

Policy: Review, Evaluation and Improvement

Policy Reference: C-QA-002
Version: 2
Person Responsible: Director: Quality, Measurement and Analysis and Planning

1. Policy Statement

Bahrain Polytechnic is committed to maintaining effective teaching, support services and administrative processes in order to facilitate high quality learning by undertaking regular reviews of the performance, quality, relevance and effectiveness of its academic programmes at the faculties as well as maintaining corporate efficiency and credibility and improving deficiencies.

Review, Evaluation and Improvement processes are an important contributor to the Polytechnic commitment towards achieving its mission and key strategic results.

Information from internal and external reviews and audits are collected on a regular basis, analysed to determine if standards are being maintained and to develop actions for improvement according to a standard set of procedures and monitor progress of those actions. Information on reviews and audits are reported as appropriate.

The purpose of this policy is to set out the procedures and provide guidelines for reviewing Bahrain Polytechnic courses, programmes, teaching and support services and corporate business practices

2. Definitions

Accountability: The requirement, when undertaking an activity, to expressly address the concerns, requirements or perspectives of others. (Source: Arab Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ANQAHE))

Accreditation: Recognition granted by an authority or an agency to a program or an educational institution, verifying the institution's ability to meet the quality standards and specifications of the accreditation authority or agency. The approved standards normally include the existence of systems to ensure quality and continuous improvement of its academic activities in accordance with the published regulations from the accreditation entity (Source: Arab Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ANQAHE))

Audit: a process of assessing the internal controls to ensure it comply with internal procedures and external legislative bodies. Also providing an independent opinion.

Audit Action: assigning the relevant directorate with the task in order to fulfill the audit recommendation or finding

Audit Opinion: part of an external Audit report that includes 4 types: unqualified (highest or best outcome), qualified (second best), adverse (areas unaudited), disclaimer (worst case opinion, due to limitation auditors decline to give an audit opinion or judgment)

Audit Plan: A plan that outlines scheduled dates to perform the audits on the different auditable units set by the internal auditor and approved by the audit committee. It also includes performing a risk assessment by identifying potential risks through different risk identification techniques (i.e. conducting interviews and expert judgement) and assessing the risk assigning a risk rating (High, Medium, Low) based on its probability (likelihood) and impact.

Internal Audit Report: includes audit findings, risk implications, recommendations and management responses (i.e. justifications, actions to fulfill the audit finding) for the purpose of improving an organization's operations by accomplishing its objectives and improve organization's governance, risk management and management controls.

Annual Review: A routine process that assesses the quality of all aspects of academic work offered at the level of course or programme, that usually takes place at the end of each academic year. (Source: Arab Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ANQAHE))

Benchmarking: A process of comparison of the academic standards of a programme, the quality of service, or the quality or product, with similar institutions locally, regionally or internationally. (Source: Arab Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ANQAHE))

Evaluation: A set of procedures and methods to detect the development of an institution or a system along with their components, features, effectiveness and outcomes, and to judge them based on established terms of reference and often in relation to professional standards. (Source: Arab Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ANQAHE))

External Audit: Also called a financial audit, is an audit performed by a professional audit firm in accordance with specific laws or rules on the financial statements of a company, government entity, other legal entity or organization, and who is independent of the entity being audited. The output is an unbiased and independent external audit report.

External Audit Report: Consists of audit opinion, audited entity financial statement and notes to the financial statements.

External Review: A process conducted with experts unconnected with the institution, to ensure that quality standards are continuously maintained. (Source: Arab Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ANQAHE))

External Reviewer: A reviewer (auditor) who is unconnected with the institution and who is invited to perform an institutional or program review. (Source: Arab Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ANQAHE))

Institutional Accreditation: Approval for operation of the whole institution based on certain standards with regard to its adequacy of facilities and resources, including the institution's staff, academic services, student support, curriculum, students' achievement levels, faculty members and other components of the educational institution. This is usually conducted by an accreditation authority based on specific criteria to judge whether the minimum standards are met. Accreditation is granted for a specific period of time. (Source: Arab Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ANQAHE))

Institutional Surveys: A set of approved surveys used to systematically provide information for the purposes of quality assurance, quality improvement and to monitor progress. The Institutional Quality Surveys are by nature quite general and situations will arise where more detailed information

may need to be sought from students and/or staff. All institutional surveys are listed in the Institutional Quality Survey Framework.

Internal Review: A process through which a center ensures that specifications within the institution and relevant external standards are regularly and continuously applied within the centre. (Source: Arab Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ANQAHE))

Internal Auditor: Professionals employed by organizations to generate audit plans, perform the internal auditing activity and issuing internal audit report and oversee external and special purpose audits.

Internal Audit: identifying potential risks, assessing the internal controls in place to mitigate potential risks and ensure compliance with internal procedures and external legislative bodies . Also providing an independent opinion.

Management Letter: A report submitted by the external audit to the executive management to address potential areas for attention. Similar to audit report but broader and not detailed.

National Qualifications Framework: An instrument for the classification of qualifications according to a set of criteria for specified levels of learning achieved, which aims to integrate and coordinate national qualifications sub-systems and improve the transparency, access, progression, and quality of qualifications in relation to the labour market and civil society. (Source: Arab Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ANQAHE))

Non-institutional Surveys: Internal surveys or questionnaires developed to provide information on a specific activity or matter that have limited applicability. Examples include questionnaires used in the evaluation of the effectiveness of specific interventions, determination of student preferences or the evaluation of the effectiveness of workshops and presentations where an Institutional Quality Survey would not be appropriate. Similarly research surveys (surveys that are designed with the intention of developing or contributing to the creation of general conclusions from particulars as part of a research project) are also excluded.

Review: The examination and formal review, within a pre-agreed framework, to measure the extent to which standards or a set of guidelines are met; to ensure the accuracy of records; and to achieve the set targets of efficiency and effectiveness. It may be carried out by internal or external groups. (Source: Arab Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ANQAHE))

Scope of Audit: May involve topics such as an organization's governance, risk management and management controls over: efficiency/effectiveness of operations (including safeguarding of assets), the reliability of financial and management reporting, and compliance with laws and regulations.

Special Audits: is an audit performed by a third party that is external and independent of the entity being audited on a specific area related to the requester field of work (excluding financials).

3. Application

People:

This policy applies to all staff and students of Bahrain Polytechnic.

Processes:

All reviews and audits conducted at or by Bahrain Polytechnic. This includes but is not limited to the following:

Internal:

- Annual Programme Review (APR)
- Periodic Review
- External Validation
- External Monitoring
- Benchmarking
- Periodic Institutional Review
- Internal Audit

External:

- Programme Validation
- Programme Mapping
- Programme-within-Faculty Review
- Programme Accreditation
- Institutional Accreditation
- Institutional Review
- Institutional Listing
- External Audit
- Special purpose audits

4. External Requirements

This policy helps Bahrain Polytechnic meet the following external requirements:

- The laws and regulations of Kingdom of Bahrain.
- Royal Decree No. 65/2008
- Higher Education Council (HEC)
- International Financial Reporting Standards "IFRS"
- Ministry of Finance Policies and procedures
- Civil Services Bureau

5. What is Expected:

Reviews, Evaluation and audits will be :

- Carried out according to its schedule
- Contribute to the process of on-going improvement by identifying system weaknesses and facilitating corrective and improvement actions where necessary;
- Compliance with legal, regulatory and external requirements;
- Identification of potential risks to students, staff or the Polytechnic;
- Identification of cases of non-compliance and ensure that compliance occurs, and to identify areas of improvement in procedures and processes.
- Identification of strengths and areas of excellent performance/good practice so that it may be replicated in other areas
- Establishment of a range of comparative data and information for the use of the quality of the programmes, support services or corporate directorates

- Maintaining organization's governance, risk management and management controls over: efficiency/effectiveness of operations (including safeguarding of assets), the reliability of financial and management reporting, and compliance with laws and regulations.

6. Key Dates

First Approved:	07 September 2008
This Version Approved:	04 June 2015 by SMT, 14 December 2015 by BoT
Next Review Date:	4 years from this version approved date or as required

7. Links and Related Documents

- Programme Approval And Follow Up A-AB-001
- Procedure: Annual Programme Review (APR)
- Procedure: Quality Improvement Plan (QIP)
- Roles and Interrelationships of Various Quality Entities within the Polytechnic (approved by SMT on 05 July 2015)



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