

Directorate of Higher Education Reviews Programme Review Summary

**University of Bahrain
College of Law
Master in Public Law
Kingdom of Bahrain**

Site Visit Date: 7 – 9 June 2021

HA020-C3-R020

I. Introduction

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

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

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

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

Standard 1: The Learning Programme

Standard 2: Efficiency of the Programme

Standard 3: Academic Standards of Students and Graduates

Standard 4: Effectiveness of Quality Management and Assurance

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

Table 1: Criteria for Judgements

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

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

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

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

II. The Programme's Profile

Institution Name*	University of Bahrain
College/ Department*	College of Law
Programme/ Qualification Title*	MA in Public Law
Qualification Approval Number	
NQF Level	
Validity Period on NQF	
Number of Units*	9 Units plus Thesis
NQF Credit	
Programme Aims*	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Providing the Bahraini community with graduates of distinguished legal expertise needed for efficient legal practice. 2. Employment of legal research to cater for community needs and labor market requirements 3. Extending legal studies to ensure the development of legislative, judicial, and jurisprudence-related work.
Programme Intended Learning Outcomes*	<p>In the end of the program, the graduate will be able to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Engage in in-depth study of the branches of law. 2. Analyze and scrutinize legal texts and facts. 3. The ability to refute and weight between jurisprudential positions different and comparative legislation. 4. The ability to use the skills of scientific research in preparation of Legal studies and research in line with the needs of the labor market and society. 5. The ability to undertake all legal and judicial work Efficient and distinguished.

* Mandatory fields

III. Judgment Summary

The Programme's Judgment: Confidence

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

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

IV. Conclusion

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

There is Confidence in the Master in Public Law of the College of Law offered by the University of Bahrain.

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

1. The role of the Department, the College, and the University in the transformation to online learning.
2. The training activities organized for students by the College which help them link theory to practice and enhance independent learning.
3. The professional development opportunities available to faculty.
4. The cyber security procedures followed by the University.
5. The active role of the advisory committee in improving the programme to meet labor market and local community needs.

In terms of improvement, the Panel recommends that the College of Law should:

1. Review the current programme intended learning outcomes so that they reflect the programme's specialization, are measurable, and clearly align with international standards and NQF requirements.
2. Accurately map course intended learning outcomes to programme intended learning outcomes and ensure their proper alignment, by ensuring that every faculty member identifies the outcomes of the courses they teach and maps them to the different courses of the programme in a matrix approved by the Department.
3. Ensure that all course specifications are complete.
4. Include a variety of recent references in all courses, comprising books, articles, and reports.
5. Regularly review the admission policy and revise it based on the feedback received from the relevant stakeholders, while ensuring the benchmarking of the programme with reputed regional and international colleges which offer similar programmes.
6. Review the faculty's administrative and teaching load and the maximum number of theses they can supervise.

7. Work on ensuring a better balance in specializations when recruiting new faculty members.
8. Increase the number of new international references in the legal library and subscribe to international electronic databases in the field of law, such as Westlaw and Lexisnexis, due to their importance for both master's students as well as faculty members doing research.
9. Mention the title of the thesis or the specific specialization on the graduation certificate and regularly clarify and abide by the timeframe usually needed for issuing certificates.
10. Regularly assess the support services provided to students and improve them based on their needs.
11. Use a variety of exam questions at a suitable level of complexity, which can measure multiple learning outcomes in addition to students' critical thinking skills.
12. Devise a clear mechanism for directly and precisely measuring the intended learning outcomes of the MA in Public Law programme.
13. Implement a follow-up process of the assessment procedures and improve and document them in a more systemic and detailed manner.
14. Expand the scope of implementation of the plagiarism-detection procedures, to include all written assignments and not just the theses.
15. Conduct internal reviews and more rigorous evaluations to measure the effectiveness of internal moderation.
16. Expedite having measures in place for implementing external moderation of assessments, with identifying set criteria for the selection of external moderators who are experienced professionals capable of developing and improving the programme.
17. Revert to seminars which are beneficial to the student researchers and their colleagues in higher education.
18. Improve the alumni tracking process and the collection of their relevant data, as well as the enrolled students' data, to clearly and accurately ensure that they meet the academic standards.
19. Evaluate the mechanisms used to ensure the consistent implementation of quality assurance-related policies and procedures at the college, department, and programme level.
20. Improve the documentation of evidence in the self-evaluation reports and ensure a systematic follow-up process of the implementation and evaluation of the improvement plans.

21. Implement the university's quality assurance policy in relation to carrying out comprehensive periodic reviews of the MA in Public Law programme, and develop and implement relevant improvement plans based on the review results.
22. Conduct, through direct contact with universities offering programmes similar to the MA in Public Law, a more comprehensive benchmarking exercise of the programme, covering different aspects and components of the academic and administrative activities and services it provides.
23. Evaluate the mechanism used to distribute surveys, to ensure that they reach the greatest number of targeted stakeholders, and evaluate the mechanism of communicating survey results and decisions made on their basis to the relevant survey participants.
24. Review the mechanisms that are systematically implemented to ensure that the programme meets the needs of the labor market and the local community.