation, supply chain management and transport security contribute to achieving balance between academic standards and professional practice. Moreover, work-based learning contributes to the employability attributes of the graduates, as is evident in work placement and community contribution electives. The Panel appreciates that the BILM curriculum is organized to provide academic progression with suitable

workloads for students, and appropriate balances between knowledge and skills, and between theory and practice.

2.3   The BILM curriculum consists of 480 credits to be completed over a four academic year period (each ten learning hours equating one credit). Courses offered in year one and two provide students with a broad knowledge of the logistics environment, with more advanced topics covered in year 3 and 4 culminating into the final-year industry project which ensures students' attainment of the BILM programme learning outcomes. The syllabus is well-documented in the PAD which outlines the full constituent courses within the programme. In addition, Course Descriptors are developed for each course to specify course topics and content, learning outcomes, learning and teaching strategies, a semester outline, assessments and moderation, as well as grade-book achievement. The Panel finds the syllabus to be accurately documented in terms of breadth, depth, and relevance. The Panel is also of the view that the programme has appropriate references to current professional practice as evidenced by the recruitment of industry professionals to teach on programmes, the active involvement of the CAC in the programme offerings, as well as the use of materials and case studies contextualized to the region. The Panel appreciates that the BILM syllabus is well-documented, with appropriate references to current and recent professional practice and research findings. However, during Panel interviews with students, the need was expressed that the BILM should also allow for specialisation in major fields of study. The Panel recognises the programme's efforts to this effect. In its interviews, the Panel was informed that the programme team is currently focusing on Maritime as a major field of study, and embedding other professional qualifications, e.g. from IATA and the Institute of Chartered Shipbrokers within the programme. The Panel recommends that the School of Logistics and Maritime Studies consider offering specialization majors as specialised skills are increasingly required by commerce and industry.

2.4   The BILM programme ILOs are included in the PAD document and are described in the form of graduate profiles. The Panel finds the BILM PILOs to be overall appropriate and in alignment with BP's revised Mission 'to produce professional and enterprising graduates'. The course intended learning outcomes are documented in course descriptors and are classified into three categories: generic or transferrable skills; knowledge and understanding; and practice. During interviews, the Panel learned that to ensure alignment with the institution's Mission, the teaching staff are required to reference the programme aims and graduate profile when developing the course learning outcomes. The Panel acknowledges that CILT's recognition of the BILM programme is an indication of the appropriateness of the BILM PILOs. The Panel appreciates that the BILM programme has appropriate intended learning outcomes which are expressed in the programme and course specifications and are aligned with the mission and programme aims.

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2.5   Each course has a number of learning outcomes each of which are classified as: A (generic, transferable skills), B (Knowledge and understanding) and C (Practice: applied knowledge and understanding). The Panel finds the course ILOs to be satisfactory and appropriate to the course level, in line with the Bahrain Polytechnic Qualification Framework (BPQF). To ensure alignment with the programme aims, a curriculum skills map is employed to ensure that each course contributes to the achievement of the overall programme aims. The Panel learned from interviews with the programme team that a full mapping exercise of intended learning outcomes to employability skills for each course was conducted in October 2013. The Panel appreciates that course intended learning outcomes appropriate to the aims and level of the courses, are in place and are mapped to the programme learning outcomes.

2.6   Work-integrated Learning (WIL) contributes to the employability attributes of the graduates. This is evident in work placement and community contribution electives. Work-integrated learning is imbedded in the assessment strategies. Examples are to be found in the course descriptors for Maritime Systems & Practices, Shipping Safety and Security and International Transport Geography. Work-based learning is particularly evident in the Industry Project course descriptor and well-detailed Course Guide. This project stretches over a six month period and is worth 60 credits. There are clear guidelines for the management and assessment of the industry project and employer and student feedback during interview sessions were very positive. The School of Logistics and Maritime Studies is commended for the comprehensive nature of the industry project. A dedicated WIL Programme Manager oversees WIL initiatives and to ensure that WIL opportunities are embedded into the curriculum, including field trips, projects internships and guest speakers. The Panel appreciates that work-integrated learning contributes to the attainment of the Programme ILOs, and that the practical skills gained by the students enhance their employability attributes.

2.7   The BILM programme's approach to teaching is guided by a number of key institutional documents including, Curriculum Development: Principles and Guidelines, e-learning Strategy and the PBL Project Plan. The teaching and learning strategies implemented in individual courses are outlined in the PAD and in course descriptors. These include: conventional lectures, group tutorials, case studies and discussion groups. In addition, MOODLE VLE is used to support students in their academic activities including course materials, assignments as well as providing feedback on students' work. During interviews, the teaching staff informed the Panel that they are supported in developing their skills in designing and delivering courses through their enrolment in the Certificate in Tertiary Teaching and Learning (CTTL) programme when they join the Polytechnic. This programme is designed to give staff a range of skills in designing and delivering courses using interactive teaching methods; topics covered include, amongst other, assessment and moderation, PBL,

teaching practice and student centred learning. The Panel appreciates the teaching effectiveness of academic staff is enhanced through their enrolment in the Certificate in Tertiary Teaching and Learning Programme which appropriately prepares them for the BP teaching philosophy. Further development of staff's teaching skills is provided through the annual Teaching and Learning Symposium. Students interviewed by the Panel confirmed that opportunities for independent learning are increased as they progress through the programme, and that the use of MOODLE as a virtual learning environment further supports their independent learning. The Panel appreciates that a wide and innovative range of teaching methods are employed to ensure the attainment of the BILM programme learning outcomes.

2.8   Appropriate policies and procedures that govern assessments are in place and are adequately communicated to staff and students through the BP website, MOODLE, the BILM Course Guide, Student Handbook. A range of assessment styles including formal examinations, reports, projects and presentations are implemented to ensure that students with different learning styles fairly assessed. The course specification documents clearly state which learning outcomes are being assessed through each assessment. In its interviews, teaching staff indicated that all assessments have pre-moderated rubrics (or model answers in cases of examinations) so that the students know how marks are awarded before they start work on an assignment. The Panel notes with appreciation that effective and prompt feedback on assessments is provided to students in line with the institution's assessment policies. Students interviewed by the Panel confirmed that they receive effective feedback within 10 working days during classes, office hours or *via* email. The Panel notes that policies for appeals processes are well-documented and that students are well-aware of their rights in regards to appealing any grade that they wish to dispute. The pre- and post-moderation of each assignment ensure that examinations and tasks are fair, valid, reliable and appropriate for the relevant level The Panel appreciates that a set of well-documented assessment policies and guidelines are in place and are made available to all stakeholders.

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

- There is a clear academic framework outlining the broad programme aims and how they contribute to the achievement of the Institution's mission.

- The embedded CILT courses enable the students to earn the Certificate and Diploma in Logistics and assist their employability, regionally and internationally.

- The curriculum is organized to provide academic progression with suitable workloads for students, and appropriate balance between knowledge and skills, and between theory and practice.
- The BILM syllabus is well-documented, with appropriate references to current and recent professional practice and research findings.
- The programme has appropriate intended learning outcomes which are expressed in the programme and course specifications and are aligned with the mission and programme aims.
- Course intended learning outcomes appropriate to the aims and level of the courses, are in place and are mapped to the programme learning outcomes.
- Work-based learning contributes to the attainment of the Programme ILOs, and to the employability attributes of graduates.
- A wide and innovative range of teaching methods are employed to ensure the attainment of the BILM learning outcomes.
- The teaching effectiveness of academic staff is enhanced through their enrolment in the *Certificate in Tertiary Teaching and Learning Programme* which appropriately prepares them for the BP teaching philosophy.
- Effective and prompt feedback on assessments is provided to students.
- Well-documented assessment policies and guidelines are in place and are made available to all stakeholders.

2.10 In terms of improvement the Panel **recommends** that the School of Logistics and Maritime Studies should:

- consider offering specialization majors within the BILM programme as specialised skills are increasingly required by commerce and industry

2.11 **Judgement**

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

3. Indicator 2: Efficiency of the Programme

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

3.1 The Bahrain Polytechnic has a clear admission policy aaccording to which, a student to be admitted to the first year must have (a) a high-school leaving certificate with a score of 70% or more cumulative over final two years; (b) evidence of English levels equivalent to at least IELTS 4.00. Entry Criteria to the Bachelor of International Logistics Management requires a satisfactory level of mathematics, IT and English levels. For mathematics, is it required that the students pass the 'Mathematics Selection Test' and have an IELTS 5.0 or above as English requirement. Students who do not meet these criteria are required to undertake Bahrain Polytechnic's foundation programme and are supported in Mathematics and English to enable them to enter to the first year of the BILM Programme. The Panel finds that there is clear evidence that an appropriate admission policy and related procedures are in place. The adequacy of the admission policy is evident in the student achievement rates. The Panel notes with appreciation that an appropriate admission policy is in place and is consistently implemented and adequately communicated to staff and students, *via* the Student Handbook, SharePoint and Staff Handbook.

3.2 The appropriateness of the students' profile to the BILM programme is supported by the high course pass rates and the overall retention rates. The latest version of the annual programme review document 2012-2013 was made available to the Panel. It is evident from this report that the retention rate (99%+) and pass rates of students are acceptable and generally in line with international practice, although the overall pass rates may be a bit on the high side when considering international norms. It can be ascertained that about 56% of students consist of females and the total programme pass rates are 89.3%. From the overall statistics provided, it is evident that the student profile suits the programme characteristics. Student numbers given for the academic year 2012-2013, is 380. The Panel finds the number of students appropriate to the programme's available resources. During the touring of the facilities, the Panel was accompanied by BILM members of the Students Council who organized the tour and acted as a guide throughout the 90 minutes session. The Panel also had the opportunity to conduct structured as well as *ad hoc* interviews with BILM students. The Panel notes with appreciation, the impressive level of motivation, engagement, as well as the communication skills of these students, which the Panel views as an indicator of the appropriateness of the students profile.

3.3 The structure of the management of the BILM follows international practice and is published in the Faculty of Business Staff Handbook. Three levels of management are identified, these being: the Dean, Head of School and Programme Manager. The

Head of School (HoS), who has oversight of all aspects of operations management within the School, is assisted by two Programme Managers. Tutors report to their Programme Managers who are also the first point in the evaluation of the Performance Evaluation Process. At Faculty level, there are two further Programme Managers with cross-faculty responsibilities; the Programme Manager for Academic Quality and the Programme Manager for Work Integrated Learning (WIL). From Panel interviews with academic staff and administrators during the site visit it is evident that there is a major awareness of the lines of responsibility and accountability and that these are indeed followed. Furthermore, academic committees of the Faculty and the BILM Programme, namely the BILM Programme Committee, the Curriculum Advisory Committee and the Faculty Board have clear lines of responsibilities, regular meetings with set agendas and decisions recorded appropriately. All committee meetings minutes are available on SharePoint for all staff members to access. The Panel appreciates the clear lines of accountability with regard to the management of the BILM Programme. During interviews with senior management, the Panel learned that the management structure for the Faculty of Business is currently being reviewed to ensure that it serves the programme needs in the next stage of the Faculty's development. The Panel concurs and encourages the Faculty to conduct this review in light of the evaluation outcomes of the Faculty's first full cycle of degree programmes.

3.4   The BILM programme has 11 full-time academic staff members, one staff member has a Ph.D. with two currently undertaking their Ph.D. studies. In addition, five staff members hold one (or more) Masters qualifications and four are currently undertaking their Master's studies. The Panel notes that all staff members have significant international industry experience. Six staff members have professional membership with CILT with five further applications pending. Furthermore, four members of staff hold teaching certificates and/or diplomas in addition to the Polytechnic's in-house Certificate in Tertiary Teaching and Learning (CTTL). During interviews with programme management, the Panel was informed that, considering the unique nature of the BILM programme, industry experience is viewed as an important criteria in the recruitment of teaching staff. While the Panel appreciates the rich international experience, the Panel is of the view that research and publications should become a focus area of the School, in further support of the overall BILM programme and potential future programme developments. The Panel notes the intention to focus on this area as a new priority focus area with the establishment of a Research Committee and the establishment of a Faculty Research Strategy as well as the improvement of academic staff qualifications. The Panel also notes that eight existing staff are enrolled for further studies of which six are enrolled for masters degrees and two for doctorates. The Panel is also of the view that efforts should be made to develop local expertise in teaching the BILM programme. The Panel notes the School's plan to 'develop selected graduates as tutors over the next five years'.

The Panel recommends that the School of Logistics encourage some staff members to pursue doctoral qualifications. The Panel also recommends that the School implement appropriate mechanisms to develop Bahraini staff members in teaching on the BILM programme.

3.5   In the academic year of 2013-2014, the student to teaching staff ratio is calculated to be 1:14, which the Panel finds low (although this figure fluctuates in relation to the levels of staffing difficulties experienced) compared to most universities, and may impact the financial sustainability of the programme. From site visit interviews, the Panel notes with appreciation that the teaching staff are motivated, enthusiastic and demonstrate good pedagogic knowledge and skills, with a positive attitude towards improvement. Students interviewed by the Panel indicated that they are satisfied with the quality of learning and that the teaching staff are supportive and accessible because of the favorable student-staff ratio and the open door policy.

3.6   There are clear procedures for staff recruitment of academic staff at Bahrain Polytechnic. The recruitment of teaching and administrative staff is currently carried out by the Civil Service Bureau (CSB) in cooperation with the Faculty of Business and the HR Directorate. However; the Annual Programme Review for 2012-2013 highlights the difficulty in attracting suitably qualified staff to join higher education institutions in the field of logistics management. The staffing problem appears to also be linked to institutional issues as well. The Panel heard consistently, in different interviews, about the difficulties encountered by BP in recruiting academic staff since the Civil Service Bureau (CSB) assumed responsibility for recruitment in 2012. For example, the recent change in job description necessitates that teaching staff have a minimum of a 'postgraduate degree', as opposed to a 'Bachelor's degree with industry experience' prior to 2012. In addition, there are long lead-times between recommending the applicant for hire and an offer being made. Moreover, the remuneration offered by the CSB results in a high proportion of offers being declined by applicants. These issues have impacted the recruitment and selection procedures. The Panel notes the School's efforts to address the staffing issues including, bringing in contract staff, as well as following a train-the-trainer programme for appropriate staff. While the Panel appreciates the measures undertaken by BP, the Panel is of the view that the staffing issue poses a risk to the School and should be appropriately managed. Staffing issues will be further exemplified when more students undertake the industry project (TLB 7501) which is very time intensive and a core element of the BILM. This additional workload together with the current levels of understaffing poses a serious risk to the sustainability of the programme and the expectations of students enrolling for the programme. The Panel recommends that the School of Logistics and Maritime Studies explore sustainable measures to ensure that the staffing challenge is appropriately addressed. For example, the development of local expertise, despite the lead-time difficulties experienced to develop local expertise,

ought to be encouraged. The programme review document, detailing the 2012-2013 review period, ought to be used as a basis to address the critical staffing issues that the School is experiencing.

3.7   A new process of staff appraisal entitled 'Performance Enhancement Process' was introduced in December 2013, and samples of staff evaluation forms were made available to the Panel. The Appraisal Form covers all the core functions of a teaching staff, namely the teaching effectiveness, research and community engagement. A peer review as well as student course evaluation surveys are considered in the appraisal process. The Form is monitored by the Head of School and the Dean and is used to identify areas for professional development. There are well-established induction processes at the Bahrain Polytechnic for all newly recruited staff. These include a general induction about Bahrain Polytechnic for all staff, in addition to a Certificate in Tertiary Teaching and Learning for teaching staff. Newly recruited teaching staff interviewed by the Panel confirmed these induction processes. The Panel appreciates that appropriate induction processes are consistently implemented for all new staff in the BILM Programme.

3.8   The promotion policy is currently under review and not yet finalised. According to the SER, the promotion for the teaching staff at the School of Logistics and Maritime Studies is from 'assistant tutor' to 'tutor' and to 'senior tutor' in light of academic performance and recommendation of the Head of School. During interviews, the Panel learned that the Dean can appoint appropriately qualified staff to programme manager or head of Department, subject to CSB approval; alternatively, the Dean can advertise internally to invite applications for available conditions. The Panel notes that a formal retention policy is not yet in place; however, the Panel was informed in interviews that the new PEP process will be used to identify high performing staff for potential incentives. The Panel recommends that the School of Logistics and Maritime Studies develop and implement formal promotion and retention policies to deal with this critical area of talent management as intellectual capital is the cornerstone of the academic programme.

3.9   The BILM is supported by two major Management Information Systems (MIS), the Banner Student and SharePoint. The Banner Student is used mainly in registration and enrolment, saving academic records, programme planning and tracking students attendance. During the touring of facilities, the Panel learned that access to the Banner system is controlled so that each user can only access the information pertinent to their decision-making, whether that is a student, staff member, or manager. The Panel was also informed that the BP is in the process of upgrading the Banner MIS to version 9. Academic staff interviewed by the Panel confirmed that they are trained on the use of Banner as part of their induction training programme. MS SharePoint software is mainly for teaching staff for sharing class materials,

operational manuals, staff handbooks, QMS policies and procedures, and meeting minutes. During the site visit the Panel was given a demonstration of the SharePoint system, including sample course files and QMS. During Panel interviews the Panel was assured of adequate backup IT systems, both on campus as well as off-campus. The Panel appreciates the use of MIS to support the programme and ensure the sustainability of its information resources. However, the Panel is of the view that the Faculty of Business needs to enhance the use of these systems in producing analytical reports, such as cohort analysis, that support decision and policy making. In its SER, the BP has recognized the need to streamline its MIS architecture to meet its growing information and data requirements, particularly in light of the rapid growth over the past few years. Tenders have been issued for this purpose. The Panel concurs and encourages BP to expedite the procurement of the new MIS systems.

3.10   Bahrain Polytechnic has appropriate policies and procedures in place to ensure the security of the learners' information and accuracy of the results. Through the BANNER software, appropriate security protocols are used in managing the student records. Technical support is given by the IT Department of the Bahrain Polytechnic which is also responsible for taking daily back-up of the system and store it outside the premises. The management of student grades, from the time that a grade is captured for the first time until it is published is in line with acceptable practice. During its interviews with teaching staff, the Panel was informed that the grades for all assessments are recorded in BANNER by teaching staff and once the results are ratified by the Academic Board only the Registrar could update the student records. Disclosure of any student information is carefully controlled by the Registrar. Students interviewed by the Panel had adequate understanding of their rights regarding grade reviews and the underlying policies that guided this process. The Panel acknowledges that appropriate policies and procedures are consistently implemented to ensure the security of learner records and accuracy of results.

3.11   Bahrain Polytechnic currently shares the Isa Town campus with University of Bahrain; however, a new campus design is at its final stages. A number of issues regarding suitable venues and office space and the lack of availability of computer laboratories etc. are highlighted in the Annual Programme Review document for 2012-2013. The Panel is of the view that some of the issues are operational in nature, and therefore solvable when raised, and that the envisaged campus development plan, which is yet to be implemented, would alleviate some of these pressures. During the site visit the Panel toured the campus and noted the availability of an adequate number of classrooms with adequate audio-visuals, PBL workshops and seminar rooms for its current student numbers. The Panel finds these facilities to be comparable to any such facilities on other campuses internationally. The library, in particular, is well designed and has quite spaces for students to study, areas where group discussions can take place without disturbing other students and general

conversational areas. The logistics section of the library is adequately resourced for the purposes of the BILM programme. There are sufficient business journal collections, databases including Proquest, Emerald, EBSCO Host, Harvard Business Review as well as local and regional business journals. Moreover, BP has recently adopted Ebrary as a virtual library solution. The Panel notes with appreciation that the Library is managed by a knowledgeable and experienced librarian with a Master's Degree in Library Science, which is an asset to the programme. The Panel also notes that the student survey shows 83% satisfaction rate with the facilities and 90% with the equipment and technology. This was confirmed by students interviewed by the Panel.

3.12 The Panel notes with appreciation that Bahrain Polytechnic has also built a state-of-the-art Library Learning Centre (LLC) which includes a 'writing' centre, to develop students' written language skills. Moreover, the LLC provides access to integrated technology, including assistive technology, gaming; touch screens that meet the needs of the Bahrain Polytechnic Community. WIFI is available across campus for students and staff. During interviews, the Panel learned that the Faculty has established an entrepreneurship provision located at the Riyadat Centre in A'Ali so that students can be adapted into a business incubation environment. The Panel was also informed that the Faculty is currently exploring the establishment of a specialist Financial Analytics Laboratory with state-of-the-art information platforms such as Bloomberg. The Panel acknowledges the Faculty's efforts to explore and implement further initiatives to enhance the BILM students' learning experience.

3.13 Bahrain Polytechnic has well established procedures to track the utilization of its resources. Student information is followed through the BANNER software, timetabling by the Celcat, Library Management System by Millennium, Virtual Learning Environment by MOODLE and Management Information System by MS SharePoint. All general classrooms and laboratory-based rooms' usage can be obtained from the Timetabling System and are usually displayed on classroom doors. The IT Department tracks the internet, telephone and printing in detail, and this data is used to control usage. There is a continuous evaluation of the usage of physical and digital resources. The Panel appreciates the availability of an efficient tracking system that follows the utilization of resources.

3.14 Bahrain Polytechnic has a well-established student support system in terms of library, laboratories, e-learning, guidance and support care. While Student Services Department provides pastoral services to students, mentors and Library Learning Centre (LLC) provide academic assistance to students at risk. The LLC provides one to one service in English Language and Writing Skills and general academic support. In its interviews with students, the Panel was informed that the LLC runs a PASS programme with senior peers tutoring students in need of academic assistance on a

drop in-basis. The Panel also learned that the LLC organizes workshops to students on a number of topics some of which are time management, reading and spelling strategies, and paraphrasing. The Bahrain Polytechnic has arrangements for its disabled students such as giving extra time in exams while it needs to improve its infrastructure to rehabilitate them more efficiently. Students are also supported in computer use via the ICT Helpdesk which provides help with issues regarding login, email, mobile access to email, or MOODLE. Wireless access is subcontracted and monitored efficiently. Moreover, the Career and Employment Centre offers a drop-in service for students looking for help in managing their career planning and skill development. During discussions with students general satisfaction was expressed with the type and quality of student support services. The Panel appreciates that a well-established and effective student support system is available to enhance the students' learning experience.

3.15   Orientation of the newly admitted students including the transfer students is organized by the Student Services Directorate and is scheduled in advance of every semester. The orientation is conducted over 2-3 days, during which the students are introduced to teaching staff, mentors and attend a number of workshops on rules and regulations and conduct of behaviour at the Bahrain Polytechnic. They are also given their student ID numbers and cards and shown how to log on the Polytechnic computer systems to obtain their timetables. Students interviewed by the Panel confirmed that they were provided with a Student Handbook containing information on class attendance requirements, services and facilities, mentoring as well as health and safety. The Panel acknowledges that appropriate arrangements are implemented for new and transfer students.

3.16   Bahrain Polytechnic has well-established policies and procedures to provide an early warning of students at risk in order to provide them with the needed academic support. The students at risk policy is all-encompassing and includes items such as risk associated with academic progress, personal and psychological issues, health/safety related issues, financial issues and social/behavioural issues. The students at risk are identified from their attendance records at the BANNER. Tutors are also expected to be pro-active and follow up with students that are absent. In general, students are allowed to be absent from class for 20% of the time due to occasional illness and other absences. Furthermore, students who could not get the required grades to be successful are recorded as 'in probation' and such students are given reduced workloads until they succeed. Staff are made aware of students at risk via a summarized staff information document detailing reasons for at risk students such as lack of academic progress and irregular class attendance. The Panel views this information document as good practice as it specifically guides staff on how to identify such students, details some examples of types of support that could be offered (depending on the circumstances) and then sets out the entire process by

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means of a flow diagram. In addition, it also identifies the typical at risk categories in conjunction with the typical interventions that could be enlisted in a table format in the information document. During interviews, the teaching staff confirmed that they receive information on how to identify the students at risk and how to refer them to the correct support. Students at risk are required to attend weekly sessions with their learning advisor for one to one tutoring and may also have to attend peer tutoring. The Panel notes that out of 33 students at the Business Programme who were identified at risk, only seven of them required further support in the following semester. The Panel appreciates that effective institutional structures and support mechanisms are implemented to assist at risk students

3.17   Bahrain Polytechnic has a number of arrangements to provide a suitable learning environment to students in their studies and personal lives. The Directorate of Student Services runs social, awareness and cultural events all throughout the academic year. The elected Student Association (BPSA) also contributes to these events. Career and Employment Centre offers a range of services some which are: workshops on how to write CV, organize carrier days inviting firms to introduce various professions and provide recruitment opportunities. The Library Learning Centre provides opportunities for informal learning through initiatives like American Corner which offers events like 'Bahraini Business Women Mentorship, Entrepreneurship and SMEs. The Health and Wellness Centre on the other hand with its two personal trainers offers weekly group fitness classes. The Centre has a fully equipped gymnasium, indoor basketball courts, a mini gymnasium for ladies. During interviews, students were complimentary regarding the support systems and initiatives implemented by BP to improve their study experience. The Panel appreciates that the learning environment is conducive to expanding the student experiences and knowledge through informal learning.

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

- An appropriate admission policy is consistently implemented, adequately communicated to staff and students and regularly reviewed.
- The students are motivated, engaged, with impressive communication skills.
- There are clear lines of accountability with regard to the management of the Programme.
- The teaching staff are motivated, enthusiastic and demonstrate good pedagogic knowledge and skills, with a wide range of international experience.
- Appropriate induction processes are consistently implemented for all new staff in the BILM Programme
- A range of Management Information Systems are used support the programme and ensure the sustainability of its information resources.

- The library is managed by a knowledgeable and experienced librarian with a Master's Degree in Library Science, which is an asset to the programme.
- A state-of-the-art Library Learning Centre (LLC) provides comprehensive support to students across a wide range of areas.
- An efficient tracking system, with well established procedures, is implemented to track the utilization of resources.
- A well-established and effective student support system is available to enhance the students' learning experience.
- Effective institutional structures and support mechanisms are implemented to assist students at risk of academic failure.
- The learning environment is conducive to expanding the student experiences and knowledge through informal learning.

3.19   In terms of improvement, the Panel **recommends** that the School of Logistics and Maritime Studies should:

- address staffing issues as a matter of concern, both at the institutional level as well as the CSB and explore sustainable measures to ensure that the staffing challenge is appropriately resolved
- develop and implement formal promotion and retention policies to deal with this critical area of talent management as intellectual capital is the cornerstone of the academic programme
- encourage staff members to improve their academic qualifications and become more research active
- implement appropriate mechanisms to develop Bahraini staff members in teaching on the BILM programme.

3.20   **Judgement**

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

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4. Indicator 3: Academic Standards of the Graduates

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

4.1   Graduate attributes for the BILM programme are clearly depicted in the Programme Approval Document, and serve as a framework for the course learning outcomes. A matrix linking course intended learning outcomes to the programme aims and the graduate profile is included in the programme documentation. The Panel notes that the learning outcomes from the embedded CILT qualifications are also 'staircased' to the overall aims and graduate profile of the BILM programme. Moreover, all CILOs are mapped to the generic grid-level descriptors on the Bahrain Polytechnic's Qualifications Framework. During interviews, the Panel learned that as all graduates are required to demonstrate 21st Century skills, as part of the BPs vision statement, the School of Logistics and Maritime Studies has recently developed an additional matrix linking intended learning outcomes assessment to employability skills. To ensure the achievement of learning outcomes, a range of appropriate assessment methods, both formative and summative, are implemented. The Panel appreciates that the programme graduate attributes are clearly stated and that there is a strong link between the ILOs, types of assessments and graduates profile. The Panel acknowledges the BILM is still a relatively new programme with the first nine graduates only graduating as recently as June 2013, and encourages the School of Logistics and Maritime Studies to expand the range of indirect assessment of graduate attributes as more cohorts are graduated in the upcoming years.

4.2   The CILT-embedded qualifications in the BILM, as well as the recent accreditation by the CILT of the BILM, enables the School of Logistics and Maritime Studies to have a benchmarked qualification, against the standards of the CILT and similar institutions of higher education worldwide, that make use of the CILT qualifications as part of their curricula. The Panel notes with appreciation that the recent CILT reaccreditation of Bahrain Polytechnic as a provider of its professional qualifications has enhanced the BILM programme's reputation and established international standards to which it must operate. The Senior Management Team indicated during interviews that the CILT accreditation implies that the BILM is of the same standards and rigour to over 100 degrees globally; a fact worth emphasizing, as less than one third of the requests for accreditation of individual degrees are successful. The Panel also acknowledges that Bahrain Polytechnic has recently signed MOUs with the *National Maritime College of Ireland* (NMCI) and the *Gulf Aviation Academy* which would lead to international academic standards to be included in the BILM's maritime and aviation courses. However, the Panel is of the view that the School of Logistics and Maritime Studies needs to conduct formal benchmarking against regional and international programmes that adopt a similar pedagogical approach.

During interviews conducted with academic staff, the Panel was informed that it was difficult to benchmark the BILM to similar programmes elsewhere (that don't have CILT accredited programmes), as such programmes were generally not comparable nor available. The Panel also learned that the management of the benchmarking processes is not yet systematic within the Institution and there are no formal policies to guide this process. The Panel recommends that the School of Logistics and Maritime Studies develop and implement policies and procedures for formal benchmarking against similar institutions to ensure the BILM programme's academic standards.

4.3   The Bahrain Polytechnic's assessment policies and procedures are fully documented in its Assessment and Moderation Policy A/AB/005 V2. This policy is widely circulated amongst all staff and is accessible on SharePoint. Amendments to the policy are discussed before teaching commences to highlight changes. In its interviews with the programme team, the Panel learned that at the programme level, course co-ordinators ensure that their assessments meet the required standards and that polices are followed; and that faculty wide student meetings are also held to cover the same scope of information dissemination. The normal process of policy review from the Departmental-level to the faculty board is followed with implementation effectiveness monitored by the Programme Manager and eventually by means of the Annual Programme Review Process where the pass rate, results per course (inclusive of gender-based pass rates and the overall pass rates) as well as programme statistics per course, is reported. In the case of the CILT courses, the CILT Assessment Policy and Guidelines provide the framework for CILT assessments. A policy on Academic Honesty and Integrity is in place and sets out the manner in which transgressions are dealt with, the applicable penalties and the rights of appeal. Use is made of TurnItin to determine levels of similarity of students' projects with published material. Examples of plagiarism investigations were provided to the Panel. In cases where plagiarism is suspected, a formal investigation is undertaken by the Tutor and recommendations made on how to deal with misconduct. During interviews, it was evident that the teaching staff students are fully aware of the assessment policies. The Panel appreciates that well established policies and procedures for assessment are consistently implemented, monitored and subjected to regular review and are made available to stakeholders.

4.4   Policies and procedures are in place to ensure alignment of assessment to learning outcomes. The Assessment and Moderation Policy require that assessments are appropriate for the learning outcomes and reflect the academic standards achieved by students. The Results and Reporting Policy deals with (amongst other) the recording of summative assessment results, the checking of the results in a Course Team Meeting, the verification of results at a Programme Committee meeting, followed by the confirmation of results at a Faculty Board Meetings and then by the

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Academic Board. The mappings of assessment to course learning outcomes are closely monitored by the Programme Committee and the Faculty Board. During interviews, students confirmed that all assessment methods are documented in the course specification, and that they are satisfied with the assessment tasks. The Panel acknowledges that appropriate mechanisms are implemented to ensure that assessment tasks are designed to accurately measure student learning, in alignment with the level of course learning outcomes.

4.5   The institutional Assessment and Moderation Policy is followed in the BILM programme and provides for two stages of internal moderation: pre-assessment moderation which occurs prior to the application of the assessment to students and post- assessment moderation which occurs after student grading has been completed. Teaching teams are also required to jointly pre-mark a sample of students' work to ensure consistency in the application of the marking rubric. The Panel was informed during interviews with teaching staff that feedback from moderation processes is incorporated onto the end of semester course reviews, and that changes to courses are approved by the Programme Committee in light of moderation recommendations. A five year BILM rolling moderation plan has been developed which stipulates which courses should be internally and externally moderated (pre- and post- assessed) in a given year. The Panel appreciates that effective internal moderation processes are implemented to ensure that course assessments are fit for purpose in the BILM programme.

4.6   Appropriate policies and procedures for external moderation are in place; however it has so far been implemented only for the CILT- embedded courses. During interviews with senior management, it was mentioned that BILM is actively searching for appropriate institutions to undertake annual external monitoring, in addition to CILT. A Memorandum of Understanding was recently signed with the *Cork Institute of Technology* to provide external moderation. The Panel is of the view that external moderation should be, as a minimum, considered for final year courses and the industry project. The Panel recommends that the School of Logistics and Maritime Studies introduce effective external moderation to further ensure the academic standards of the BILM programme.

4.7   Adequate samples of assessed students' work, including final examinations, assignments, industry projects as well as pre-moderation and post-moderation reports were made available to the Panel during the site visit which enabled scrutiny of student's assessed work. The Panel finds that these assessments were fair and in line with international practice, and that the student's quality of work appropriate for the level of the programme. This conclusion is supported by the external moderator's reports of the CILT courses which indicated that students are being assessed at the appropriate levels from a national and international perspective. The

Panel learned from interviews with the teaching staff that the appropriateness of the assessment levels is ensured by the implementation of the Bahrain Polytechnic Qualifications Framework and the institutional Results and Reporting Policy (A/AB/017) which mandates the range of achievement on a particular course, as reflected in assessment outcomes. In addition, both internal and external moderation (for CILT courses) are conducted to ensure that the assessment tasks are at the level required by the approved course descriptor. The Panel appreciates that effective mechanisms are implemented to ensure that students are being assessed at the appropriate levels from a national and international perspective.

4.8   The BILM is still a relatively new programme with the first nine graduates only graduating as recently as June 2013. Since then two more cohorts completed their studies. Graduate achievements can be inferred from the results of the final-year Industry Project where students are expected, to achieve a number of learning outcomes aligned to the programme aims. The respective (good) grades achieved in the industry project are indicative of maturing students that have the ability to make use of their learning experiences by applying such to the industry project. These grades would not be possible had the programme aims and ILOs not been achieved in earlier 'foundation' courses. The normal distribution of grades for the industry placement course and other level 7 BILM courses, suggest a reasonable distribution of student academic achievements. There is a good correlation between cumulative GPAs and industry placement grades indicating a strong alignment between TLB 7501 representing industry placement as a proxy for graduate attributes, with curriculum structure in earlier courses. Furthermore, the Panel notes the nomination of BILM as a finalist for 'Education and Training Provider of the Year' at the Supply Chain and Transport Awards in Dubai, as well as the recognition of a BILM student by CILT for the best undergraduate project in the transport and logistics field in October 2013. The Panel views these achievements as predictors of student performance as a graduate. Furthermore, the graduates and employers interviewed by the Panel were very satisfied with the knowledge, skills and competence attained by the graduates. The Panel appreciates that the level of graduates' achievement meets the programme aims and learning outcomes, as demonstrated in final results, grade distribution and confirmation by independent scrutiny.

4.9   As the Polytechnic does not operate on a cohort system, rates of progression is not measured. In the absence of this measurement the SER included a table to illustrate the progress of students that enrolled in 2009, Semester 1. According to this table the progression rate is 42% over the four year study period. This is regarded as acceptable by the Panel, especially considering the fact that seven of these students are in their senior years and thus likely to complete the BILM. The SER indicates that measurement of progression is problematic as students have tailored pathways through their programme of study and BANNER tracks the progress of each student

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individually. The Panel is of the view that rates of progression are important management tools for higher education institutions and ought to be readily available. Teaching and administrative staff interviewed by the Panel recognize the importance of establishing systematic automated cohort measurements, particularly that the data above had to be manually extracted by student registry. This should not be the case. The Panel recommends that the Faculty of Business investigate measures it could adopt to implement a students' cohort analysis and utilize the outcomes to inform decision-making in the Faculty.

4.10   Appropriate policies and procedures are in place for the implementation and monitoring of the assessed work-based learning. Policies and procedures for the industry project are spelled out in the PAD document, the TLB 7501 course specification document and the detailed course guide. These are viewed by the Panel as adequate and clearly identify the rights and expectations of all role players involved in the industry project. Students are required to complete a 60-credit industry project in the final year of study. This project meets the work-integrated learning philosophy of the Polytechnic and is in the course specification document (TLB 7501) as well as a very detailed course guide. The project-system is well managed with BILM academic staff supervisors allocated to students, industry supervisors identified in host organisations, academic staff visiting the respective host organisations and the assessment and internal moderation of the projects. During interviews, the teaching staff informed the Panel that that the assessments of work-based projects, as in the case of examinations or other assignments, are pre and post-moderated and graded with the use of detailed rubrics. The Panel undertook a more detailed review of three industry projects which represented top, middle and bottom samples of students' work, together with the completed assessment of these projects, based on detailed marking rubrics. It was found that the assessments were fair and the students' quality of work appropriate and in line with expectations for this level of training. The Panel appreciates that effective policies are consistently implemented for the management and assessment of work-based learning to assure that the learning experience is appropriate. The Panel notes however that, at present, these projects are not formally externally moderated, although an effort has been made to have this done by informally sending a number of projects to an Emeritus Professor in New Zealand for feedback. The Panel encourages the School to formalize the practice of external moderation, especially seeing that the project represents 60 credits, to ensure good academic governance (see section 4.6).

4.11   A Curriculum Advisory Committee (CAC) is in place and well-integrated into the activities of the Department. A policy guides the terms of reference, reporting requirements, membership and operational guidelines of the CAC. The CAC meetings are held twice per annum. From evidence provided to the Panel, it is evident that the CAC plays an important role in ensuring industry feedback and

comments on the BILM programme and its respective courses, as well as the contextualisation of these courses to the Bahraini circumstances. During site visit interviews, it was evident that CAC members as industry representatives, are very passionate and positive about the BILM and play leading roles in offering industry projects to BILM students. A strong sentiment was expressed by CAC members to change the name of the CAC since their contribution was much broader than curriculum. The Panel encourages the School of Logistics and Maritime Studies to consider re-naming the CAC. The Panel finds the level of cooperation between industry and academia to be commendable. The Panel appreciates that a functioning Curriculum Advisory Committee is in place with enthusiastic members whose recommendations are systematically used to inform programme improvement.

4.12   The Panel had the opportunity to have interviews with students (both current as well as graduated) as well as employers. General satisfaction was expressed by the employers about the programme aims and objectives as well as the employability of graduates. Graduates were also pleased with their studies and the fact that most had been able to find work. The student's views correlate with the views of the BILM Student Forum Report where the graduates were of the view that the BILM had assisted them in obtaining interviews and that a professional qualification earns them employment promotions.

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

- The graduate attributes are clearly stated and there is a strong link between the intended learning outcomes, types of assessments and graduates profile.
- The CILT reaccreditation has enhanced the BILM programme's reputation and established international standards to which it must operate.
- Well-established assessment policies and procedures are consistently implemented, monitored and subjected to regular review and are made available to stakeholders.
- Effective internal moderation processes are implemented to ensure that course assessments are fit for purpose in the BILM programme.
- Effective mechanisms are implemented to ensure that students are being assessed at the appropriate levels from a national and international perspective.
- The level of graduates' achievement meets the programme aims and learning outcomes, as demonstrated in final results, grade distribution and confirmation by independent scrutiny.
- Effective policies are consistently implemented for the management and assessment of work-based learning to assure that the learning experience is appropriate.

- A functioning Curriculum Advisory Committee is in place with enthusiastic members whose recommendations are systematically used to inform programme improvement.

4.14 In terms of improvement, the Panel **recommends** that the School of Logistics and Maritime Studies should:

- develop and implement policies and procedures for formal benchmarking against similar institutions that adopt the BILM programme's teaching philosophy
- introduce effective external moderation to ensure the academic standards of the BILM programme
- investigate measures it could adopt to implement a students' cohort analysis and utilize the outcomes to inform decision-making in the Faculty

4.15 **Judgement**

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

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5.   Indicator 4: Effectiveness of Quality Management and Assurance

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

5.1   The Bahrain Polytechnic's Quality Management System has a centralized register of policies, procedures and terms of reference for academic governance, some of which are Student appeal, Student admission, Results and Reporting, Programme approval and Research and Scholarly activities. Policies are managed under the auspices of the Quality Measurement Analysis and Planning Directorate (QMAP). The approved policies and procedures are made available to academic staff on SharePoint in a 'Quality site' while those pertaining to students, such as the Assessment Policy, are available on MOODLE. Students interviewed by the Panel confirmed that they are fully informed about and understand the policies pertaining to them. The consistency of academic policies is verified by the Programme Committee, Faculty Board, and the Academic Board at Faculty level and Academic Quality Assurance Committee (AQAC) chaired by the Executive Director Projects and assistant to the CEO, at Institutional level. To ensure consistent policy development and the monitoring of policy implementation at Faculty level, a Programme Manager for Quality has recently been appointed in each Faculty. The Panel appreciates that the Institution's policies, procedures and regulations are applied effectively and consistently across the Faculty.

5.2   In ensuring that governance structures are coordinated and the goals of the Faculty are achieved, leadership is demonstrated by the clear governance structures that are in place. In particular, at Faculty level, the Dean is supported by the Programme Manager who, in turn, is supported by the Course Coordinators. A Programme Committee, with representatives from key support functions outside of the School, oversee the running of the Programme and report monthly to the Faculty Board and by extension to the Academic Board. Effective leadership is also illustrated by the Performance Enhancement Process (PEP) in which academic staff members have the opportunity of identifying enhancement activities for their personal and professional development. Responsible leadership is evident from the stable management structure supporting the development of an appropriate governance structure, for example, the Head of School and the Dean are active members of the Academic Board and the Dean serves on the senior management team. This has led to the first fully accredited programme and the first transport and logistics degree programme in the MENA region to be recognised by CILT. Furthermore, CITL provides external oversight to ensure effective progress against the goals. The Panel appreciates that Programme leadership is effective and responsible.

5.3   The quality assurance management system operates at various levels. Firstly, at the institutional level QMAP is responsible for managing the policies and procedures, as explained in Section 5.1, and AQAC assures that the quality management system are consistently implemented in all the Faculties. Secondly, at Faculty level, the Programme Manager for Quality oversees quality assurance for Programmes while at the Programme level, the Programme Committee monitors and evaluates the implementation of academic policies. There is an opportunity of sharing best practices through the annual Programme review process. Processes that are used for quality assurance include student surveys, course surveys and reviews, pre- and post- internal moderation, annual and periodic Programme reviews and validations. The quality assurance processes for the School of Logistics was confirmed in the interview with BILM academic and administrative staff members. A quality assurance process for the development of new Programmes, including the market research, validation, benchmarking, mapping to qualifications frameworks and accreditation is also in place. The Panel appreciates that there is a clear quality assurance management system that is consistently implemented, monitored and evaluated.

5.4   Quality assurance issues are discussed at various forums such as staff meetings, periodic training sessions, mainly offered by the CTTL and team sessions. The roles and responsibilities, generic programme information and the moderation of assessments are clearly communicated to academic staff members in their 'Staff Handbook February 2014'. Furthermore, quality assurance issues are addressed in the 'Certificate in Tertiary Teaching and Learning' (CTTL) which all new staff members are required to attend and pass. The faculty members prepared their course specifications and have their courses moderated internally. The Panel learned in interviews that the Faculty of Business developed a plan for academic staff to enhance quality assurance and accountability. From the different site visit interviews, the Panel noted with appreciation the strong and shared understanding amongst staff members and students about quality assurance.

5.5   The Policy on Programme Approval clearly outlines the procedures for the development of new Programmes and new majors in a Programme as well as the procedures for the approval of high impact and low impact courses. During interviews, the Panel learned that ideas for a new programme or major (concept brief) are submitted to the SMT to gain support for the market needs analysis, for example the new majors in HRM and Business Tourism. The fit for purpose is evident in producing graduates that meet Bahrain's needs as well as ensuring that there is no or limited overlap with other external providers and across Programmes offered at the Polytechnic. The Panel appreciates that there are rigorous policies and procedures for the development of new Programmes to ensure that they are relevant and fit for purpose to meet the economy's needs.

5.6   The academic staff conduct an annual programme review for each academic year. This practice is commendable as it leads to the systematic analysis of key areas of offering the BILM programme. The latest version of this document made available to the Panel dates 2012-2013. This process is managed and coordinated by the Curriculum Unit and monitored by the Academic Quality Assurance Committee (AQAC) for institutional oversight. Timely release of information on key Programme statistics are made by the Registry and course survey results by the Quality Unit in September each year. During interviews, the Panel was informed that the Programme team writes up the Programme review, including individual course reviews and an action plan. An update on the previous action plan is also generated and monitored by the Programme Committee throughout the year. The Panel appreciates that there are appropriate arrangements for annual internal programme evaluations and implementation of recommendations for improvement. However, the Panel is of the view that the acquisition of a reporting tool that better integrates different reports into the operational decision making processes at Programme Committee and Faculty Board. To this end, a project is in place to implement a curriculum management system that will integrate the Registry, LLC and HR systems and tie them into the needs of the Faculty programmes. The Panel recommends that the School expedite the acquisition of a reporting tool to enhance the capturing of data for quality reviews and decision-making.

5.7   Mechanisms are in place for the periodic external and internal reviews of the BILM programme as stipulated in the Evaluation and Review Policy (A/QA/002) and the Institutional Quality Framework. The Policy on Evaluation and Review stipulates that in the review process feedback has to be obtained from internal and external stakeholders and the Programme Approval Document outlines that the periodic reviews are guided by the QQA standards and external feedback. Evidence of both and internal and external review processes and the resultant quality improvement plans, includes: the re-accreditation of BILM by CILT in November 2013 after a full review by senior CILT auditors; the report on the re-validation of the BILM programme by a Panel of three international experts, undertaken in May 2014; and the annual programme reviews (APR) undertaken by the academic staff members in the Faculty. The Panel learned during interviews that the feedback based on the CILT re-accreditation (2013) and APR's was actioned and implemented. In addition, the recommendations made in the expert panel validation report in May 2014 would form the basis of BILM's 2014-2015 QIP. The Panel notes with appreciation that the review feedback from both the internal and external stakeholders is considered and feed back into the improvement process. Since the BILM programme is not fully mature yet, it has been necessary to have the thorough internal and external reviews. However, going forward, the Panel suggests that that external reviews take place on a four to five year cycle.

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5.8   Mechanisms are in place for collecting and analyzing students' feedback consistent with the 'Institutional Quality Survey Framework'. Surveys conducted include Teaching Survey, Course Survey, Student Experience Survey and Student Services Survey. Teaching surveys are collected and analyzed each semester by QMAP which then sends the surveys summaries to the Dean, the Heads of School, and the individual teaching staff. Course surveys are handled in the same manner and are sent back to the Dean, the Head of School, and the course coordinator responsible. During interviews with the programme team, the Panel learned that the results of the Teaching surveys are used for tutor professional development plans whereas Course survey results are included in the annual programme review action plan. The Panel notes with appreciation that the course survey results and improvements from the previous semester are communicated to students in the first weeks of the course. In addition, Curriculum Advisory Committee (CAC) surveys are administered annually by the industry liaison team and analyzed by the QAMP. The survey results are discussed in the CAC meetings, with identified issues added to the action plan in the meeting minutes. The Panel encourages the Faculty to gather information from other external stakeholders, such as the potential employers of the graduates. In doing so, the BILM would also receive feedback on possible new types of 'knowledge' (courses) needed by business practice and the types of competencies required.

5.9   The Panel notes that since the first cohort of students graduated at the end of 2012-2013 academic year, comprehensive feedback still needs to be obtained from the Alumni. The recently formed Alumni club surveyed Alumni three and six months post-graduation on their employment status and salary level, and preliminary Alumni reports and statistics were generated. During the site visit, the Panel learned that a draft online Alumni Survey has recently been developed but is not yet approved for implementation. Upon examining the draft survey, the Panel noted that some questions consist of multiple elements, and that the questions on employability skills needed to be re-phrased. The Panel encourages the School of Logistics and Maritime Studies to revise the draft Alumni survey to clarify the questions on employability skills and how well the institution developed these skills amongst its graduates, as this would be more appropriate for improving on how the programme develops these skills amongst the current cohorts of students.

5.10   There is an institutional Professional Development Application Committee which processes professional development (PD) applications for funding and leave. These applications require Civil Service Bureau's approval. A new Performance Enhancement Process (PEP) was launched in December 2013 in which employees and their line manager are required to sign off on a PD plan each year based on areas for development identified in the performance appraisal. Furthermore, during interviews teaching staff confirmed that they were satisfied with the informal and formal support offered by the Teaching and Learning Unit to academic staff

members for professional development, including the induction programme. Faculty members also confirmed that even though research is relatively new to them, they are encouraged and supported to attend local and international conferences, seminars, workshops, academic leave, professional exams and course work. The Panel encourages the School of Logistics and Maritime Studies to motivate its teaching staff to conduct academic research through proper incentives (see section 3.5). The Panel notes with appreciation that the professional development needs of teaching staff are identified by means of the PEP and that the development plans are monitored and evaluated.

5.11   In scoping the labour market, the Curriculum Advisory Committee (CAC), comprised of industry experts in the discipline, provide industry input to the curriculum while ensuring an alignment between programme development with labour market needs. Validation feedback from the expert panel will be used to ensure that there is an appropriate balance between attaining academic standards and meeting labour market needs. Furthermore based on the CILT re-accreditation new developments include Aviation Security and Risk Management. During the interview sessions with the programme team, it was confirmed that the material received from CILT that is in keeping with industry developments, was contextualised to the Bahraini context to meet the labour market needs. The Panel encourages the School of Logistics and Maritime Studies to continue their close liaison with the industry stakeholders regarding the labor market needs in Bahrain and the Gulf area.

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

- The institution's policies, procedures and regulations are applied effectively and consistently across the Faculty.
- The Programme leadership is effective and responsible
- There is a clear quality assurance management system that is consistently implemented, monitored and evaluated.
- There is a strong and shared understanding amongst staff members and students about quality assurance.
- There are rigorous policies and procedures for the development of new programmes to ensure that they are relevant and fit for purpose to meet the economy's needs.
- There are effective arrangements for annual internal programme evaluations and feedback from both the internal and external stakeholders is considered and implemented in the improvement process.
- The course survey results and improvements from the previous semester are communicated to students in the first weeks of the course.

- The professional development plans of teaching staff are linked to their appraisal results, and are monitored and evaluated.

5.13   In terms of improvement, the Panel **recommends** that the School of Logistics and Maritime Studies should:

- expedite the acquisition of a reporting tool to enhance the capturing of data for quality reviews and decision-making and to facilitate quality management processes

5.14   **Judgement**

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

6.   Conclusion

Taking into account the institution's own self-evaluation report, the evidence gathered from the interviews and documentation made available during the site visit, the Panel draws the following conclusion in accordance with the DHR/QQA *Programmes-within-College Reviews Handbook, 2012*:

There is confidence in the Bachelor of International Logistics Management (BILM) of the Faculty of Business offered by the Bahrain Polytechnic .