هيئة جودة التعليم والتدريب
**Education & Training Quality Authority**
مـمـلـكـة الـبـحـريـن KINGDOM OF BAHRAIN

# Directorate of Higher Education Reviews
## Programme Review Report

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

## Site Visit Date: 4 – 6 March 2024
HA122-C3-R122

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# Acronyms

| | |
|---|---|
| BELL | Bachelor in English Language and Literature |
| 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 |
| ELC | English Language Center |
| HEC | Higher Education Council |
| IT | Information Technology |
| LMS | Learning Management System |
| NQF | National Qualifications Framework |
| PAC | Programme Advisory Committee |
| PCAP | Post-Graduate Certificate for Academic Practice |
| PEO | Programme Educational Objective |
| PILO | Programme Intended Learning Outcome |
| QA | Quality Assurance |
| QAAC | Quality Assurance and Accreditation Center |
| SAC | Student Advisory Committee |
| SER | Self-Evaluation Report |
| SIS | Student Information System |
| UoB | University of Bahrain |
| UILO | University Intended Learning Outcomes |

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# 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 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 judgements 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 judgement, 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 | |

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The APR Review Report begins with providing the profile of the programme under review, followed by a brief outline of the judgement 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.

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# II. The Programme's Profile

| | |
|---|---|
| Institution Name* | University of Bahrain |
| College/ Department* | College of Arts |
| Programme/ Qualification Title* | Bachelor in English Language and Literature |
| Qualification Approval Number | - |
| NQF Level | - |
| Validity Period on NQF | - |
| Number of Units* | 43 |
| NQF Credit | - |
| Programme Aims* | 1. Communicate effectively both orally and in writing in a variety of academic and professional settings<br>2. Apply relevant skills and knowledge to excel in careers involving the use of English language and language-related fields<br>3. Demonstrate the ability to apply adequate research skills to pursue advanced degree courses in language, linguistics literature, and other language-related fields (e.g. translation)<br>4. Demonstrate adequate critical thinking skills and use of modern technological tools to meet personal, academic, and professional needs<br>5. Work effectively both independently and in teams, demonstrating a high level of professionalism, ethical behavior, responsibility, integrity and motivation for life-long learning. |
| Programme Intended Learning Outcomes* | 1. Apply knowledge of key theories, principles, concepts and methods in the fields of language, linguistics and literature.<br>2. Critically analyse diverse forms of discourse and genres in extended written and spoken texts using appropriate methods and techniques of linguistic and literary analysis and criticism.<br>3. Produce coherent and authentic written essays, reports, and projects using appropriate language skills.<br>4. Synthesize information after reading texts comprehensively in a variety of forms, styles, structures, and modes using intensive information retrieval and interpretation skills. |

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| | 5. Communicate effectively in speaking by displaying accuracy and fluency in the use of language, lexis, style, oral presentation skills, and public speaking skills.<br><br>6. Develop and conduct primary research using critical thinking skills, adequate data collection and data analysis methods, accurate documentation, and appropriate ICT skills. |
|---|---|

\*   Mandatory fields

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# III. Judgement Summary

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## The Programme's Judgement: Confidence

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| Standard/ Indicator | Title | Judgement |
|---|---|---|
| **Standard 1** | **The Learning Programme** | **Satisfied** |
| 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** | **Satisfied** |
| 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** | **Academic Standards of Students and Graduates** | **Satisfied** |
| Indicator 3.1 | Efficiency of the Assessment | Addressed |
| Indicator 3.2 | Academic Integrity | Addressed |
| Indicator 3.3 | Internal and External Moderation of Assessment | Addressed |
| Indicator 3.4 | Work-based Learning | Addressed |

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| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 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** | **Satisfied** |
| 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 | Partially Addressed |

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# IV. Standards and Indicators

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## Standard 1

### The Learning Programme

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

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### Indicator 1.1: The Academic Planning Framework

*There is a clear academic planning framework for the programme, reflected in clear aims which relate to the mission and strategic goals of the institution and the college.*

**Judgement:** *Addressed*

- The Bachelor in English Language and Literature programme (BELL) is offered by the Department of English Language and Literature (DELL) of the College of Arts at the University of Bahrain (UoB). The programme follows a clear, top-down planning process for designing and evaluating academic programmes in line with UoB Academic Bylaws, Regulations for Offering and Developing Academic Programmes and Courses, the Quality Manual, Assuring of Learning, and the IDEAS document. As per the Self-Evaluation Report (SER), the BELL underwent several improvements since its inception in 1986, most recently in 2020, where major changes were introduced.

- Potential risks related to the quality, delivery, and academic standards of the programme are identified and managed at the department level. These risks are regularly identified as explicated in the Risk Management Register and managed as per the Risk Management Process. The Panel examined DELL's Risk Management Register, and the actions taken to mitigate risks and is satisfied with the current arrangements.

- The BELL programme has not been placed yet on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF), however, the SER states that the processes are currently underway to meet the NQF qualification design requirements and to place the BELL programme at NQF Level 8. During interviews, the Panel discussed the NQF application process and is satisfied that progress is being made.

- The programme title is accurately documented on the website, graduates' certificates and the various documents that were submitted to the Panel. The title is concise and reflects the type and content of the programme. The certificates also include the student's minor subjects: Linguistics, Literature, Translation, American Studies, and French.

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- The aims of the programme are stated in the form of Programme Educational Objectives (PEOs). They are well-aligned with the university's mission and strategic goals. The Panel confirmed that the PEOs are regularly reviewed and updated based on feedback from internal and external stakeholders.

## Indicator 1.2: Graduate Attributes & Intended Learning Outcomes

*Graduate attributes are clearly stated in terms of intended learning outcomes for the programme and for each course and these are appropriate for the level of the degree and meet the NQF requirements.*

**Judgement:** *Partially Addressed*

- UoB has defined generic graduate attributes at the institutional level. These attributes are derived from the university's six Intended Learning Outcomes (UILOs): Communication, Technological Competence, Critical Thinking and Analysis, Knowledge and Skills, Information Literacy, Responsibility and Integrity, and Life-Long Learning. Furthermore, the graduate attributes are captured in the PEOs and the Programme Intended Learning Outcomes (PILOs), which are mapped to the PEOs as shown in submitted evidence.

- The Panel notes that both the PEOs and PILOs are written in the same manner describing what the student will be able to do. The Panel also notes that PEO (5) is not sufficiently covered in the PILOs. Moreover, the BELL benchmarking study that was conducted in the academic year 2018-2019 did not include the PEOs and PILOs. Therefore, the Panel recommends that the College should ensure the PILOs cover all the PEOs and that the PEOs and the PILOs meet international norms through benchmarking with other comparable programmes in Bahrain, regionally and internationally.

- The Programme Specification Form clearly illustrates that the PILOs are well-defined, appropriately written using clear and measurable action verbs. The Panel notes that the PILOs have been revised by the academic staff to enhance their measurability and alignment with the NQF level descriptors.

- The Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs) are linked to the course content and appropriately mapped to the PILOs. Course specification forms include CILOs and the mapping of CILOs to PILOs. During interviews, the Panel learned that CILOs are regularly updated based on various inputs, including feedback received from different stakeholders. Specific modifications have been implemented to enhance oral communication skills across all courses and capstone research projects for the senior year within the programme.

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## Indicator 1.3: The Curriculum Content

*The curriculum is organised to provide academic progression of learning complexity guided by the NQF levels and credits, and it illustrates a balance between knowledge and skills, as well as theory and practice, and meets the norms and standards of the particular academic discipline.*

**Judgement:** *Partially Addressed*

- The BELL Study Plan is well-organized, with a clear progression of courses over eight semesters and four academic years. The linguistics courses, for instance, follow a logical progression, starting with foundational concepts and gradually advancing to more complex concepts and skills. The Study Plan also includes an appropriate list of course prerequisites and a suitable workload for students. In their final year, students must complete a capstone course that allows them to apply the knowledge and skills acquired throughout their studies. The BELL Study Plan aligns with international standards regarding course credits, required credit hours for graduation, and the average study duration.

- As demonstrated in various evidence, the curriculum was updated in 2020 to meet professional expectations and requirements, based on feedback from faculty, committees, Advisory Board and surveys, as well as benchmarking with regional and international universities. The previous review of the curriculum highlighted imbalances in course offerings and prerequisites, which were addressed in the 2020 Study Plan.

- The Study Plan is designed to offer students a well-rounded education through a diverse range of courses. The Panel notes that, overall, the programme maintains an appropriate balance between theory and practice. However, the Panel finds some ambiguity in the Study Plan and Course Syllabus Forms regarding the courses that include practical components, as some these courses lacked allocated practical hours. Also, the Courses Syllabus Forms of some Minors do not explicitly mention practical skills. Therefore, the Panel recommends that the College should ensure that the practical components of the programme are explicitly mentioned in the Study Plan and course syllabi.

- The Panel notes that there is a notable variation in the emphasis placed on developing practical skills in the Minors. While the Translation Minor places significant emphasis on the development of practical skills for various sectors like business, journalism, scientific fields, and consecutive interpretation, the French Minor does not refer to practical skills in the Course Syllabus Form. In addition, the Translation Minor is the only minor that includes a dedicated course, (TRAN405), specifically designed for a practicum experience. Moreover, the recent Senior Exit Survey Report revealed dissatisfaction with the practical application component of the programme, scoring a rate of 2.87. The Panel learned during interviews that the Pearson laboratory was established in 2022 to provide more opportunities for practical application. The Panel acknowledges the efforts made by DELL

to enhance the practical skills of students. However, the Panel recommends that the College should put more emphasis on the practical components of the programme and ensure a consistent and comprehensive approach to the development of practical skills across all Minors.

- The syllabus of each course undergoes regular reviews by the Curriculum Committee to ensure a comprehensive coverage of CILOs and the appropriateness of course materials and textbooks. The Panel examined samples of course e-portfolios and noted that the courses in the programme are generally a relatively standard set of language and literature courses. The Panel also notes that the programme prioritizes current textbooks and references. However, the nature of the programme also requires using old classic books for literature. Overall, the Panel is satisfied with the mechanism in place for reviewing and evaluating course textbooks to ensure relevance.

## Indicator 1.4: Teaching and Learning

*The principles and methods used for teaching in the programme support the attainment of programme aims and intended learning outcomes.*

**Judgement:** *Addressed*

- UoB has a dedicated Teaching and Learning Policy which highlights the key domains that encourage students to be active members in their learning. These are: designing of interactive learning materials and assessment, integration of technology enhanced learning, incorporating life-long learning skills, supporting research informed teaching and learning.

- The Panel notes that DELL teaching and learning methods are tailored to achieve both PILOs and CILOs with a combination of classroom and online techniques. These methods include presentations, debates and peer feedback, which suit the nature of learning foreign languages. These methods are also in line with the university's regulations and guidelines, as well as the Quality Manual and Teaching and Learning Guidelines.

- DELL effectively integrates e-learning into its teaching and learning methods by utilizing the Blackboard platform, which grants students access to course materials, assessments, learning activities, and discussion forums. At the university level, the e-learning Centre has implemented a reward system to acknowledge the efforts of highly active and efficient academic staff members. In the academic year 2022-2023, three academic staff from the Department received certificates of honour from the University President in recognition of their outstanding utilization of e-learning resources. The Panel was informed during interviews with senior management that 36 staff members of the College have been awarded excellence in using technology-enhanced teaching and learning approaches in

their respective courses. The Panel appreciates the efforts exerted by the College to encourage academic staff to utilize technology-enhanced teaching and learning approaches in their respective courses.

- During interviews with senior management, creative and innovative aspects of students' learning were discussed, in addition to the approaches to provide students with exposure to professional practice. During the campus tour, the Panel also had the opportunity to observe a student-led session in Pearson Centre shortly. The Panel notes that UoB learning environment encourages students' participation in learning and promotes the concept of lifelong learning by encouraging all types of learning: formal, informal and non-formal learning. Within the programme, there is also a strong emphasis on research ethics, with academic staff actively encouraging students to uphold principles of honesty and integrity. In the capstone course, 'Project Writing' (ENGL450), instructors provide students with comprehensive information on the requirements of ethical conduct of research, including guidelines on research ethics and academic integrity.

## Indicator 1.5: Assessment Arrangements

*Suitable assessment arrangements, which include policies and procedures for assessing students' achievements, are in place and are known to all relevant stakeholders.*

**Judgement:** *Addressed*

- UoB has a comprehensive assessment framework with appropriate provisions for internal and external moderation of assessments. The assessment framework includes policies, procedures, regulations, manuals and handbooks such as the Regulations of Study and Examination, UoB Moderation of Assessment Regulation, Avoiding Plagiarism Policy, Quality Manual, and Teaching and Learning Policy, which are accessible *via* UoB's website, and disseminated to students through Blackboard, Students Package, and New Students' Orientation documents.

- As per UoB regulations, 40% of the student marks are allocated to the final examinations and 60% are allocated to mid-term examination, essays, projects and presentations. The Panel notes that the BELL programme implements a mix of formative and summative assessments. The Panel also notes that the BELL programme has implemented various measures to ensure fair and consistent grading. These measures include unified midterm examinations for multi-section courses, internal moderation of tests and examinations, result announcements, and a process for students to appeal their final examination grade. Appeals are reviewed by two appointed academic staff, who may recommend a new grade.

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- As per the provided evidence, assessment follows clear grading rubrics, and assessment results and feedback are promptly shared. During the interviews with students and alumni, it was suggested that feedback on assessment be given immediately to enhance the learning experience. Furthermore, during the interviews with academic staff, the Panel noted a lack of adherence to a clear timeline for marking and providing feedback. Hence, the Panel recommends that the College should establish a structured and consistent approach to ensure timely feedback is consistently provided to students.

- In line with the university's regulations and policies, DELL has implemented measures to prevent and detect plagiarism, including the use of the plagiarism detection software 'SafeAssign' for all assignments and projects. DELL has also collaborated with UoB's E-learning Centre to promote academic integrity through various workshops. Cases of academic misconduct, such as cheating or plagiarism, are referred to the Department Student Misconduct Committee, which determines appropriate actions based on UoB regulations. Penalties for cheating may include test failure, registration cancellation, or deprivation from future registration.

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## Standard 2

### Efficiency of the Programme

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

### Indicator 2.1: Admitted Students

*There are clear admission requirements, which are appropriate for the level and type of the programme, ensuring equal opportunities for both genders, and the profile of admitted students matches the programme aims and available resources.*

**Judgement:** *Addressed*

- UoB has general admission requirements in addition to other criteria required for the BELL programme. Both UoB and BELL admission requirements are clear and available on the university's website. According to UoB's general admission requirements, applicants must possess a Secondary School certificate or its equivalent, with a total minimum grade of 70% and a minimum of 90% in English Language courses. Applicants who obtained a score below 90% in English Language course at the Secondary School certificate may still be considered for admission, provided they attend the orientation programme to enhance their linguistic and study skills. Exemptions are available for students who have passed the TOEFL test with 500+ points or the IELTS with 5.5+ points or the university's English exemption test, which is administered by the English Language Center (ELC).

- UoB supports access, progression, credit transfer, and Recognition of Prior Learning. The Regulations of Study and Examination outline the credit transfer process between UoB programmes and from other universities to UoB. The interviews with different stakeholders confirm that the admission requirements are consistently implemented and ensure that appropriate students are accepted on an equal basis between females and males in the BELL programme. These interviews also confirmed that DELL provides remedial measures for students who are not sufficiently prepared for the programme. Students who do not attain the required score in the exemption test are placed in the orientation programme at level 1 (two semesters) or level 2 (one semester).

- As per the SER, the programme admission requirements have undergone three changes in the past three years based on benchmarking and consultation with stakeholders. The Panel examined the Benchmarking Report and noticed that it is undated and did not include the admission criteria (see Indicator 4.4). However, the Panel found evidence of

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discussing revised admission requirements for the BELL programme at the Department Council, which subsequently were approved by the University Council on 13 September 2023. According to the revised admission requirements, a B2 level of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) will be required for the BELL programme. Evidence was also provided on assessing the performance of the 2020-2022 student cohorts and taking the results into consideration in the revision of the admission requirements.

## Indicator 2.2: Academic Staff

*There are clear procedures for the recruitment, induction, appraisal, promotion, and professional development of academic staff, which ensure that staff members are fit-for-purpose and that help in staff retention.*

**Judgement:** *Partially Addressed*

- As per the SER, UoB has adequate policies and regulations for the recruitment, induction, appraisal, and promotion of academic staff, which are consistently implemented in a transparent manner. Newly appointed academic staff participate in induction workshops at the university and college levels to be familiarised with university procedures and their responsibilities. They are also provided with the Faculty Guide document.

- The Panel notes that DELL has mechanisms in place that ensure the quality of scientific research carried out by academic staff, and its alignment with the research plan of the college and the institution. DELL also promotes gender equality taking into consideration the needs of women and academic staff with special needs. Various policies are in place to support academic staff, including maternity and paternity leave, remote working, pay-scale equity, and grievance procedures.

- The BELL programme is taught by one Professor, five Associate Professors, 24 Assistant Professors, and three Research Assistants, in addition to one part-time academic staff. The Panel examined the submitted standardized faculty Curriculum Vitas and is pleased with the diverse qualifications and expertise. The Panel noticed that the student-to-faculty ratio is 35-1, as indicated in the annual SERs of 2022 and 2023. Academic staff are expected to work a maximum of 40 hours per week, with teaching responsibilities ranging from 12 to 18 credit hours based on their rank. The remaining time is allocated for research, committee participation, and community engagement.

- The workload balance for academic staff at UoB is a concern due to various factors. Academic staff are tasked with teaching another programme offered by DELL simultaneously in addition to the BELL programme. This is in addition to other responsibilities such as thesis supervision, academic advising, and committee work,

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resulting in a heavy workload. The Panel also noticed that only one academic staff has applied for a promotion in the past three years. Hence, the Panel recommends that the College should encourage academic staff to apply for promotion and develop a mechanism to reduce the faculty teaching load.

- UoB has policies and arrangements in place that support the professional development needs of its staff. DELL actively encourages academic staff to attend workshops and organises activities tailored to their specific needs. Evidence was provided on active participation of academic staff in various professional development activities, and on regular monitoring and evaluation to ensure the effectiveness of these activities. DELL has developed a well-defined Annual Professional Development Plan based on various inputs including the analysis of the annual evaluation of academic staff by the Head of Department (HoD).

- The University offers continuing professional development services, including an internationally accredited certificate in teaching in higher education. DELL academic staff have obtained Post-Graduate Certificate for Academic Practice (PCAP). Moreover, research assistants receive support to pursue higher qualifications. The Panel appreciates that DELL academic staff have successfully obtained teaching certificates from the programmes offered by the Unit of Teaching Excellence and Leadership in collaboration with the Higher Education Academy.

- UoB has robust measures in place to monitor staff turnover and prioritise retaining highly qualified academic staff members. These measures encompass a range of effective strategies, including performance evaluations, faculty satisfaction surveys, mentorship programmes, and professional development opportunities. During the site visit, the Panel observed firsthand the commitments made by DELL in fostering a supportive work environment that encourages collaboration and respect, thereby demonstrating its dedication to retaining its academic staff.

## Indicator 2.3: Physical and Material Resources

*Physical and material resources are adequate in number, space, style and equipment; these include classrooms, teaching halls, laboratories and other study spaces; Information Technology facilities, library and learning resources.*

**Judgement:** *Addressed*

- The Panel visited the Department during its relocation from the S17 building to the main building of the College of Art, which houses classrooms equipped with data projectors, white screens, whiteboards, and internet-connected computers. DELL also utilizes the E-learning Centre and the Central Library resources to enhance the learning experience of

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its students. The Reading Laboratory has been renovated by collaborating with Pearson Publishing House, providing physical and digital reading materials. Specialized facilities such as the Visio-Braille Laboratory, Self-Access Laboratory, and Interpreting Laboratory further cater to the needs of visually impaired students, independent learning, and translation studies. Overall, DELL provides sufficient resources for education and research, with support from Pearson and other university facilities. Based on the physical and virtual tour, the Panel is satisfied with the appropriateness and adequate equipment of the classes and laboratories.

- UoB's Information Technology (IT) facilities support students' learning, including computer laboratories, Wi-Fi access, and email services. Policies promote IT utilization in teaching and learning, backed by the University Teaching and Learning Policy. The UoB implements a mechanism to assess student satisfaction with IT facilities. For instance, the Senior Exit Survey of the academic year 2020-2021 reveals positive feedback regarding classroom facilities and internet availability on campus.

- UoB Central Library has a dedicated section for 'Language and Literature'. This section explicitly supports the BELL courses with the needed teaching and learning resources. The UoB Digital Library Website provides access to a wide range of digital resources. During interviews with students and alumni, it was confirmed that they could request any electronic resources that are currently unavailable in the library. The library promptly provides these resources, making the research process more convenient and ensuring easy access to necessary materials. Researchers, both staff and students, can also benefit from inter-library loan services. During the site tour and interviews, the Panel confirmed the appropriateness of the library facilities at UoB in terms of study spaces and accessibility for all students and staff with special accommodation spaces for individuals with special needs.

- UoB has a formal mechanism to ensure the maintenance and adequacy of its resources, including facilities, equipment, technology, and infrastructure. This mechanism involves regular audits and assessments to identify areas in need of repair or improvement. Continuous evaluations and feedback from faculty and students contribute to ongoing improvement efforts.

- During the site visit tour, the Panel noted that the UoB campus is equipped with clear health and safety instructions for all its academic and operational functions. Exit signs, various types of fire extinguishers, and prominently displayed usage instructions are found throughout the campus. These displays also provide important information about service dates, upcoming checks, and contact details for maintenance vendors.

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## Indicator 2.4: Management Information Systems

*There are functioning management information and tracking systems that support the decision-making processes and evaluate the utilisation of laboratories, e-learning and e-resources, along with policies and procedures that ensure security of learners' records and accuracy of results.*

**Judgement:** *Addressed*

- UoB effectively utilizes management information systems to handle critical data for its operations, enabling informed decision-making. These systems include the Student Information System (SIS) and Learning Management System (LMS). SIS facilities include timetabling, admissions, registration, advising, and grade management. During the site visit, the Panel was provided with a demonstration of the SIS system, which showcased its ability to facilitate informed decision-making and streamline operations. Further evidence was also provided on utilizing generated reports from SIS and LMS in decision making at the department level.

- UoB has implemented policies and procedures to ensure the security and accuracy of learners' records. Secure databases and limited access to authorized personnel are in place to protect sensitive information. UoB has also comprehensive data protection and social media policies. Information regarding the issuance and replacement of graduation certificates can be found on the university's website, ensuring transparency and accessibility for all stakeholders. During the virtual site visit, the Panel confirmed that the awarded certificates and transcripts are accurate and issued in a timely manner.

## Indicator 2.5: Student Support

*There is appropriate student support available in terms of guidance, and care for students including students with special needs, newly admitted and transferred students, and students at risk of academic failure.*

**Judgement:** *Addressed*

- UoB provides comprehensive support to students in various areas, including the library, laboratories, e-learning, and counselling services. The library offers adequate support to students through services such as the reserve collection, information literacy training, and library instruction programmes. Robust technical support for the LMS is also provided to students and faculty. The academic staff affirmed that the University provides comprehensive guidance and assistance to ensure the effective utilization of the LMS in addition to the support offered by the E-learning Center and the IT Center in providing seamless access to online platforms and assistance with IT resources.

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- UoB offers a comprehensive range of career support accessible through the Tawasul portal, including workshops, counseling, job fairs, and internships. The goal is to empower students in making informed career choices and achieving success in the workforce. Career fairs are organised to facilitate student engagement with companies and institutions. During the site visit, students and alumni confirmed that the Career Guidance Office organizes regular career fairs and internship opportunities.

- As per the SER, arrangements are in place for inducting both newly admitted and transferring BELL students. The Undergraduate Students Induction Day, organized by the Guidance and Counseling Department, introduces first-year students to the university's culture, values, academic procedures, and available services. The College of Arts and the DELL also hold induction days to acquaint students with their respective offerings. In addition, comprehensive information regarding the regulations and services can be found on the university's website.

- Academic advising is provided to all students, with each student being assigned an academic advisor. The SIS facilitates efficient communication between advisors and students. DELL monitors and provides support to at-risk students, who are identified based on their Cumulative Grade Point Averages (CGPAs), through an online Academic Advising System, particularly those who may not meet the minimum requirements for the BELL. However, the Panel noticed a low students satisfaction rate (69.6%) with electronic advising *via* SIS, as demonstrated in the latest survey, thus, advises the Department to investigate this matter and enhance the electronic advising services accordingly.

- UoB has implemented measures to support students with special needs and address the specific needs of women. The Disability Division, within the Students' Services and Development Department, offers services to support students with physical and psychological disabilities, including counselling, and additional support. Currently, no students with special needs are enrolled in the programme.

- UoB regularly assesses and improves its support services to meet the needs of its students. Through continuous evaluation and gathering feedback, the university identifies areas for enhancement and makes necessary adjustments to provide high-quality support. The Student Exit Survey indicates a high level of satisfaction among exiting students, particularly regarding the prompt responsiveness of the Students Service Centre. Alumni and employer surveys further support these positive findings, which validate the programme's effectiveness.

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# Standard 3

## Academic Standards of Students and Graduates

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

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## Indicator 3.1: Efficiency of the Assessment

*The assessment is effective and aligned with learning outcomes, to ensure attainment of the graduate attributes and academic standards of the programme.*

**Judgement:** *Addressed*

- Evidence that a variety of assessment methods are used and uniformly applied across the programme and that the assessments meet the academic standards of the programme was provided and confirmed during the interviews. Reviewing samples of internal pre and post moderation forms, samples of CILOs and PILOs assessment sheets, courses portfolios, samples of assessments, and samples of SafeAssign originality report verifies that the assessment methods, in place, are valid, reliable and in line with current practices in the field.

- The Panel confirmed during interviews that appropriate mechanisms are in place to ensure the alignment of assessments with CILOs. These mechanisms are reflected *via* various processes, such as statistical analysis of CILO-PILO attainment (using percentages and averages) which is conducted by DELL through CILO-PILO Assessment Excel Sheet. The programme also employs a set of assessment rubrics to evaluate student performance on assignments and projects. Another mechanism to achieve these goals, samples of assessment methods are subjected to internal moderation to ensure that instructors design assessments in line with the course CILOs, that the assessment tasks are clear and appropriate, and that marking is consistent with the same standards.

- The Panel found sufficient evidence on mechanisms followed for monitoring the implementation and improvement of the assessment process through the annual SERs. During the interviews, the Panel confirmed the involvement of the Quality Assurance (QA) committees in ensuring consistency, level adequacy and the quality of the assessments by reviewing course portfolios submitted by the faculty.

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## Indicator 3.2: Academic Integrity

*Academic integrity is ensured through the consistent implementation of relevant policies and procedures that deter plagiarism and other forms of academic misconduct (e.g. cheating, forging of results, and commissioning others to do the work).*

**Judgement:** *Addressed*

- The Panel finds that policies and procedures relating to academic integrity, ethics, and research are well-disseminated and known by students and staff. These include Anti-Plagiarism Policy, Regulations of Professional Conduct Violations, Study and Examination Regulations. The Panel recognizes UoB's efforts to compel its students to adhere to Anti-Plagiarism policies and regulations, and principles of integrity and ethical research practices.

- SafeAssign application is compulsory to all courses including research courses. There were some reported cases of academic misconduct where students failed due to plagiarism as per the originality reports. Cases of plagiarism are referred to the Department Student Misconduct Committee. During interviews with faculty and students, the Panel learned that the acceptable percentage of similarity within 'Safe Assign' is up to 25%. Also, both students and faculty indicated that students could resubmit their work in case of a high similarity level, but there was no clear number of re-submissions permitted. Hence, the Panel recommends that the College should set a maximum number of allowed submissions permitted through the plagiarism detection software (Safe Assign or similar) and align the acceptable percentage of similarity with international norms.

## Indicator 3.3: Internal and External Moderation of Assessment

*There are mechanisms in place to measure the effectiveness of the programme's internal and external moderation systems for setting assessment instruments and grading students' achievements.*

**Judgement:** *Addressed*

- The Panel confirmed in the interviews that the BELL abides by the university's Assessment Moderation Policy, which is consistently implemented by the DELL. The SER affirms that DELL has been internally, and externally moderating assessments based on the course rolling plans since 2018. Since the academic year 2021-2022, the internal moderation has been improved to cover two assessment tasks in each course (one of which is the final examination and the other should weigh at least 15%), and to ensure that all courses are internally moderated every semester. The Panel learned during interviews and from the SER that the moderation, in the past, was conducted every four years. The Panel is satisfied with the current improvement.

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- As for the selection of internal and external moderators, this is done in line with UoB Moderation of Assessment Regulation, which outlines details on the selection process and criteria for selecting moderators. During the interviews, it was confirmed that the moderation forms are helpful in assessing the fairness of grading and validity of assessments. Evidence is presented on some pre- and post-moderation forms with the course coordinators' response dated from 1/1/2020 to 10/1/2023 in addition to samples of external moderation forms. Reviewing samples provided, the Panel found that moderators provided comments when deemed necessary. These comments were compiled and analyzed by the Moderation Committee, which develops an assessment improvement plan to be submitted to the DELL.

- From the interviews and supporting evidence, the Panel notes that evaluation of the effectiveness of the programme's internal and external moderation is sought through the Moderation Survey that is conducted at the end of each academic year as per the SER. The SER refers to guidelines that have been developed based on the results of the survey analysis.

## Indicator 3.4: Work-based Learning

*Where assessed work-based learning takes place, there is a policy and procedures to manage the process and its assessment, to assure that the learning experience is appropriate in terms of content and level for meeting the intended learning outcomes.*

**Judgement:** *Addressed*

- The Panel was provided with evidence that the three credit hours practicum course (TRAN405) is available for translation-strand students only. Students expressed highly positive satisfaction regarding the value of their internship experience allowing them to become better competitors and raising their employability. They also highlighted their instructor's support for better understanding of the course expectations. The Panel suggests that the BELL team explores the possibilities of the incorporation of the work-based learning component as a credited course to students of all strands, not only the translation major.

- Clear policies, procedures and guidelines ensuring an equivalent experience amongst translation students are in place. Furthermore, roles and responsibilities of all the internship stakeholders are set out in the (TRAN405) Manual document, which is available at Blackboard platform and is well-communicated to all stakeholders as indicated during the interviews with different stakeholders.

- The SER relates clear evidence that the assessment of the work-based learning is well-managed, consistently implemented, and is appropriate in terms of content and level. The

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Panel found that the CILOs and PILOs are well aligned as evidenced in (TRAN405) Course Portfolio of 2022-2023.

- The Panel finds that the effectiveness of the work-based learning is being evaluated *via* the Internship Evaluation Survey. However, the Panel was provided with only two survey reports dating back to April 2022 and November 2022. Also, the Panel noticed that the Internship providers are not surveyed. The Panel thus recommends that the College should ensure that the work-based learning component is regularly evaluated by all relevant stakeholders.

## Indicator 3.5: Capstone Project or Thesis/Dissertation Component

*Where there is a capstone project or thesis/dissertation component, there are clear policies and procedures for supervision and evaluation which state the responsibilities and duties of both the supervisor and students, and there is a mechanism to monitor the related implementations and improvements.*

**Judgement:** *Addressed*

- Reviewing the Course Specification Form of the 'Project Writing' course (ENGL450) and the document titled '(ENGL450) CILO to PILO sheet', the Panel confirmed that the capstone project component contributes effectively to the achievement of the PILOs. Furthermore, the SER states that the capstone project component contributes to enhancing students' skills in problem-solving, data analysis, and team play, which are embedded in the UILOs, PEOs and PILOs. These skills not only enhance students' employability rate but also introduce them to research, thus satisfying the programme's PILOs, PEOs and UILOs according to results revealed *via* the Alumni Survey of 2022.

- The supervisors' and students' roles and responsibilities are clearly set in place in the Project Writing Guidelines document. These roles and responsibilities are communicated to all stakeholders *via* the (ENGL450) Course Packet in addition to at least three research-related seminars delivered by academic advisors at the academic semester advent. The interviewed alumni, as well as students, confirmed the positive impact of the knowledge of their roles in realizing the capstone on their learning experience.

- The Project Writing Course Survey measures students' satisfaction with the supervision process and the resources available to conduct their research. Survey results verified that 78.5% of participating students expressed being either 'Satisfied' or 'Somewhat Satisfied' with the 'Project Writing' course (ENGL450) quality, knowledge and skills it equipped them with for their writing tasks and future career opportunities.

- During interviews, students highlighted the necessity of providing them with timely feedback after each submission. In the Alumni Survey of 2021, graduates recommend

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integrating newest technology in education (in particular Artificial Intelligence applications), enhancing research skills, and augmenting the use of technology and 21st century skills. The Panel notes with concern the high ratio of students to supervisor (50:1). While the Panel embraces the programme's keenness to interpret survey results in the Project Writing Students Progress Report, it highly recommends that the College should investigate ways of advancing research skills of students to accommodate the newest technologies (Artificial Intelligence) and the 21st century skills.

- Further evidence was provided on the assessment of the quality of the 'Project Writing' course (ENGL450). This includes the CILO-PILO achievement report of 2022-2023; and the (ENGL450) Project Writing Course Survey of 2022-2023. Updating the Project Writing Course (ENGL450) rubric and the project's description in line with results extracted from surveys stand out as evidence of benefiting from evaluation in improving the course delivery.

## Indicator 3.6: Achievements of the Graduates

*The achievements of the graduates are consonant with those achieved on equivalent programmes as expressed in their assessed work, rates of progression and first destinations.*

**Judgement:** *Addressed*

- The aspired level of students' achievements is verified through the alignment of graduate attributes to PILOs and PEOs and the alignment of the assessments to CILOs and PILOs. Examining samples of students' submissions, course e-portfolios, moderation of assessment reports, CILOs and PILOs reports convinced the Panel that the level of students' achievements is appropriate.

- While the ratio of admitted students to successful graduates has increased from 0.5 in 2019-2020 to 0.6 in 2021-2022, the programme witnessed a rise in the enrollment rate from 223 in 2020-2021 to 271 in 2021-2022 reflecting increasing demand for the BELL programme. The number of graduates also increased from 161 in the academic year 2019-2020 to 175 in the academic year 2021-2022, testifying to the programme's capacity to satisfy students' graduation requirements. The students' retention rate increased in contrast to the decreasing number of under probation and dismissed cases, reflecting the increased effectiveness of the programme.

- The Alumni Survey Results of 2021 and 2022 verify the programme's success in ensuring that academic standards meet the graduates' progression, with a moderately high satisfaction rate (3+) in achieving the PEOs such as effective communication, applying English in related careers, research skills, critical thinking and IT skills. The Alumni Survey Results of 2021 also revealed that 58% of graduates were employed, of which 52%

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are employed in the education sector, 12% in translation and 36% in various sectors ranging from diplomacy to receptionists.

- The Panel was provided with sufficient evidence to demonstrate the DELL efforts in retaining graduate and employer satisfaction with the graduates' profile. These includes the Assurance and Enhancement Policy; Alumni Survey Results of 2021 and 2022; Programme Advisory Committee (PAC) meeting minutes (2019-2022); Employer Survey Results of 2022; the programme CILO-PILO Average EXCEL sheet; Creative Writing workshop; Public Speaking Workshop; Preparing Future Leaders; Master Trainer Certificate in Engaging and Motivating Adult Learning in a Face to Face Environment Programme. During interviews, the Panel confirmed the satisfaction of graduates and employers with the graduates' profile.

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## Standard 4

### Effectiveness of Quality Management and Assurance

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

### Indicator 4.1: Quality Assurance Management

*There is a clear quality assurance management system, in relation to the programme that ensures the institution's policies, procedures and regulations are applied effectively and consistently.*

**Judgement:** *Addressed*

- At the institutional level, policies and regulations are in place such as admission and registration policies, Quality Assurance Policy, the Quality Assurance Enhancement Policy, and the UoB Teaching and Learning Policy. The Panel acknowledges that there are institutional mechanisms at the university, college and department levels to review the QA policies. Also, there are portals for communicating these policies to all stakeholders (e.g., Quality Assurance and Accreditation Center (QAAC) webpage) and several printed documents in which the policies are published.

- The QAAC oversees the QA system at the University. At the college level, there is a Quality Assurance Office and a QA Committee. The Heads of these entities report to the Dean, who communicates with the Department. At the department level, there is also a QA Committee that reports to the HoD and oversees all QA activities ranging from monitoring courses, teaching and learning, assessment, and surveying stakeholders.

- To manage the programme's QA processes and guarantee that they comply with university requirements, the College maintains a QA policy which is monitored by the Quality Assurance Office at the university level, which tracks the evaluation and progress of different programmes. An annual QA report is produced for each programme by the responsible QA committee. It was confirmed by the Panel during the interviews that the QA system is being applied consistently.

- The QA Committee organizes workshops for faculty to assist in the understanding of QA processes. However, since these workshops are not mandatory, it is not clear how many academic staff participate in these to benefit from the training offered in them. Thus, the Panel advises investigating ways to ensure that QA training workshops are attended by most teaching staff and administrators. The Panel was satisfied to see that faculty are participating in various committees and this proves their awareness of QA processes

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within the programme. During interviews, academic and administrative staff showed an understanding of QA and their role in ensuring effectiveness of provision. Interviews also confirmed the active monitoring, periodic evaluation, and updates of the QA management system in the College. The Panel, thus, holds the view that the programme has provided enough evidence that shows that it has a quality management system that is monitored, evaluated, and improved periodically.

## Indicator 4.2: Programme Management and Leadership

*The programme is managed in a way that demonstrates effective and responsible leadership and there are clear lines of accountability.*

**Judgement:** *Addressed*

- The College has a suitable organizational chart for managing the programme, with distinct reporting lines to facilitate interdepartmental communication and decision-making. The HoD oversees the two programmes offered at DELL. The responsibilities at every level are clearly defined and closely watched. The academic and administrative responsibilities are distributed among various committees that report to the HoD. It was clear from the interviews with academic staff and the senior management that the programme is managed adequately and that the current organization is suitable.

- It is evident that existing reporting lines connect the Department and its committees to the College Council. The management of the programme is supported at the college level by committees such as the QA Committee, the Academic Programme Committee, the Promotion Committee, and the Scientific Research Committee. Email and the Content Management System are the primary means of communication. The Panel received sufficient evidence during the interviews that confirms that there are channels of effective communication and decision-making in the programme.

- All posts and committees have clear Terms of Reference (ToR), and evidence was provided on their function in accordance with their clearly specified ToRs. However, the Panel noticed that the ToRs for all committees are the same, with no specialization for each committee. Therefore, the Panel recommends that the College should review and revise Terms of Reference for all committees to ensure that the specific role of each committee is distinguished and clarified.

- The responsibility and custodianship of maintaining the academic standards of the programme are clearly stated at various levels, as per the Quality Manual and the Faculty Task Allocation & Reports document. This helps identify where different academic and administrative responsibilities lie, and who exactly is responsible for the custodianship of the academic standards of the programme at the various levels: department, college, and

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university. This was confirmed to the Panel from interviews with college administrative and academic staff.

- The programme has provided evidence that shows that the programme management is supported by administrative staff at the programme level and the college level. Based on the interviews, the evidence, and SER, the Panel is confident that there are defined lines of accountability, and that the programme's current management is exhibiting effective leadership. Committees, councils, operational plans, reports, satisfaction surveys, and quality manuals are all evidenced.

## Indicator 4.3: Annual and Periodic Review of the Programme

*There are arrangements for annual internal evaluation and periodic reviews of the programme that incorporate both internal and external feedback and mechanisms are in place to implement recommendations for improvement.*

**Judgement:** *Addressed*

- At UoB, there is an annual and periodic programme review policy in both English and Arabic that outlines the purpose, scope, principles of reviews and details each type of programme evaluation. The annual SERs of the programme are prepared by its QA Committee based on a range of different data sources, such as: course details; results of course evaluations conducted by the QAAC every semester; feedback from the department committees, PAC, and Student Advisory Committee (SAC); and survey results. The Panel examined the annual reports of the last four years (2019-2020 to 2021-2022) and noticed that they include intensive analysis of various sources and ends with an improvement plan. Evidence was also provided on decisions taken at the Department to implement the latest improvement plan and the action plan. The SER details the recently implemented modifications including revising the assessment of some courses; updating all course specification forms to include research component at 300- and 400- level courses and oral presentations across all sections; conducting three public speaking workshops in addition to other workshops on career guidance.

- The QAAC developed a manual which is a comprehensive reference guide for periodic reviews of programmes at UoB. During the interviews, the Panel was informed that the periodic review takes place every five years. Based on the recommendations the programme received during the BQA review in 2017, major changes were made to the programme including initiating a new study plan in 2020 based on a benchmarking study, and revision of the admission policy in 2020. The SER does not mention any other comprehensive review. Evidence was provided on conducting an Internal Audit Report dated 20 February 2024 by the QAAC, however, the focus, scope and purpose of this audit report is different than what is expected in a periodic review of the programme. Therefore,

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the Panel recommends that the College should ensure that a comprehensive periodic review of the programme is regularly conducted with its results utilized in improving the programme delivery.

## Indicator 4.4: Benchmarking and Surveys

*Benchmarking studies and the structured comments collected from stakeholders' surveys are analysed and the outcomes are used to inform decisions on programmes and are made available to the stakeholders.*

**Judgement:** *Partially Addressed*

- The Benchmarking Policy of UoB provides the framework for different entities of the University to undertake benchmarking. In accordance with the university regulations in effect at the time, the BELL programme went through a benchmarking exercise in 2018–2019 with three universities at regional and international levels. However, the Panel noticed that the benchmarking study was limited to comparing the number and titles of courses. As explained during the interviews, following this exercise, the programme's study plan was updated in 2020. The Panel, thus, recommends that the College should conduct a comprehensive benchmarking study, covering all aspects of the programme, and utilize the results of this study as an input in the next periodic review to improve the programme.

- The BELL programme uses formal mechanisms to collect structured comments from internal and external stakeholders by means of surveys and PAC and SAC meetings. The submitted evidence clearly shows that Senior Exit Surveys, Alumni Surveys, Employer Surveys, and Enrolled Students Surveys have been deployed to gather stakeholders' input on the BELL programme. According to the Course Evaluation Report 2021-2022, the response rate to course evaluation surveys in the College of Arts is 37%, which is significantly low. Response rates are high for the Student Exit Surveys (135 respondents) but low for Alumni (64 respondents) and exceptionally low for Employer Surveys (5 respondents). The Panel recommends that the College should investigate reasons behind the low response rates for Alumni and Employer Surveys and introduce mechanisms to improve response rates to these surveys.

- Feedback from different stakeholders is analyzed and incorporated into action plans, which inform the decisions for future improvements in the programme. Evidence was provided on the modifications introduced to the BELL programme in 2020 based on the feedback of various stakeholders collected in 2018-2019. However, no evidence provided of major improvement on the programme taken place since 2020.

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- The SER does not explain how changes to the programme are communicated to external stakeholders. Internal stakeholders, faculty and staff, confirmed during interviews that they receive updates either from the HoD or through meeting minutes. In addition, PAC members are informed of changes during PAC meetings. However, other stakeholders were not aware of the extent to which their suggestions have been considered, as revealed during the interviews. Some suggestions by external stakeholders were to incorporate real-life experiences into the programmes; provide students with the needful skills for clarity in writing and to be more prepared for the job market; improve direct and indirect assessment methods; and increase graduates exposure to the labour market. Alumni have expressed that they would like more opportunities to stay connected. Furthermore, although the SER stated that SAC and PAC were satisfied with the learning outcomes and the improvements that were made based on their feedback, the meeting minutes that are cited do not contain any discussion of stakeholders' satisfaction with the changes they suggested and are limited to only mentioning the satisfaction rate with the programme and its strengths. This led the Panel to conclude that changes, updates, and/or improvements to the programme should be better publicized and announced to the stakeholders. The Panel hence recommends that the College should put in place an effective feedback mechanism to communicate to external stakeholders the modifications, improvements, or decisions made based on their feedback and to set in place a process to evaluate the effectiveness of this mechanism.

## Indicator 4.5: Relevance to Labour market and Societal Needs

*The programme has a functioning advisory board and there is continuous scoping of the labour market and the national and societal needs, where appropriate for the programme type, to ensure the relevancy and currency of the programme.*

**Judgement:** *Partially Addressed*

- The BELL programme has a functioning Advisory Board that consists of PAC and SAC. The PAC has members from the governmental and private sectors of the local community. The SER mentions that PAC meets once a year. However, during the interviews, the Panel was informed that a decision has been taken that PAC should meet twice a year. As for SAC, it is also a fully functioning committee that meets periodically. The SER states that feedback from SAC and PAC is used to improve the curriculum and study plan. The Panel noticed that feedback from PAC and SAC is included in the annual SERs and utilized to inform decision making in the programme. Evidence was also provided on submitting the annual SERs on SAC and PAC for approval. However, the Panel noticed that the ToRs of both PAC and SAC lack sufficient details and clarity on the purpose and objectives of each committee; the requisite skills and expertise sought by committee members, the processes by which members are selected, and the roles and responsibilities entrusted to them. Thus, the Panel recommends that the College should ensure that the terms of reference for both

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the Programme Advisory Committee and the Student Advisory Committee are updated and refined.

- The mechanisms that are in place to collect data about the quality of the programme and whether graduates meet labour market needs are mainly satisfaction surveys. The Panel examined a document titled 'Market Study' for the BELL programme that was conducted in 2022. This document presents the results of the Alumni Survey, Employer's Survey, and Senior Exit Survey. These surveys do -to some extent - provide insights into market requirements, but they are primarily designed to evaluate the stakeholders' satisfaction with the programme. The Study does not list the employability skills in the different sectors where alumni have found jobs. The SER explains that the HEC conducted an analysis in 2012 and produced a report emphasising the need for competent English speakers and English language teachers. Another report is mentioned that was produced in 2018.  Nothing further is said about these reports and how these helped the programme decide on its needs in 2023-2024.  The Panel is of the view that, to investigate the ever-changing competitive landscape with the new technology demands, evolving trends, and community needs, thorough market research should be conducted as part of the periodic review of the programme. Adequate research tools need to be developed for this purpose. Therefore, the Panel recommends that the Department should review the currently implemented mechanisms for scoping market needs and design appropriate ones to ensure that the programme meets the national and societal needs of the labour market.

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# V. 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 Bachelor in English Language and Literature of College of Arts 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 exerted by the College to encourage academic staff to utilize technology-enhanced teaching and learning approaches in their respective courses.

2. Department of English Language and Literature academic staff have successfully obtained teaching certificates from the programmes offered by the Unit of Teaching Excellence and Leadership in collaboration with the Higher Education Academy.

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

1. Ensure the PILOs cover all the PEOs and that the PEOs and the PILOs meet international norms through benchmarking with other comparable programmes in Bahrain, regionally and internationally.

2. Ensure that the practical components of the programme are explicitly mentioned in the Study Plan and course syllabi.

3. Put more emphasis on the practical components of the programme and ensure a consistent and comprehensive approach to the development of practical skills across all Minors.

4. Establish a structured and consistent approach to ensure timely feedback is consistently provided to students.

5. Encourage academic staff to apply for promotion and develop a mechanism to reduce the faculty teaching load.

6. Set a maximum number of allowed submissions permitted through the plagiarism detection software (Safe Assign or similar) and align the acceptable percentage of similarity with international norms.

7. Ensure that the work-based learning component is regularly evaluated by all relevant stakeholders.

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8. Investigate ways of advancing research skills of students to accommodate the newest technologies (Artificial Intelligence) and the 21st century skills.

9. Review and revise Terms of Reference for all committees to ensure that the specific role of each committee is distinguished and clarified.

10. Ensure that a comprehensive periodic review of the programme is regularly conducted with its results utilized in improving the programme delivery.

11. Conduct a comprehensive benchmarking study, covering all aspects of the programme, and utilize the results of this study as an input in the next periodic review to improve the programme.

12. Investigate reasons behind the low response rates for Alumni and Employer Surveys and introduce mechanisms to improve response rates to these surveys.

13. Put in place an effective feedback mechanism to communicate to external stakeholders the modifications, improvements, or decisions made based on their feedback and to set in place a process to evaluate the effectiveness of this mechanism.

14. Ensure that the terms of reference for both the Programme Advisory Committee and the Student Advisory Committee are updated and refined.

15. Review the currently implemented mechanisms for scoping market needs and design appropriate ones to ensure that the programme meets the national and societal needs of the labour market.

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