



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

Directorate of Higher Education Reviews

Programme Follow-Up Visit Report

Bachelor of Arts in English Language and Literature
College of Arts
University of Bahrain
Kingdom of Bahrain

First Follow-up Visit Date: 21-23 September 2020

Review Date: 3-7 December 2017

HC118-C2-F019

Table of Contents

Acronyms	2
The Programme Follow- up Visit Overview.....	3
1. Indicator 1: The Learning Programme.....	5
2. Indicator 2: Efficiency of the Programme.....	10
3. Indicator 3: Academic standards of the graduates.....	16
4. Indicator 4: Effectiveness of quality management and assurance	27
5. Conclusion	32
Appendix 1: Judgement per recommendation.....	33
Appendix 2: Overall Judgement.....	34

Acronyms

BAEL	Bachelor of Arts in English Language and Literature Programme
BQA	Education & Training Quality Authority
CGPA	Cumulative Grade Point Average
CILO	Course Intended Learning Outcome
DELL	Department of English Language and Literature
DHR	Directorate of Higher Education Reviews
ICT	Information Communication Technology
ILO	Intended Learning Outcome
MAEL	Master of Arts in Applied English Language Studies
PAC	Programme Advisory Committee
PEO	Programme Educational Objective
PILO	Programme Intended Learning Outcome
QAAC	Quality Assurance and Accreditation Centre
QAC	Quality Assurance Committee
QAO	Quality Assurance Office
SAC	Students' Academic Committee
SIS	Student Information System
UILO	University Intended Learning Outcome
UoB	University of Bahrain

The Programme Follow-up Visit Overview

The follow-up visit for academic programmes conducted by the Directorate of Higher Education Reviews (DHR) of the Education & Training Quality Authority (BQA) in the Kingdom of Bahrain is part of a cycle of continuing quality assurance review, reporting and improvement.

The follow-up visit applies to all programmes that have been reviewed using the Programmes-within-College Reviews Framework, and received a judgement of 'limited confidence' or 'no confidence'.

This Report provides an account of the follow-up process and findings of the follow-up panel (the Panel), whereby the Bachelor of Arts in English Language and Literature (BAEL), at University of Bahrain (UoB) was revisited on 21-23 September 2020 to assess its progress in line with the published Programmes-within-College Reviews Framework and the BQA regulations.

A. Aims of the Follow-up Visit

- (i) Assess the progress made against the recommendations highlighted in the review report (in accordance with the four BQA Indicators) of UOB's BAEL since the programme was reviewed on 3-7 December 2017.
- (ii) Provide further information and support for the continuous improvement of academic standards and quality enhancement of higher education provision, specifically within the BAEL programme at UOB, and for higher education provision within the Kingdom of Bahrain, as a whole.

B. Background

The review of the BAEL programme, at UOB in the Kingdom of Bahrain was conducted by the DHR of the BQA on 3-7 December 2017.

The overall judgement of the review panel for the BAEL programme, of UOB was that of 'limited confidence'. Consequently, the follow-up process incorporated the review of the evidence presented by UOB to the DHR, the Improvement Plan submitted to BQA in March 2019, the progress report and its supporting materials, which were submitted in December 2019, and the documents submitted during the follow-up site visit and those extracted from the interview sessions.

The external review panel's judgement on the UOB's BAEL programme for each Indicator was as follows:

Indicator 1: The learning programme; '**satisfied**'

Indicator 2: Efficiency of the programme; '**satisfied**'

Indicator 3: Academic standards of the graduates; '**not satisfied**'

Indicator 4: Effectiveness of quality management and assurance '**satisfied**'

The follow-up visit was conducted by a panel (the Panel) consisting of two members. This follow-up visit focused on assessing how the Institution addressed the recommendations of the report of the review conducted on 3-7 December 2017. For each recommendation given under the four Indicators, the Panel judged whether the recommendation is 'fully addressed', 'partially addressed', or 'not addressed' using the rubric in Appendix 1. An overall judgement of 'good progress', 'adequate progress' or 'inadequate progress' is given based on the rubric provided in Appendix 2.

C. Overview of the Bachelor of Arts in English Language and Literature

The College of Arts, at the UoB, was originally established as a part of the University College of Science, Art and Education, which was founded in 1978. In 1986, the UoB was established by a merger of the Gulf Polytechnic and the University College of Science, Art and Education. The Board of Trustees of the UoB issued a decision, in 1990, to separate the College of Arts & Science into two colleges: The College of Arts and the College of Science. The Department of English Language and Literature (DELL) offers the Bachelor of Arts in English Language and Literature (BAEL) programme at Sakhir campus. The programme was first offered in 1986 when the UoB was established. The Department also offers a Master of Arts in Applied English Language Studies programme as well as 16 service courses to various colleges. The BAEL programme offers a single major option and a major/minor option of a total of 128 credit hours. At the time of the virtual site visit, the total number of students enrolled in the programme was 1348, with the total number of graduates since inception being 1974. Currently, there are 32 full-time and 26 part-time faculty members, supported by four administrative staff, contributing to the delivery of the programme.

1. Indicator 1: The Learning Programme

This section evaluates the extent to which the BAEL programme of UOB, has addressed the recommendations outlined in the programme review report of December 2017, under Indicator 1: The learning programme; and as a consequence provides a judgment regarding the level of implementation of each recommendation for this Indicator as outlined in Appendix 1 of this Report.

Recommendation 1.1: *revise the study plan to ensure that all required language proficiency and composition support courses (specific language support courses, not major content courses) are offered earlier in the programme.*

Judgement: *Fully Addressed*

In response to the 2017 BQA Review Report in relation to revising the study plan and balancing required courses, and based upon the Quality Assurance and Accreditation Centre (QAAC) operational plan and work and investigation of the Quality Assurance Committee (QAC) and Departmental Curriculum Committee, the DELL reviewed and approved a revised BAEL study plan to be implemented in 2020. The plan includes changes in the learning outcomes of language and composition courses. The plan has also been restructured through the reduction in language and composition courses, ensuring all said courses are completed by BAEL students by the end of semester 4 of the new study plan. A speech course (ENGL306) has also been introduced and the final project course has been transitioned into a capstone course, to name a few of the changes. As per UOB regulations, the revised Study Plan has been passed by the Department Council and the College Programmes and Curriculum Committee. Departmental meeting minutes as well as interviews with various stakeholders including faculty, students, and the department curriculum committees further verified the study plan revisions, communication of the study plan to stakeholders, and initial implementation procedures. Based on the aforementioned reasons, the Panel appreciates the keen and thorough study plan revision of the BAEL programme and, thus, considers this recommendation as fully addressed.

Recommendation 1.2: *investigate the possibility of integrating a capstone course in the curriculum that provides a cumulative experience from all the offered courses in the programme, in a manner that supports the programme aims and objectives.*

Judgement: *Fully Addressed*

To address integrating a capstone in the BAEL programme, the revised study plan for implementation in 2020-2021 transitions the previous ENGL450 (Project Writing) into a capstone course through revised Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs) and assessment measures. The approved requirements have also ensured that only final-

semester students are eligible for this course after 'successfully completing 110 credit hours'. Also, interviews with the curriculum committee and faculty members indicated that ENGL450 has already begun to transition into a capstone course through the use of skills accumulated by students over their BAEL study plan and through increasing marks being awarded for the final project. The modified CILOs for the QAAC Course Specification for ENGL450 and the completed final project rubrics clearly show cumulative skills gained in writing and research in a major area (language, linguistics, literature, or related topic) with constructive feedback being provided from the instructor; thus, supporting the programme aims and objectives.

As the new study plan will be implemented in 2020-2021, the Panel suggests the expedited transition of the capstone course once the necessary committee and council approvals are received and the course name modified to reflect the cumulative experience of the course (e.g. Capstone Project or Final Project rather than Project Writing). Based on the aforementioned comments, the Panel appreciates the amendment of a capstone project course in the 2020 BAEL curriculum and finds this recommendation fully addressed.

Recommendation 1.3: *follow the Quality Assurance and Accreditation Centre format for course specifications and include all the required information to ensure consistent delivery of the courses.*

Judgement: *Fully Addressed*

To address the consistency in the use of the course specification form, DELL requested the form from the QAC and formatted the BAEL programme course specifications according to the Quality Assurance and Accreditation Course Syllabus Form. Further, as per interviews with various groups of stakeholders and the 2019 BAEL Progress Report, regular follow-up every semester is done for course specifications for each subgroup of language, linguistics, and literature.

As indicated from a sample of course specifications from the BAEL programme (sent electronically) including ENGL130, 340, 342, 405, 450, ENGLU203, and TRAN405, the BAEL programme has been consistently using the QAAC formatted syllabus form as of the 2019-2020 academic year. While some of the electronic documents were provided to the review panel in Word format, which did not include the QAAC and UoB logos, it was evident that the format is consistently used and completed, with only slight variations between courses. Based on the aforementioned reasons and overall consistency of the use of the QAAC format, the Panel finds this recommendation fully addressed.

Recommendation 1.4: *revise all course specification documents, to ensure that they include all the required information and that the lists of textbooks of main courses are current and adequately expose students to the new concepts of their field of study.*

Judgement: *Partially Addressed*

To address the revision of all course specification documents including portfolios, as mentioned in recommendation 1.3, DELL has undergone course specification and portfolio review to ensure the consistency of the format and inclusion of all required documents. Further, textbooks have been updated across the curriculum to include main course textbooks and references published within the last decade and several within the last few years. It is understood by the Panel that literary classics and historical textbooks are necessary for the BAEL curriculum and should remain in some courses as valuable texts and references for students.

While the QAAC format is used consistently, as mentioned in recommendation 1.3, completion of Item 19 on the form, course assessment, varied from one course to another with some courses having extended assessment examples (ENGL450, ENGL342) while others (ENGLU203) have limited explanation or schedule of assessments. One course specification reviewed (TRAN405) did not include all required information such as references, textbook, and a detailed schedule. Another course specification (ENGL405) in the weekly course breakdown did not fully include weekly topics, course methods, or a link to CILOs. While the course portfolios reviewed by the Panel for major courses did consistently contain the relevant course specification documents, the Panel assumes that both ENGLU203 and TRAN405 offered by DELL will also follow the same course specification/documents requirements. Further, the Checklist for Completion of e-Portfolios, a portfolio checklist for required items at DELL, was not present in the sample portfolios, which would have facilitated ensuring all necessary information/documents were present.

Although there has been considerable progress in updating course specification portfolios and textbooks across the curriculum, due to the aforementioned minor variations in course specification completion and missing or incomplete information in the few samples reviewed, the Panel is of the view that this recommendation has been partially met.

Recommendation 1.5: *review all course specifications to ensure that all course intended learning outcomes are measurable and appropriately mapped to the programme intended learning outcomes and course topics.*

Judgement: *Partially Addressed*

Based on the 2017 BQA report, which recommended a review of all course specifications to ensure measurable and appropriately mapped CILOs, the department's QAC conducted internal audits and workshops as capacity building for writing CILOs and mapping CILOs to Programme Intended Learning Outcomes (PILOs) and using the QAAC template. The consistent review of measurable outcomes and appropriate mapping was confirmed through interviews with the departmental QAC and various other stakeholders, as well as through the provided materials from the QAAC.

After reviewing a sample of course specifications from the BAEL (2019-2020 academic year) provided by DELL, including ENGL130, 340, 342, 405, 450, ENGLU203, and TRAN405, the Panel notes that the vast majority of CILOs reviewed are measurable, and the Panel appreciates the apparent internal audit and review of the CILOs. While the learning outcomes were largely measurable in the sample portfolios, the CILOs in two of the BAEL courses (most recent course specifications reviewed) were mapped to different PILOs (ENGLU203, TRAN405) from what is shown in the BA Programme. Also, several course specifications reviewed had inconsistencies such as CILOs being mapped to five PILOs, rather than to all six program outcomes (ENGL205, ENGL405) as shown in the BAEL Programme. Further, some CILOs in the same course (ENGL405) offered several measurable items within one learning outcome (for instance, 'apply knowledge of critical reading (analysis and synthesis) skills, work out implicit meaning, comprehend contextual/ textual relations, and draw conclusions using fiction and non-fiction texts'), which could be divided into more than one outcome or possibly simplified for better student understanding. Moreover, in some specifications, course topics were not linked to CILOs (ENGL350, ENGL405).

While there has been a significant effort and progress in internally auditing, revising, and mapping CILOs, another systematic review of all course specifications is required to finalize revision of any of the minor inconsistencies left regarding course and programme outcomes' mapping, consistent programme outcomes written on the specifications, and appropriate measurability of CILOs for all courses offered through DELL. For the aforementioned reasons, the Panel concludes that this recommendation has been only partially met.

Recommendation 1.6: *develop and implement a plan that ensures the effective use of the available e-learning platform in the delivery of the programme courses.*

Judgement: *Not addressed*

In response to the 2017 BQA Report and recommendation to develop and implement a plan for e-learning, the College of Arts and DELL increased related workshops for capacity building. As indicated through interviews with several stakeholders, the DELL Action Plan 2019-2020, and the 2019 Progress report which reported faculty

members' self-report on e-learning usage, the e-learning platform has been recommended for faculty members and students and workshops have been provided in collaboration with UoB's E-learning Centre, College of Arts, and DELL. During the COVID-19 pandemic and transition to online learning, as per interviews with all stakeholders, the e-learning platform has been used extensively in all classes.

However, also as indicated by interviews and evidence provided, there is no clear indication or evidence of an e-learning plan at the Department level that ensures the effective use of the available e-learning platform in the delivery of specifically the BAEL programme courses. According to evidence provided, the e-learning workshops were well-attended and recommended but not mandatory. The e-learning platform usage is not systematically monitored or data reports requested/analysed by DELL to develop a future plan for increased usage.

Although there is clear increased e-learning usage in BAEL courses, yet, the Panel did not receive evidence of development or implementation of an actual DELL/BAEL e-learning plan as per the recommendation. Thus, the Panel concludes that this recommendation has not been addressed.

2. Indicator 2: Efficiency of the Programme

This section evaluates the extent to which the BAEL programme of UOB, has addressed the recommendations outlined in the programme review report of December 2017, under Indicator 2: Efficiency of the programme; and as a consequence, provides a judgment regarding the level of implementation of each recommendation for this Indicator as outlined in Appendix 1 of this Report.

Recommendation 2.1: *revise the admission policy to include specific programme admission requirements for the BAEL programme, in light of the outcomes of the current admission outcomes against admission policies of similar programmes and students' performance.*

Judgement: Partially Addressed

In response to the 2017 BQA review report in relation to the revision of the admission policy, BAEL responded by informally benchmarking its admission requirements against three similar programmes from universities regionally and internationally. The analysis of the results from the benchmarking exercise yielded a revised admission policy and requirements that were approved in May 2019 by the Department Council, College Council, and the University Programmes and Curriculum Committee. In addition to the university admission requirements, applicants to the BAEL programme are now required to obtain a secondary school grade of 90% or above in English and must also score a minimum of 75% on the newly introduced English language entrance exam, which is set at level B2 in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages.

In interviews with members of the programme's curriculum committee, it was stated that these admission requirements can help ensure that no student enters the programme without being proficient enough to cope with its courses. In terms of implementation, the admission policy went into effect only recently (i.e. Semester One of academic year 2020-2021); thus, it is too early to judge on the effectiveness of the revisions that have been made to the admission requirements considering students' progression and retention rates. For this reason, the Panel considers this recommendation as partially addressed.

Recommendation 2.2: *investigate measures to follow up on BAEL students' academic progress in relation to their admission profile and establish remedial measures for inadequately prepared students, to ensure that the profile of admitted students matches the programme aims.*

Judgement: Not Addressed

The Student Information System (SIS) of the University of Bahrain helps in facilitating a number of processes, such as: monitoring attendance, student advising, and tracking and analysing student progress, as was explained during interviews and also in the Progress Report. The BAEL programme benefits from the SIS by utilizing the information and data analyses it receives from it to follow up on students' academic progress- data like students' attendance rates, Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA), and semester-based comparisons of student performance. Additionally, interviews with various stakeholders pointed to the importance of academic warnings issued by the SIS in following up on students' academic progression and referred to the role of the academic advisor as being significant in supporting academically at-risk students, who are defined as those with a CGPA of 2.0 or below.

Nonetheless, despite these references and explanations, the Panel did not find clear evidence on how students' admission profile is being taken into account in this academic progress follow-up process, as specified in the related recommendation included in the last BQA Review Report of 2017. The only evidence submitted by the programme in relation to this recommendation is an Excel sheet, including overall statistics for the academic year 2018-2019, which displays data such as the total number of students who are admitted, enrolled, or cancelled admission, or are under probation, and so on and so forth, without any tracking of each BAEL student's progress from the start of their programme to the point that they have reached in it, or any formal analysis of what this data means in light of the admission profile, nor what types of decisions or remedials are to be planned on its basis.

Also, apart from academic advising, which itself involves issues with implementation as will be explained later in this report (Recommendation 2.6), the Panel did not find clear evidence on the establishment of 'remedial measures for inadequately prepared students, to ensure that the profile of admitted students matches the programme aims', as the recommendation states. The only remedial measures that the programme referred to during the virtual interviews concern borderline student applicants, who are sent to the English Language Centre of UoB to complete a semester or two of English before they enter the BAEL programme. Based on the above and considering that no systematic and consistent measures are in place to follow up students' academic progress in relation to their admission profile, the Panel finds this recommendation as not addressed, especially with the implementation issues present in the existing academic advising processes.

Recommendation 2.3: *investigate ways of reducing staff teaching load and student-to-faculty ratios, to enable the efficient delivery of the programme and allow time for faculty research and community engagement activities.*

Judgement: *Partially Addressed*

The Panel members investigated the programme's measures that were taken to reduce the high faculty teaching load and the high student-to-staff ratio that were pointed to in the original BQA review report of 2017. In response, they were informed by the senior management of the programme that there had been many efforts exerted to try and recruit more full-time faculty members and that employment offers had been extended to nine assistant professors, who all rejected the offers mainly because they were not satisfied with the compensation package. Nevertheless, to date, three new faculty members have been successfully recruited. However, they continue to teach on both the BAEL and the Master of Arts in Applied English Language Studies (MAEL) programme at the same time, just like the situation was during the last BQA review of the programme; thus, having to juggle teaching courses from both programmes in addition to service courses offered by the Department, which places on them a heavy teaching workload.

The senior management also informed the Panel that the programme had also worked hard on recruiting as many part-timers as possible, after having subjected them to a thorough interview process. The objective behind their recruitment was to have them deliver mainly the service courses, so that the BAEL full-time faculty members could focus on the programme's core courses. Additionally, steps were taken by the programme to try to keep the class size up to no more than 35 students in most cases. Interviews with various stakeholders (among them mainly faculty and students), however, confirmed that the number of students in classes continues to be quite large, ranging from 40-80 students per class. Faculty members also explained that it is still challenging to conduct research and get promoted academically, mainly due to their heavy workload. Additionally, the Panel noticed that the document submitted by the programme as a list of community service activities undertaken by faculty members of DELL in the last three years included only eight members out of the total 33 DELL full-time faculty members. Thus, although the Panel acknowledges the efforts of BAEL in trying to address this recommendation, the Panel is of the view that it has been only partially addressed.

Recommendation 2.4: *implement systematic and formal arrangements for the induction of newly appointed faculty.*

Judgement: *Fully Addressed*

In response to the recommendation of there being no systematic and formal arrangements implemented for the induction of newly-appointed faculty members, the Progress Report states that the Quality Assurance Office (QAO) of the College of Arts at UoB organized several faculty induction sessions over the last two years for the teaching staff. This is in addition to the induction programme delivered at the university-level. Evidence for these sessions was submitted to the Panel in the form of

a faculty induction policy being in place; a memo being sent from the Vice President of Academic Programmes and Higher Studies to the UoB President including a proposal of an induction day for new academic staff; and an analysis report of the faculty induction evaluation survey from the QAO of the College of arts of the induction conducted in Semester Two of the academic year 2018-2019. Also, when interviewed, part-time faculty members and one of the three newly-recruited members who was present in the interview confirmed receiving an induction when first joining the DELL and expressed great satisfaction towards it; all of them also confirmed having evaluated the induction. Considering the above, the Panel finds this recommendation as fully addressed.

Recommendation 2.5: *Utilize the information obtained from tracking reports to inform the process of decision-making with regard to the programme.*

Judgement: *Not Addressed*

With respect to tracking reports, the 2017 BQA report of the BAEL programme clearly refers to tracking reports of a number of services at the departmental, college, and university level. Specifically, it mentions tracking reports from the E-Learning Centre indicating usage of the learning management systems such as Blackboard and MOODLE; tracking reports from the reading laboratory related to a manual system of lending and borrowing of resources; in addition to timetables posted on classroom and laboratory doors to track usage of facilities. Thus, when the 2017 review panel had made the recommendation for the programme to utilize such reports in the process of decision-making, it was clearly referring mainly to the services listed above and to ones similar to them. Thus, the expectation of the Panel was to find something in the Progress Report mentioned about these services and/or their reports under this recommendation. Instead, however, these services were not referred to at all and in their place there was reference to reports generated from the Program Advisory Committee, assessment moderation reports, reports related to students' progress, the programme's self-evaluation report, and the course file review reports.

In addition, the evidence submitted by the programme for this recommendation was not of great relevance, if any; as, it was mainly either students' grade statistics for Semester One of the academic year 2019-2020 and minutes of a meeting discussing students' progression, which is more related to recommendation 2.2; or a list of textbooks indicating the status of their availability in the bookstore and whether there is a need to purchase more or not, without any real or formal action plan reflecting strategic decision-making based for example on projected student numbers or the like. In any case, there was in the Progress Report a total absence of mention of the facilities or systems highlighted in the 2017 BQA review report.

Finally, interviews with various stakeholders did not help inform the panel members much with respect to how the recommendation in concern was addressed; as, most interviewees were focused on mentioning the types of reports generated in or for the programme (e.g. committee reports, English Language Centre reports, Central Library e-databases usage reports and reports on the usage of hard/printed copies and physical resources), instead of providing concrete examples on how information obtained from tracking reports is being systematically utilized to inform the process of decision-making with regard to the programme. Consequently, the Panel finds this recommendation as not addressed.

Recommendation 2.6: *investigate ways to provide more effective academic advising for all students; and use pro-active advising for possible at-risk students, to identify them early on, and to systematically monitor them to ensure their academic good standing.*

Judgement: *Partially Addressed*

The BQA 2017 review report highlighted some issues in relation to academic advising, among them the lack of systematic follow-up or monitoring of academically at-risk students and lack of a mechanism for identifying such students before their CGPAs drop below 2.0; an overall student dissatisfaction with the advising services provided to them; in some cases, a big number of advisees per advisor, and students not meeting with their advisors often.

To address these issues, the BAEL programme discussed in one of the meetings of the DELL Council students' academic progress for the academic year 2018-2019 and the decision was made for academic advisors to communicate with students in need of special attention as a form of proactive advising, so as to prevent them from becoming at-risk students. Additionally, academic advisors were urged to communicate with their students through the SIS after they were provided with training on the use of the SIS's advising feature. Moreover, a general meeting was held by DELL for all its at-risk students, to help advisors identify common problems.

From interviews it was confirmed that the Head of Department receives the advisors' reports and then discusses them in DELL council meetings. It was also mentioned that the ratio of advisees-to advisor has been set to approximately 30-to-1. When asked about a policy stipulating the number of times an advisor must meet with their advisees per semester or year, the Panel was informed by the management of the programme that there is no set policy and that this is left to the students' needs. Faculty members confirmed the absence of such a policy and emphasized the importance of the SIS in identifying students at risk of academic failure, which helps them in fulfilling their advising duties more easily. However, when recalling the number of their advisees, none mentioned a figure less than 40, with some mentioning what the Panel

found to be alarming numbers, especially for an academic faculty with a considerably heavy workload, as mentioned earlier (Recommendation 2.3). This probably explains why most students reported in their interview session that they had not heard from their advisors much, if at all: although, they are quite certain that if they were ever struggling academically, their advisor would definitely be willing and available to advise them on academic planning matters as well as on course registration issues. For now, however, they prefer to ask for help directly from their course instructors rather than from their advisors.

Considering the aforementioned, the Panel acknowledges the several steps taken in the right direction by the DELL and the BAEL programme when it comes to academic advising. However, given the issues still persisting such as the high advisee-to-advisor ratio, infrequent meetings or communication between the advisors and the advisees, and lack of formal policy to regulate the advisory meetings, the Panel finds this recommendation as only partially addressed.

3. Indicator 3: Academic standards of the graduates

This section evaluates the extent to which the BAEL programme of UOB, has addressed the recommendations outlined in the programme review report of December 2017, under Indicator 3: Academic standards of the graduates; and as a consequence provides a judgment regarding the level of implementation of each recommendation for this Indicator as outlined in Appendix 1 of this Report.

Recommendation 3.1: *revise the mapping of the programme educational objectives and programme intended learning outcomes to the university intended learning outcomes and ensure that the programme utilises reliable assessments that adequately measure the attainment of the course intended learning outcomes and hence the programme intended learning outcomes.*

Judgement: *Partially Addressed*

In response to the 2017 BQA report to revise the mapping of Programme Educational Objectives (PEOs) and PILOs to University Intended Learning Outcomes (UILOs), the BAEL programme *via* the departmental faculty and committees revised the PEOs and PILOs and received approval by the Department Council and the College QAO.

As per the new BAEL Programme, the revision and mapping of PEOs to UILOs as shown is appropriate, and the rewritten PILOs are measurable, appropriate, and at the level of the BAEL programme. At the same time, there still are some examples of inappropriate or incorrect mapping between PILOs and UILOs. For instance, PILO 6, 'develop and conduct primary research using critical thinking skills, adequate data collection and data analysis methods, accurate documentation and appropriate Information Communication Technology (ICT) skills' is mapped to UILO 1 (Communication) and 6 (Lifelong Learning) but not UILO 2 (Technological Competence), 3 (Critical Thinking Knowledge and Skill), or 4 (Information Literacy). Another example of an incorrect mapping between the PILOs and the UILOs is PILO 1 'Apply knowledge of theoretical and applied concepts, processes, and principles related to language, literature, and linguistics' being mapped to UILO 2 'Technological Competence: Demonstrate competence in the use of information technology broad enough to meet personal, academic and professional needs.' This PILO is better mapped to UILO 3 'Critical Thinking Knowledge and Skill'. As in 2017, the follow-up review panel is of the view that it is difficult to measure the attainment of graduate attributes if the outcomes are not mapped appropriately. At the same time, however, the revised PEOs, PILOs and improved mapping of PEOs to UILOs are clearly noted.

Further, it is evident from various sources including Course Assessment spreadsheets and reports, faculty and quality committee member interviews, course specifications'

audits, hands-on faculty workshops on mapping CILOs to assessments, and suggested measures to raise attainment of course learning outcomes included in reports, that the attainment of measuring CILOs has become a priority integrated into the Departmental Operation Plan. After reviewing course assessment reports from a sample of course e-portfolios from the BAEL programme (2019-2020 academic year) including ENGL130, 340, 342, 405, 450, ENGLU203, and TRAN405, it was noted that all courses measured successful attainment of CILOs by students in the course assessment form. At the same time, some inconsistencies were noted in the course assessment forms. Although course specifications include proper CILOs to PILOs mapping, the course ENGLU203 showed different PILOs from the newly revised ones on its course assessment form and thus the mapping of CILOs to PILOs and related assessment attainment would be difficult to ascertain. Also, some of the course assessment templates provided as evidence illustrated different PILOs than the newly revised ones, which would affect mapping of CILOs to PILOs, thus, affecting measuring assessments accurately.

While there has been considerable departmental effort and high attainment of this recommendation including PILOs' revision, introduction, and development of valuable and well-implemented tools to measure the attainment of CILOs; nevertheless, due to the aforementioned minor inconsistencies in mapping and the fact that the reviewed portfolios only represent a sample of course offerings, the Panel is of the view that this recommendation has been only partially met.

Recommendation 3.2: *conduct formal benchmarking of all aspects of the programme in accordance with the university's benchmarking policy.*

Judgement: *Not Addressed*

To benchmark its programme structure and learning outcomes, the BAEL programme selected three universities of world ranking that are similar in their English language programmes. For benchmarking its curriculum, BAEL selected a programme from one of these universities plus programmes from two other universities, one regional and one international. The evidence and interviews confirm that, after initial contact with the universities and with limited or no response from them, the benchmarking was all done informally online.

The Progress Report outlines the benchmarking at the programme structure/learning outcome level and curriculum level and the QAAC official benchmarking report and new BAEL Programme include the percentage of similarity between each of the selected programmes and the BAEL. Areas of University course requirements, college course requirements, major and major elective requirements, and courses (i.e. programme structure) are highlighted in the new BAEL Programme. Appropriate

justifications of world ranking and similar programmes were made for each programme choice.

According to the UOB Quality Assurance and Accreditation Manual, the benchmarking processes 'are used to determine and verify the equivalence of its academic standards with other similar programmes locally and internationally, which includes clear statements, evidence about the purpose of benchmarking, the choice of what is benchmarked, and what it is against, how the process is managed, and how the outcomes are used'. While the benchmarking report mentions the metrics of programme structure, curriculum, admission, and assessment for benchmarking, other than general comments, assessment comparison does not appear in neither the Progress nor Benchmarking Reports. Regarding the admission policy (see Recommendation 2.1), three different universities were informally benchmarked. Further, the progress report highlights the areas of programme structure/learning outcomes and curriculum which, as mentioned, includes one different university in each area that is not present in the other area. The Benchmarking Factors Summary is brief, vague and does not include details about assessment or admission comparisons. The General Findings and Comments and Recommendations briefly discuss how the benchmarking was used to modify programme structure and course offerings in the BAEL.

Although the BAEL programme did complete an informal benchmarking, due to the inconsistencies and lack of apparent metrics/framework in benchmarking (different universities for different metrics and incomplete/unclear aspects and comparisons), and also because the recommendation specifically mentions formal rather than informal benchmarking, the Panel finds this recommendation as not addressed.

Recommendation 3.3 implement a formal system with clear lines of responsibility, to ensure that the programme applies all aspects of the university's assessment policy, including those relevant to internal and external moderation of assessment and dealing with plagiarism.

Judgement: *Partially Addressed*

In response to the recommendation for implementation of a formal system regarding the University's assessment policy, the DELL has updated assessment components in course specifications and assessment tools. The QAO has also practiced capacity building by offering professional development workshops for faculty linking formative assessment to learning. DELL has also begun implementation of the University Anti-Plagiarism Policy and has organized workshops on using SafeAssign on Blackboard in collaboration with UoB's E-learning Centre for capacity building and encouragement to use plagiarism-detection tools. Further, 2018-2019 e-learning survey indicates that 83.3% of DELL instructors use SafeAssign in their courses, and

interviews with various stakeholders indicate increased awareness of the Assessment Policies. The Department has also implemented internal and external moderation across the BAEL programme including in both the Department Action Plan and Rolling Plan for moderation.

While internal and external moderation procedures have been implemented, a clear, formal assessment system and lines of responsibility regarding moderation follow-up and feedback (closing the loop) has not yet been finalized due to issues such as missing documents, incomplete moderation, and lack of procedures for choosing moderators (See Recommendations 3.5-3.6). Further, as evidenced by interviews with various stakeholders and documents presented, there is no apparent departmental policy or practice regarding plagiarism notification or threshold for similarity reports on written assignments. Interviewees reported that the similarity threshold varies depending on instructor and, in some courses, multiple submissions of the same assignment are allowed. As per the University's Anti-Plagiarism Policy, there is a distinction between major and minor offences which does not appear to be implemented in the Department.

The BAEL programme has implemented course assessment reviews, formative assessment for learning, internal and external moderation, and training and usage of anti-plagiarism tools all toward clear implementation of the University Assessment Policy. However, a formalized assessment system with clear lines of responsibility and review of assessment policies, considering the aforementioned reasons, has not been finalized. Thus, the Panel finds this recommendation as partially addressed.

Recommendation 3.4: *review thoroughly and revise the alignment of course assessments with the course intended learning outcomes and the programme intended learning outcomes to ensure the achievement of academic standards of graduates.*

Judgement: *Fully Addressed*

To address reviewing and revising course assessments' alignment with course and programme Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs), DELL carried out several measures. The department's QAC organized small groups to review course specifications and CILOs and then send their feedback to the course coordinators for final revisions. Course specifications were reviewed and included a table of alignment between assessments and course outcomes. Further, the course portfolios reviewed by the Panel include an excel spreadsheet (course assessment form with several spreadsheets) aligning CILOs/PILOs with assessments and measuring attainment of those outcomes. The portfolios reviewed indicated that the course outcomes and thus programme outcomes were overwhelmingly met. Several faculty members also wrote actions to improve the percentage of outcome achievement at the end of their course reports.

While there are minor inconsistencies in PILOs written on a few course assessment forms (as mentioned in Recommendation 3.1, *which the Panel found to be only partially addressed*), overall there is thorough evidence on proper alignment in other important sources of evidence, such as: CILO-PILO reports, outcome mapping, attainment of CILOs, course specifications, DELL action plan, and examples of students' works as shown in each of the course portfolios, which indicates that the assessments in each course have been reviewed and aligned with course and programme outcomes to ensure the academic standards of graduates. Thus, the Panel finds this recommendation fully addressed but also advises the BAEL to conduct more thorough reviews of its different documents to ensure that future inconsistencies in the writing of PILOs are avoided.

Recommendation 3.5: *implement formal internal moderation in line with the university's policy and procedure and develop mechanisms to measure the effectiveness of internal moderation to ensure fair and rigorous assessment.*

Judgement: *Partially Addressed*

In response to the recommendation of the 2017 BQA report to implement internal moderation, the BAEL programme has included internal moderation in the departmental four-year Action Plan, operational plan, and in the QAAC four-year course action plan. In the Progress Report and from interviews with various stakeholders, and also as evidenced in the moderation Professional Development Workshops, BAEL Course Rolling Plan, Internal Moderation Forms, and related correspondence, implementation of formal pre-and post-internal moderation is clearly indicated. The BAEL Course Rolling Plan also outlines courses and assessments to be moderated, and the Course Moderation Reports and departmental meeting minutes offer an overview and recommendations for moderation. Further, based on these report recommendations, the BAEL has arranged for several trainings on moderation and designing assessments/rubrics which have led to clearer rubrics and more student feedback on assessment overall.

The BAEL programme has taken significant steps toward effective and fair internal moderation. Nevertheless, as internal moderation is fairly new to the programme, there is indication of limited follow-up and measurement of the effectiveness of internal moderation. As shown in interviews with various stakeholders, departmental minutes, and moderation reports, there are gaps of consistency in the procedures and mechanisms including unsubmitted documents/assessments for moderation as per the schedule, recommended norming procedures for moderation (recommended coordination between course coordinators and moderators in departmental meeting minutes), and unclear follow-up procedures on improvement of assessments or suggestions offered in the course moderation forms. The Progress Report, indicated

that the 'test writer and moderator sit together to discuss the outcome of moderation...before modifications are made to the examination/test'; however, this does not seem to be systematic as shown in the moderation forms. Further, moderation reports mentioned incomplete assessment tables and weights and there were some issues with assessment in a few courses. From the moderation reports, forms, and meeting minutes, it is unclear what follow-up procedures there are on any inconsistencies or issues in instructors' grading or students' achievements in-line with course expectations.

Considering the aforementioned, the Panel acknowledges the significant steps taken by the DELL and the BAEL programme to ensure internal pre-and-post assessment moderation. The programme has clearly integrated and documented internal moderation as part of the departmental assessment scheme. However, there are still issues with mechanisms that promote consistency (full and thorough compliance with internal moderation) and measuring the effectiveness of internal moderation such as clear follow-up procedures (to close the loop) that ensure improved assessment and student achievement. Thus, the Panel finds this recommendation as partially addressed.

Recommendation 3.6: *implement external moderation of the assessment tools used in the programme and students' assessed work in line with the university procedures and assess its effectiveness.*

Judgement: *Partially Addressed*

In response to the 2017 BQA Review Report that indicated that there was no indication of external moderation of assessment tools and students' work, the BAEL programme has integrated external moderation in the departmental four-year Action Plan, operational plan and QAAC four-year course action plan. From the Progress Report, interviews with groups of stakeholders including external moderators and the departmental QAC, and evidence from the moderation Professional Development Workshops, and External Moderation Reports, there has been clear external moderation of some BAEL programme courses. Further, the external examiners selected by the Department have the appropriate experience and academic background for external examination and were invited by DELL to perform external moderation on samples of students' work for a fixed period as per set moderation guidelines.

However, the BAEL Course Rolling Plan 2018-2019 and 2019-2020 did not indicate specific courses and assessments to be moderated externally. Additionally, the Moderation Reports and Departmental Meeting Minutes discussing moderation, and interviews with various stakeholders did not specify follow-up procedures on the moderator's recommendations. Further, it is unclear how external moderators were

chosen. This indicates that there is no systematic plan for which courses are externally moderated, nor any follow-up procedures on recommendations, nor assessment of the effectiveness of external moderation.

The Panel considers DELL's integration of and initial processes for external moderation of assessment tools as steps taken in the right direction. As external moderation appears to be in its initial stages, full implementation and thorough mechanisms including follow-up and assessment of the effectiveness of the external moderation are still being developed and, thus, encouraged to be expedited by the Panel. Based on the aforementioned, the Panel finds this recommendation as partially addressed.

Recommendation 3.7: *implement effective measures to ensure that the level of achievement of the programme's graduates meet the programme aims and intended learning outcomes.*

Judgement: *Partially Addressed*

To address this recommendation, the Progress Report outlines three main measures that show achievement of programme graduates: Course-Program outcomes assessment sheet, Employer/Alumni Surveys, and Senior Exit Surveys. DELL uses the University Quality Excel Sheet to statistically analyse the achievement of both course and programme outcomes in each course. Despite minor inconsistencies, as shown by statistical evidence and course portfolios, the Panel finds that these outcomes are measured and, in most cases, met at the appropriate programme level. Regarding the Senior Exit Survey, the evidence provided to the Panel from 2017-2018 and 2018-2019 shows the overall student programme experience as perceived by students is 3.68/5 or 74% satisfaction from 74 responses. The lowest ranked in the overall programme was extracurricular opportunities (2.6) and 'I learned the skills needed to effectively locate, retrieve, and evaluate information' (3.3). The most positive experience as reported by seniors was "As a graduating senior, I feel confident of my knowledge and understanding of my field of study" (4.3) and "I believe in continuing professional development and aim to develop my skills and knowledge after graduation" (4.5).

The employer and alumni surveys to obtain programme feedback, based on an online survey designed by the College QAC and distributed to public and private institutions that employ several DELL graduates, were completed in 2019 and 2020, both receiving very low response rates (13 responses/2019; 6 responses/2020); the sample sizes of distribution were not reported. The 2020 "Stakeholders Conference" Employers' report mentioned that participants felt involved in decision-making and in new programme changes. While the responses indicated in the 2019 Employers' report show high scores for programme graduates' overall knowledge (92%), analytical, critical thinking and communication skills (92%), and personal characteristics

including ICT skills (92%) as reported in the Progress Report, the interviews with stakeholders did not reflect that (see Recommendation 3.9). Several interviewed stakeholders mentioned communication, interpersonal and ICT skills (soft and speaking skills) as areas for improvement. It is also not evident how the surveys are used or acted upon (alumni, employer, and student), to ensure the level of graduates meets the programme aims. There is no indication that these surveys consistently inform the action plans for the programme. Moreover, the capstone course, which would serve as an important measure of the programme graduates' cumulative level of achievement has not yet been fully implemented and is in the transitioning stage from project writing to a capstone.

Clearly, some effective measures have been implemented to ensure course and programme outcome achievement, such as implementation of the course assessment form and increased surveying of seniors which clearly indicates students are satisfied with the BAEL programme. Further, the majority of employers and alumni surveyed are satisfied that the graduate achievement meets the programme aims. At the same time, due to the very low number of survey responses available, the unclear link between stakeholder responses/recommendations and actual programme action, and the fact that the cumulative project (the capstone) measuring students' achievements in their final term has not yet been implemented, the Panel finds this recommendation as partially addressed.

Recommendation 3.8: *implement a systematic cohort analysis, study the reasons for the dismissal and withdrawal from the programme and the long duration needed to complete its requirements, and develop a mitigation plan, as well as gather data on first destinations of graduates.*

Judgement: *Not Addressed*

In response to the recommendation of a systematic cohort analysis and mitigation plan, DELL, as mentioned in the Progress Report, conducted cohort analyses in 2017-2018, 2018-2019, 2019-2020. These analyses presented data about enrolled students, retention rates, gender and nationality, analysis of CGPA, semesters remaining, under probation students (2018), full-time students (2019), and orientation programme students (2019). The data presented varied slightly over the three years and the only cohort that showed some statistics on progression of the cohort was 2017-2018 (retention rates only). Further, destination of graduates from 2017-2019 showed employment destinations or status of 'job seeker' for 18 out of 26 graduates (69%).

The 2017 analysis shows that of the cohort of students that began in 2017, about 61% of the original number of students are still enrolled. In the 2018 cohort, 20% have been dismissed thus far without updates in 2019-2020. The 2019 cohort does not show updated dismissal numbers. The average number of semesters to complete the

programme remained steady at about 9 to a maximum of 12 semesters throughout the three cohorts with estimated 'semesters to graduate' data presented (4.5 – 6 years). A concerning trend found in the data presented is the CGPA distribution, which is increasingly skewed to the lower grades in each cohort (14% below 2.0 in the 2017 cohort; 27% below in 2018; 33% below 2.0 in 2019 first semester). These numbers seemingly represent individual cohorts, not cohort progression, and trends in data were not discussed or analyzed. To explain the data, there are brief comments written on spreadsheets. For example, the analysis for the CGPA distribution in 2019 was that "no conclusions can be drawn from these figures because most of the courses taken in Semester 1 are College and University requirements."

Cohort analyses have increased with respect to more data that has been entered and presented between 2017-2019; however, there is no evidence of a systematic cohort analysis that follows student progression from year to year except retention rates mentioned in the 2017 cohort spreadsheet—however, no reasons for retention or withdrawal are mentioned. The data analysis consists of only brief comments on the spreadsheets summarizing the data. At the same time, there are rising numbers of students below a 2.0 CGPA (14% for 2017, 27% for 2018, 33.5% for 2019) with no evidence of follow-up or mitigation. While the reason given is that these first-year students are taking college and university requirements, the students are still BAEL programme students, and thus, follow-up and/or mitigation should be considered to ensure these students' progress.

Based on the evidence provided to the Panel, which includes increased data presented for each cohort, no evidence or indication was provided of a mitigation plan or an actual systematic analysis—e.g. cohort analysis report based on the data including progression data and analysis of the cohort through the years, evidenced reasons for dismissal or withdrawal for the cohort, discussion for CGPA slightly skewed to the lower grades, and link between the cohort analysis and the first destination of graduates. Based on the aforementioned reasons, the Panel is of the view that this recommendation has not been addressed.

Recommendation 3.9: *develop comprehensive policies and procedures for managing the practicum course to ensure its effective implementation by all participants.*

Judgement: *Partially Addressed*

To address this recommendation, the practicum (translation) coordinators developed a Practicum Manual for the practicum course including rubrics, attendance reports, duties of students and on-site supervisors, basic procedures, and assessments. The assessments and grade distributions for the course have been slightly revised since 2017, including a written report (30%), oral report (20%), and portfolio (50%). Further, the course specification indicates that CILOs are measured and met. During

interviews, the Panel was informed that on-site supervisors had not yet received the manual and there were areas of improvement mentioned by employers that were not adequately addressed by the practicum course: interpersonal skills and technical skills (e.g. vocabulary in Arabic). The interviews with various groups of stakeholders indicate that more communication between on-site supervisors and practicum faculty members is beneficial and that field/workplace visits, reported as taking place about once a semester, and the supervisor's assessment rubric may not be sufficient communication to address on-site needs.

Policies and procedures for managing the practicum course have been clearly developed; however, as the manual was recently completed and has not yet been distributed as reported in interviews, it is too early to judge the effective implementation of the Practicum Manual policies and procedures for all participants. Thus, for this reason, the Panel concludes that this recommendation has been partially addressed. At the same time, it is recommended to expedite the distribution and implementation of these policies to practicum stakeholders.

Recommendation 3.10: *expedite the implementation of policies and procedures related to the advisory committees for obtaining feedback and acting on their recommendations.*

Judgement: *Not Addressed*

The two main advisory committees for DELL are the Programme's Advisory Committee (PAC) and Students' Advisory Committee (SAC). The 2017 BQA Review Report noted that these committees had been recently formed and had just begun meeting at that time. In the 2019 Progress Report, it is mentioned that in accordance with the QAAC Manual, meetings are held annually with the committees as shown through meeting minutes and the list of advisory committee members is officially updated annually. As stated in the meeting minutes, the advisory committees are informed of their scope. In addition, the College QOA met with departments in the college, including DELL, to obtain opinions on the various programmes and held a "Stakeholders Conference" to seek feedback to improve the College programmes.

Evidence was submitted to the Panel in the form of a report entitled 'Report on PAC Questionnaire', based on an online survey designed by the College QAC and distributed to public and private institutions that employ several DELL graduates. However, there was a low-response rate (13 responses); the sample size of distribution was not reported. Moreover, the survey discusses mostly institutional-level outcomes, employability attributes, lifelong learning, etc., not specifically the BAEL programme. Further, it was not produced or seemingly distributed through/to the DELL advisory committees. Similarly, the "Stakeholders Conference" report organized through the college QAO mentioned that participants felt involved in department decision-making

and that new programme changes were based on previous feedback; however, only six participants responded. No evidence indicated that there was follow-up on the basis of their feedback 'to revisit the minor programmes and discuss them further'. Moreover, it is not clear if or how advisory committees are informed of the decisions or changes being made on the basis of their recommendations and, for those outside of the advisory committees, as evidenced by interviews, the role and presence of the advisory committees are not clear.

While evidence through interviews, meeting minutes and reported feedback surveys have shown some effort by DELL to obtain feedback from stakeholders, the response rates are low, the feedback is primarily obtained from community stakeholders (employers, alumni), not the official advisory committees PAC and SAC, and there is no indication of real continuity between meetings; each meeting does not link or revisit recommendations from the previous meetings. Moreover, as in the 2017 report, there is no evidence that committee members receive feedback on their recommendations from previous meetings or that feedback is regularly and systematically obtained. Further, no evidence of a plan or procedures was provided to the Panel showing that the advisory committees' recommendations were systematically acted upon or used to inform decision-making. Thus, the Panel considers this recommendation as not addressed.

4. Indicator 4: Effectiveness of quality management and assurance

This section evaluates the extent to which the BAEL programme of UOB, has addressed the recommendations outlined in the programme review report of December 2017, under Indicator 4: Effectiveness of quality management and assurance; and as a consequence provides a judgment regarding the level of implementation of each recommendation for this Indicator as outlined in Appendix 1 of this Report.

Recommendation 4.1: *ensure the consistent implementation of all institution's quality assurance policies and procedures, and monitor and evaluate their effectiveness with regard to the BAEL programme.*

Judgement: *Partially Addressed*

As a response to the 2017 BQA review report which highlighted several issues in relation to the communication and consistent implementation of quality assurance related policies and procedures, the DELL- as indicated in the Progress Report- resorted considerably to disseminating to its stakeholders the policies, procedures, and regulations available through a number of channels, such as: the UoB official website; the Faculty Guide; and the Quality Manual. In addition, the BAEL programme focused on following and abiding by the procedures set by its Quality Assurance and Accreditation Committee and the College QAO, which both adhere to the internal quality assurance system and policies set and implemented by the university's QAAC and Quality Assurance Executive Committee.

Attempting to comply with all these entities' quality assurance policies and procedures helped the BAEL raise the level of consistency of policy implementation across its different aspects and among its various stakeholders. This was implied in the Progress Report and also explicitly articulated in interviews with multiple groups of stakeholders, where examples were provided regarding some practices being unified and consistently implemented across the programme, such as: the design and development of the course specifications, the alignment of ILOs, the formation and functioning of committees, the mapping of assessments to ILOs, the moderation of assessments, and the development of course portfolios, to mention only a few.

Additionally, the Panel repeatedly heard from members of the BAEL Curriculum Committee how consistent implementation of institutional quality assurance policies and procedures is being monitored through the work of several committees at the department level, such as the Inspection Committee that is in charge of reviewing all contents of the course portfolios and the Textbook Committee that is responsible for ensuring the relevance, currency, and adequateness of textbooks requested by the

programme. Both committees, along with the initiatives or actions included in the University QAAC's Operational Plan, which DELL applies help guarantee that changes happen systematically rather than haphazardly in the programme and its courses.

Based on what the Panel has gathered over the course of the review of the BAEL programme, and relying on a variety of data sources (e.g. interviews with different stakeholders, examination of supporting materials, review of extra evidence submitted), the Panel is convinced that DELL is on the right track in terms of paving the way for the spread of a quality culture among all its components. Nevertheless, some improvements in a few of the programme's aspects are still needed, as was clearly explained in several parts of this report. Examples include improvements in: strategic decision-making based on systematic tracking of facilities; implementation of policies related to academic integrity of students' work; mechanisms used to elicit stakeholders' feedback; and workload distribution, to ensure equal opportunities for all faculty members to fulfill their potential in the three core functions of university life (teaching, research, and community service).

Considering the aforementioned, thus, the Panel finds this recommendation as partially addressed. At the same time, the Panel advises the programme to expedite the achievement of the needed improvements outlined in this report and to provide the needed support and capacity building for those overlooking quality matters at the department and college level.

Recommendation 4.2: *ensure that the programme is subjected systematically to a periodic programme review, which evaluates the programme holistically and includes both internal and external input and uses the outcomes to inform programme improvement.*

Judgement: *Partially Addressed*

At the time of reviewing the BAEL programme in 2017, the Panel noticed that the programme had not been subject to any kind of systematic periodic review, which incorporates all its aspects and external feedback. Nor was there any clear evidence of improvements having been made to the programme on the basis of evidence-based findings. To address this issue, the QAC at the department level in collaboration with the Curriculum Committee developed a relevant improvement plan including among many areas of focus the implementation of an annual self-evaluation review for the programme. Two such reviews have been conducted so far, one for the academic year 2017-2018 and one for 2018-2019. However, despite this appropriate move in the right direction, which can act as a stepping stone for a more comprehensive review on the long term, the Panel did not find any indication in the improvement plan document of a periodic review being planned for any given date or time in the future. The plan

mentions the collection of stakeholders' feedback on an annual basis and mentions also the undertaking of a labour market study every four years; however, that does not count for a formal and systematic periodic review of BAEL. In fact, the stakeholders' feedback as well as the labour market study findings count only as internal and external sources of input among many others needed for the successful completion of a holistic periodic review of the programme.

This, too, is made clear through the UoB's Programme Quality Assurance and Enhancement Policy, which was put into effect in April 2015 and which includes the policy and procedures for annual and periodic reviews of programmes as an integral part of it. The Panel, thus, urges the programme to abide by this UoB policy and to adjust its improvement plan as soon as possible, so as to include a future initiative of conducting a comprehensive review of the programme every four or five years and that relies on a wide scope of feedback sources through which data is to be gathered and analyzed. The scope of sources should include everything from students' course evaluation forms to graduating students' exit surveys to internship surveys and alumni and employers' surveys, in addition to labour market research findings; feedback from the PAC and SAC; results of programme mapping to learning resources, staffing, infrastructure and facilities; benchmarking results; external reviewer's findings; and annual review reports of the programme.

Conclusively, taking into account that the BAEL programme is aware of the UoB Program Quality Assurance and Enhancement Policy to guide it, and that the improvement plan set by its QAC and Curriculum Committee are a step in the right direction to start preparing for a holistic periodic review; the Panel finds this recommendation as partially addressed, due to the fact that the BAEL programme has not yet undergone a review of this type.

Recommendation 4.3: adopt more systematic and rigorous procedures to collect and use stakeholders' feedback to make informed decisions regarding the programme, and formally report to the stakeholders the actions taken to address the identified issues.

Judgement: Not Addressed

During the 2017 BQA review of the BAEL programme, collecting stakeholders' feedback was identified by the review panel as one of the programme's areas of improvement. This is mainly because of what was considered then as a poor response rate from the groups of stakeholders involved and also due to a lack of consistency in seeking feedback and in making use of outcomes to inform regular decision-making processes, which result in actions or changes that get clearly and systematically communicated to the relevant stakeholders. As stated in the Progress Report, to address this issue, the DELL started out with updating the membership of, as well as activating, the programme's SAC and PAC, in order to elicit feedback from them on a

regular basis through meetings they hold annually. Although some evidence was submitted to the Panel in the form of minutes of meetings for these committees, no clear evidence of improvement or action plans being developed on the basis of the feedback collected from them was found.

The DELL also, in collaboration with the department's QAC, took the initiative of organizing a meeting with the programme's alumni and employers (Stakeholders' Conference), to elicit their opinions on the programme both verbally and also through a questionnaire. Evidence was submitted to the Panel in the form of what the programme calls 'analysis reports' of the alumni and employers' survey results. However, upon examination of this evidence and other related evidence of surveys, the Panel easily realized that the numbers of respondents in the surveys was very low (12 and 13 in the 2018/2019 alumni surveys) and (6 in the 2020 employers and graduates survey), as an example. Not only that, but there was no mention in this evidence of the percentage of the respondents in comparison to the total number of their group, whether alumni or employers or exiting seniors, etc. Once again no improvement plans were developed on the basis of their feedback and, in reality, what was submitted to the Panel as survey analysis reports was not so at all; as, these were mere summaries or descriptions of survey results with no authentic analysis or interpretation of data. Of equal importance is the fact that nowhere is it mentioned if or how stakeholders are informed of the decisions or changes being made on the basis of their input. Taking all this into account, the Panel considers this recommendation as not addressed.

Recommendation 4.4: *Develop and implement a formal mechanism for systematic scoping of the labour market needs and use the data received to ensure that the programme is up-to-date and relevant to the market needs.*

Judgement: *Not Addressed*

The panel members of the 2017 BAEL review had arrived at the conclusion that the programme provided no evidence of a continuous or systematic scoping of the labour market needs and relied only on attempts that were often sporadic and limited in scope, such as collecting feedback from the PAC or through surveying the internship supervisors and employers or the alumni. Analysing what is included for this recommendation in the current Progress Report and what is submitted as supporting evidence for it (e.g. 2018 Alumni Survey and 2019 employers survey with a very small number of respondents in each), the Panel does not find any difference between the initiatives taken now at the programme level and those which existed during the 2017 review with respect to scoping the needs of the local labour market specifically for BAEL revisions and enhancement.

The only difference is the 2019 online study that the College QAO conducted to collect feedback about the labour market in general for all its programmes on offer, both undergraduate and graduate, and inclusive of all subject areas or disciplines, and which various programme stakeholders were not sufficiently informed about, if at all, as was clearly observed in interview sessions with the Panel. Considering that no explanation was provided by the BAEL programme of how the findings of this college-wide study could inform future revisions of it, the Panel finds this recommendation as not addressed.

5. Conclusion

Taking into account the institution's own progress report, the evidence gathered from the interviews and documentation made available during the follow-up visit, the Panel draws the following conclusion in accordance with the DHR/BQA Follow-up Visits of Academic Programme Reviews Procedure:

The Bachelor of Arts in English Language and Literature programme offered by University of Bahrain has made 'Adequate Progress'.

Appendix 1: Judgement per recommendation.

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

Appendix 2: Overall Judgement.

Overall Judgement	Standard
Good progress	The institution has fully addressed the majority of the recommendations contained in the review report, and/or previous follow-up report, these include recommendations that have most impact on the quality of the programme, its delivery and academic standards. The remaining recommendations are partially addressed. No further follow-up visit is required.
Adequate progress	The institution has at least partially addressed most of the recommendations contained in the review report and/or previous follow-up report, including those that have major impact on the quality of the programme, its delivery and academic standards. There is a number of recommendations that have been fully addressed and there is evidence that the institution can maintain the progress achieved. No further follow-up visit is required.
Inadequate progress	The institution has made little or no progress in addressing a significant number of the recommendations contained in the review report and/or previous follow-up report, especially those that have main impact on the quality of the programme, its delivery and academic standards. For first follow-up visits, a second follow-up visit is required,