



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

Directorate of Higher Education Reviews

Programme Follow-Up Visit Summary

Bachelor in Islamic Studies

College of Arts

University of Bahrain

Kingdom of Bahrain

First Follow-up Visit Date: 21-24 September 2020

Review Date: 3 - 7 December 2017

HC117-C2-F022

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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 reviews, 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 whereby the Bachelor in Islamic Studies (BAIS), at the University of Bahrain (UoB) was revisited on 21-24 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 BAIS 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 BAIS programme at UoB, and for higher education provision within the Kingdom of Bahrain, as a whole.

B. Background

The review of the BAIS 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 BAIS 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, the Progress Report and its supporting materials 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 BAIS 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) consisting of two members. This follow-up virtual 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 the recommendation as per Appendix 1; whereas an overall judgement is given based on the rubric provided in Appendix 2.

C. Overview of the BA in Islamic Studies

The Department of Arabic Language and Islamic Studies, which was founded in 1979, is one of the first departments established in the University of Bahrain. It offers graduate programmes in Islamic Studies, which are divided into: Islamic Studies Programme (Fundamentals of Islamic Religion - a single major option) and Islamic Studies (Sharia - a single major option). The Department also offers a Bachelor of Arabic Language and Literature Programme as well as a Postgraduate Studies Programme in Arabic Language and Literature.

The above-mentioned graduate programme in Islamic Studies, with its above two mentioned divisions, targeted students who aspire to gain a distinguished level of scientific specialised knowledge in Islamic, legal and fundamentalist studies. The programme consists of 128 credit hours, and the Department's students must complete 96 credit hours as requirements for specialisation (whether it is the Fundamentals of Islamic Religion or Sharia), in addition to 11 credit hours as university requirements, 18 credit hours as college requirements, and 3 credit hours as department requirements. At the time of the virtual follow-up visit, the total number of students enrolled in the Islamic Studies Programme was 400, with the total number of 20 faculty members. They belong to a number of prestigious universities in teaching Islamic studies. Since it was founded, the Department has succeeded in qualifying groups of students who achieved success in their work. The Department has led to graduating students who hold high positions in a number of ministries such as the Ministry of Information, Ministry of Islamic Affairs and Waqf, and the Ministry of Education and others.

1. Indicator 1: The Learning Programme

This section evaluates the extent to which the BAIS 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.

No.	Recommendations	Judgement
1.1	Study the possibility of including an internship course for work-based learning within the curriculum, to reduce the gap between the theoretical aspects and the practical aspects in the programme.	Partially Addressed
1.2	Offer an adequate number of elective courses every semester, to provide students with a real opportunity of choosing between these courses.	Fully Addressed
1.3	Review and revise the specifications of both the programme and the courses, to ensure that they include the recent intended learning outcomes of the programme, and use these outcomes to ensure the academic standards of both the students and the graduates.	Fully Addressed
1.4	Apply procedures that contribute to using e-learning appropriately, and in line with the teaching and learning policy of the University, and measure its effectiveness in achieving the intended learning outcomes of the programme.	Partially Addressed

2. Indicator 2: Efficiency of the Programme

This section evaluates the extent to which the BAIS 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.

No.	Recommendations	Judgement
2.1	Develop a mechanism to involve the faculty of the Department in the process of identifying the attributes of admitted students, to ensure that their capabilities are appropriate for the programme's requirements.	Fully Addressed
2.2	Adopt practical solutions to achieve a balance between the teaching and the research workloads of the faculty members and ensure the effectiveness of these solutions.	Partially Addressed
2.3	Develop and implement an appropriate plan to assist faculty members to be promoted academically; organize a formal induction programme for new academic staff at the department, college, and university levels; to introduce them to the university's policies, regulations, resources, and various services, and to evaluate the effectiveness of the induction programme.	Partially Addressed
2.4	Further utilize the tracking reports and the updated data of the tracking systems to enhance making decisions that contribute to increasing the effectiveness of the educational process.	Fully Addressed

3. Indicator 3: Academic standards of the graduates

This section evaluates the extent to which the BAIS 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.

No.	Recommendations	Judgement
3.1	Conduct formal benchmarking processes based on the university policy in order to cover all aspects of the programme, including the admission requirements, the academic standards of students and graduates of the programme, and utilize these results in improving the programme.	Partially Addressed
3.2	Ensure that the university policies and procedures of plagiarism are applied properly in the programme.	Fully Addressed
3.3	Conduct intensive training courses on assessment procedures and their alignment with learning outcomes, in accordance with UoB's study and examination system, and consequently expedite the implementation of the course assessment form, as well as, the measurement of the Course Intended Learning Outcomes and Programme Intended Learning Outcomes achievement in a more rigorous manner.	Fully Addressed
3.4	Activate the university arrangements related to pre and post internal moderation of assessment tools used in the programme, and assess their effectiveness, and assign moderators who are specialists.	Fully Addressed
3.5	Implement appropriate formal procedures for the external moderation of assessments, where the feedback of the external moderation contributes to developing the programme and improving its courses.	Partially Addressed
3.6	Apply the direct and indirect mechanisms of measuring graduates' level of achievement in the Bachelor in Islamic Studies programme regularly, and measure their effectiveness.	Fully Addressed
3.7	Utilize the available statistics about student cohorts, in conducting a detailed analysis about them and utilize its results in improving the programme.	Fully Addressed

3.8	Ensure an effective role for the advisory committee, follow a clear methodology, and identify topics that are presented to and reviewed by the committee, in addition to a mechanism of addressing the committee's observations.	Fully Addressed
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4. Indicator 4: Effectiveness of quality management and assurance

This section evaluates the extent to which the BAIS 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.

No.	Recommendations	Judgement
4.1	Develop the approaches of monitoring and assessing the system of quality assurance management in the programme, and measure its effectiveness.	Fully Addressed
4.2	Implement the university policy of periodical review of the programme in a comprehensive and continuous manner, as well as, develop mechanisms for tracking and monitoring the implementation of improvement plans.	Fully Addressed
4.3	Continue the development of mechanisms for surveying opinions of all stakeholders -especially external ones-, analyze their results periodically and regularly, and inform the stakeholders of their outcomes.	Partially Addressed
4.4	Implement periodical, rigorous, and comprehensive studies for scoping both long-term and short-term needs of the labour market to utilize them in programme development.	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 virtual 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 in Islamic Studies programme offered by University of Bahrain has made "Adequate Progress" and as a result, the programme won't be subjected to another follow-up visit.

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.