Bahrain Polytechnic Quality Management System

Policy Section: Academic

Policy: Programme Approval

Policy Reference: A-AB-001
Version: 6
Person Responsible: Director Academic Development

1. Policy Statement

Bahrain Polytechnic is responsible for the academic standards of the programmes and the quality of its offerings. When considering programmes, the Polytechnic ensures that all relevant
 strategic, financial, resource, legal and reputational issues are given due consideration and appropriately managed when identified. This policy identifies clear requirements and responsibilities for the development, validation, approval, National Qualification Framework (NQF) Placement, change of all Academic Programmes and courses.

2. Definitions

Concept Brief:	An outline of a credible rationale to support the investigation of the need for and the development of potential new programmes before any resources are committed.
Course:	The smallest component of delivery in which a student usually can be enrolled, consisting of defined learning outcomes and requirements.
Confirmation:	Confirming the decisions made by the Mapping Panel
Constructive alignment:	Coherence between the Graduate Profile, Programme Intended Learning Outcomes, Course Intended Learning Outcomes, teaching and learning strategies adopted and the assessment task.
Credit:	A measure of academic achievement in a course or programme. Credit can only be awarded as a result of an assessment process. One credit requires a notional ten hours of study (including scheduled class or other contact hours, assessment time, work experience or internships, other tutor directed time and independent or self-directed study).
Development Report:	A development report presents the case that an investment of resources in a proposed programme is viable based all evidence gathered including rationale, risk analysis, quantitative analysis of costs.
eLearning Course	A course in which 75% or more of its contact hours are facilitated by online activities.
Feasibility Report:	analysis of the viability of the new academic development based on robust research of all relevant stakeholder needs, local, regional and international best practice and trends.

General Directorate of National Qualifications Framework (GDQ):	A directorate of BQA responsible for administering and maintaining the NQF in line with the NQF General Policies
High Impact Programme:	A programme leading to a qualification of 120 credits or more, a post graduate programme, or a programme specified as high impact by the Academic Board, SMT, CEO, or Bahrain Polytechnic Board of Trustees.
Level:	Progressive stages of competence, achievement and complexity within the qualification framework.
Low Impact Programme:	A programme leading to a qualification of less than 30 credits unless specified as medium impact by the Academic Board, SMT, CEO, or Bahrain Polytechnic Board of Trustees.
Major Changes to Existing Courses:	changes to course code or name, course aim, credit value, notional hours; pre, co and anti-requisites, and learning outcomes.
Mapping:	Establishing and proposing the NQF level and credit of a qualification and its component courses.
Minor Changes to Existing Courses:	changes to NQF sub-strand, topics/content, learning and teaching strategies, completion requirements, assessment description, weighting and learning outcomes assessed, must pass requirements and form of assessments.
Minor Programme:	A supplemental second discipline of study and concentration that often complements the Major.
National Qualifications Framework (NQF):	An instrument for the classification of qualifications and courses 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)).
Medium Impact Programme:	A programme leading to a qualification of 30 to 115 credits unless specified as high impact by the Academic Board, SMT, CEO, or Bahrain Polytechnic Board of Trustees.
Notional Learning Time:	The time it takes a learner, on average, to complete all learning activities required for the achievement of a qualification, including the assessment.
Programme:	Generic term for a group of one or more Courses, requiring students to formally enrol at Bahrain Polytechnic, and usually leading to a qualification or other award.
Programme Approval Document (PAD):	Formal approval document including description of the programme, its qualifications, programme learning outcomes and specific requirements such as programme entry and qualification completion.

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Qualification:	An award (degree, diploma or other type of formal certification) issued by an approved organisation.
Qualification Placement:	The process of placing a qualification on the NQF after fulfilling the validation standards.
Re-mapping	The process of re-evaluating the NQF level and credit of a qualification and its component courses.
Readiness to Teach:	Confirmation that all essential resources and staff are available to start teaching a new programme or course.
Validation:	The process to ensure that all new, revised or amended qualifications are credible and fit for purpose, according to specified criteria.
Verification:	The process that is used to ensure that providers' assessment decisions are valid and reliable and are in line with standards. Internal verification refers to the process of internal checks that the provider has in place to ensure the consistency of assessment decisions. External verification is carried out by independent verifiers (that is, by people independent of the provider) to ensure consistency in assessment decisions.

3. Application

People:

- All those involved in developing, validating and approving Bahrain Polytechnic programmes and courses.

Processes:

- This policy applies to all Programmes and Courses offered by Bahrain Polytechnic, including those delivered by the Polytechnic in co-operation with or under contract to another body in Bahrain or overseas, regardless of type of delivery.

4. External Requirements

This policy helps Bahrain Polytechnic meet the following external requirements:

- Higher Education Council requirements
- Professional accreditations.
- BQA requirements for review, listing and placement

5. What is Expected:

- The Qualifications awarded by Bahrain Polytechnic shall be approved by the appropriate persons or bodies.
- The Qualifications awarded by Bahrain Polytechnic shall be consistent with, and may seek placement on, the National Qualifications Framework (NQF). They shall:

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- o Be classified by level in accordance with the National Qualifications Framework (NQF).
- o Be allocated a credit value (programme and courses) in accordance with the NQF.
- o Be arranged in courses which are classified by NQF level and credit.
- All changes to programme affecting the NQF Placement Profile must be notified to the General Directorate of Qualifications (GDQ)
- The Qualifications awarded by Bahrain Polytechnic shall have Stakeholder support by ensuring that consultation with relevant employers and other stakeholders has occurred
- The Qualifications awarded by Bahrain Polytechnic shall, through a variety of publications, have information about them published annually in which the formal requirements of the programme and its courses are set out for students.

6. Key Dates

First Approved: (1) 10 May 2009 by SMT
This version Approved: (6) 25 October 2021 by BoT
Next Review Date: 4 years from this version approval or as required

7. Links and Related Documents

- [Term of Reference: SMT, Academic Board, AQAC, Faculty Board](#)s, School Boards, Continuing Education Board and Programme Committees.
- [Policy: Naming and Awarding Qualifications](#)
- [Policy: Student Admissions](#)
- [Procedure: Approval of Programmes (high, medium and low impact)](#)
- Procedure: Approval of Changes to Programmes/ Qualifications
- [Procedure: Placement of Qualifications on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF)](#)
- [Procedure: Approval of New Courses](#)
- [Procedure: Approval of Changes to Existing Courses (Major and Minor Changes)](#)

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