



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

# Directorate of Higher Education Reviews Programme Review Summary

University of Bahrain  
College of Law  
Ph.D. in Private Law  
Kingdom of Bahrain

**Site Visit Date: 31 May – 2 June 2021**

HA019-C3-R019

## I. Introduction

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

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

The Cycle 2 APR Review Framework is based on four main Standards and 21 Indicators, which forms the basis 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 <b>Standard 1</b> 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 and 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 (UoB)
College/ Department*	College of Law
Programme/ Qualification Title*	Ph.D. in Private Law
Qualification Approval Number	-
NQF Level	-
Validity Period on NQF	-
Number of Units*	Thesis + 12 units
NQF Credit	-
Programme Aims*	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Providing the Arabian Gulf community with graduates with distinguished capabilities and experiences in research and the use of its tools.</li> <li>2. Gaining scientific research skills and use its tools to find solutions to the problems in this specific field to contribute to the development of the society.</li> <li>3. Preparing students to innovate research in all branches of specialization, to increase the opportunity for scientific publication.</li> <li>4. Enabling the researchers to acquire the skills of analyzing, interpretation, weighting, inference and criticism. In addition, raise their competitive ability to engage in the labor market.</li> <li>5. Creating the appropriate environment for creativity and innovation in various legislative, judicial and jurisprudential fields, as well as developing leadership skills.</li> </ol>
Programme Intended Learning Outcomes*	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Create the appropriate environment for creativity and innovation in the legal sciences, that leads to the upgrading of the scientific and professional qualities of the researcher, and the development of his legal knowledge.</li> </ol>

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>2) Improve, develop and guide the scientific and practical capabilities of researchers.</li><li>3) Prepare the researcher to acquire the skills of analysis, collecting data, interpretation, weighting, and inference, in addition to acquiring methods of interpretation, and the approaches of criticism.</li><li>4) Enable the student to be aware of rules and approaches of the scientific research, the principles of thinking, and the creation of legal opinion.</li><li>5) Follow updates in the field of legal sciences.</li><li>6) Promote profound scientific research at the University of Bahrain in the field of Legal Sciences.</li><li>7) Provide the Bahraini community with graduates who have outstanding legal experience, and the ability to practice legal activities with high efficiency.</li></ol>
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\* Mandatory fields

### III. Judgment Summary

## The Programme's Judgment: Confidence

Standard/ Indicator	Title	Judgement
<b>Standard 1</b>	<b>The Learning Programme</b>	<b>Addressed</b>
Indicator 1.1	The Academic Planning Framework	Addressed
Indicator 1.2	Graduate Attributes & Intended Learning Outcomes	Partially addressed
Indicator 1.3	The Curriculum Content	Addressed
Indicator 1.4	Teaching and Learning	Addressed
Indicator 1.5	Assessment Arrangements	Addressed
<b>Standard 2</b>	<b>Efficiency of the Programme</b>	<b>Addressed</b>
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
<b>Standard 3</b>	<b>Standard 3: Academic Standards of Students and Graduates</b>	<b>Addressed</b>
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
<b>Standard 4</b>	<b>Effectiveness of Quality Management and Assurance</b>	<b>Addressed</b>
Indicator 4.1	Quality Assurance Management	Addressed
Indicator 4.2	Programme Management and Leadership	Addressed
Indicator 4.3	Annual and Periodic Review of the Programme	Addressed
Indicator 4.4	Benchmarking and Surveys	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 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 Ph.D. in Private Law of 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 efforts of the College in the transition to online learning in the Ph.D. programme, both at the level of taking advantage of the general guidelines developed by the university to deal with the pandemic, or at the level of the actual implementation of these guidelines, including the teaching methods in the programme.
2. The study system that encourages participation and research whether in the specialized courses or as part of the requirements of the seminar and thesis course.
3. The cyber security procedures followed by the university.
4. The active role of the employers and graduates Advisory Committee in the development of the programme and meeting the needs of the labor market and the local community.

**In terms of improvement, the Panel recommends that the University of Bahrain should:**

1. Review the current PILOs to reflect the specific specialization of the programme, to be accurately measurable, and clearly aligned with the international standards as well as the NQF's requirements.
2. Ensure that all CILOs in addition to the research component of the programme are mapped to the PILOs in order to measure their alignment.
3. Reduce the number of credit hours in the programme, especially the college's compulsory remedial courses, in addition to reducing the hours of the thesis course, and focus on the student's research performance and its depth in tackling the topic of the thesis to lead to student's specific specialization.

4. Regularly review and revise the admission policy, taking into account feedback from stakeholders, and conduct benchmarking exercises with distinguished regional and international colleges offering Ph.D. programmes in private law.
5. Take appropriate measures to attract faculty members who are able to teach in English, especially those who hold the academic rank of professor or associate professor, as this can positively impact the quality of teaching and the academic supervision of the Ph.D. programme's thesis.
6. Consider reviewing the teaching and supervision workload of faculty members, and reducing the number of committees they participate in to allow more time for scientific research and community service activities.
7. Subscribe to international electronic databases specialized in law such as "Westlaw and LexisNexis", due to their importance as references for Ph.D. students and faculty members.
8. Instruct faculty members teaching the Ph.D programme to ensure that the exam questions reflect an adequate depth for testing the Ph.D. students' abilities to analyze, express their opinion, practice logical and critical thinking, and ensure that all of this is monitored.
9. Activate external moderation in accordance with the university policy by establishing partnerships with academic institutions to cooperate in this field and ensuring that external moderators are specialists in the legal field and hold higher academic ranks such as professors or associate professors.
10. Develop an appropriate mechanism to measure the effectiveness of external moderation of the programme once it is initiated.
11. Review the procedure of (sending a written thesis proposal to the arbitrators instead of presenting it during seminars) as the transition to e-learning allows the students of the programme to present their thesis face-to-face and defend their ideas. This gives the students an opportunity to establish and defend their point of view which they have adopted through conducting research.
12. Ask the thesis supervisor to write a detailed report on the suitability of the thesis for defense, evaluating it in terms of language, authenticity, references, scientific integrity, findings, recommendations, analysis, conclusion, and other criteria for evaluating theses.
13. Introduce the position of a coordinator for the Ph.D. programme in private law, so that there is a coordinator for each post graduate programme, instead of a single coordinator for all post graduate programmes offered by the college.
14. Determine the period of time required for the periodic review, and document that as it is important to review the programme regularly.

15. Conduct a benchmarking exercise through direct contact with institutions to make the benchmarking more comprehensive and cover all components of the programme.
16. Conduct separate formal studies for the Ph.D. in Private Law programme to study the needs of the labor market, national and societal needs, and foresee the future; to ensure that the programme is up-to-date and meets the needs of the labor market and society.