

BIBF

Quality Assurance

CODE OF PRACTICE

September 2023

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Glossary

APCL	Accreditation of Prior Certificated Learning
APEL	Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning
APL	Accreditation of Prior Learning
APLC	Accreditation of Prior Learning Committee
ASC	Academic Steering Committee
BIBF	Bahrain Institute of Banking and Finance
BoE	Board of Examiners
ESC	Education Standards Committee
BQA	Bahrain Education and Training Quality Authority
CH	Chapter
CILOs	Course Intended Learning Outcomes
CMARG	Malpractices, Appeals and Complaints Review Group
CoP	Code of Practice
DAMR	Design, Approval, Monitoring and Review
ESC	Education Standards Committee
HEC	Higher Education Council of Bahrain
HoC	Head of Centre
HR	Human Resources
IAG	Institute Advisory Group
ILOs	Intended learning outcomes
MC	Mitigating Circumstance
NQF	National Qualification Framework
PILOs	Program Intended Learning Outcomes
PRC	Programme Review Committee
QA	Quality Assurance
QAA	Quality Assurance Agency of the UK
QAWG	Quality Assurance Working Group
T&L	Teaching and Learning
ToR	Terms of Reference
UK	United Kingdom

1. Quality Policy

The Management team (top management) of BIBF has defined and documented its Quality Policy. This policy includes the organization's commitment for meeting customers' requirements and a continual improvement process.

Management ensures that the quality policy: is appropriate to the purpose of the organization, includes a commitment to comply with requirements and continually improve the effectiveness of the quality management system.

Provides a framework for establishing and reviewing quality objectives in which, quality objectives have been established for each key element of the quality policy, is communicated, and understood within the organization, and is reviewed for continuing suitability. The review of the quality policy is a standing agenda item for the Management Review meetings.

2. Quality Policy Statement

The Quality Policy of BIBF is to provide high and consistent quality service in education and training to support Bahrain's banking and financial Community and extend to other customers. BIBF is committed to:

- Ensure customers', learners' and employers' needs and expectations are determined, converted into requirements, and fulfilled, continually improve our people and processes to anticipate, meet and exceed the needs of customers,
- Support the continually improving quality of our customers' needs through the education and training quality services we provide,
- Focus on quality of its programs and the provision for learners, and on the activities to support them.
- Raise learners' achievements – defined narrowly as on-program results and more widely as career and progression goals – through the continual improvement of our provision, in its range and its quality, comply with all relevant frameworks and requirements of the higher education council (HEC), the education and training quality authority (BQA), as well as the applicable quality standards of the external accreditation bodies and partnering institutions,
- Conform fully with the BIBF's 'code of practice', the applicable administrative operating policies and procedures of BIBF, legal and regulatory requirements, and to identify key process indicators as quality objectives and indicate plans to achieve these targets within a reasonable time frame.

3. Policy documents

Code of Practice for Quality Assurance and Standards

BIBF's 'Code of Practice' is the main element of the quality framework for all BIBF multi-module programs and stand-alone courses. It sets out the policies and processes which cover all aspects of our programmes, from design through student life cycle, in the following twelve chapters:

NEW Chapter Number	Old Chapters Content List	Date Issued	Date last updated	New Chapter Number	New Content List	Annexures (Related procedures, committee structure & documents)
0	CH00-Introduction	December 2008		CoP-Ch00-02-01	Quality Assurance	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. CH-00-GL01-01 Glossary of Terms 2. CH-00-GL02-02 Policies Update Reference
1	CH01-Recruitment & Admissions	December 2008	September 2023	CoP-Ch01-03-01	Admission and Registration	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. CH01-GL01-02 APL Guidelines 2. CH01-GL02-02 Transfer Guidelines 3. CH01-GL03-02 Certification Issuance and Reissuance Guidelines 4. CH01-GL04-01 Academic Associate Students Guideline 5. CH01-GL05-01 Academic Admissions Guidelines committee ToR 6. CH01-FR01-02 APL Application form 7. CH01-FR02-02 APL Centre statement example 8. CH01-FR03-02 Special Needs Interview Form 9. CH01-FR04-01 Entry screening form - Admissions

2	CH02- Accreditation of Prior Learning	September 2009	September 2023	CoP-Ch02-03-01	Design, Approval, Monitoring and Review	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. CH02-GL01-03 NQF Level Descriptors 2. CH02-GL02-01 Advisory Committee guidelines & ToR 3. CH02-GL03-02 Mapping Panel Guidelines 4. CH02-GL04-02 Confirmation Panel Guidelines 5. CH02-GL05-01 Online Self- Paced Course Guidelines 6. CH02-GL06-01 PILO-CILO Matrix 7. CH02-GL07-02 Credit Framework Guidelines 8. CH02-FR01-02 Business Case 9. CH02-FR02-02 Module Specification Form 10. CH02-FR03-02 Programme Specification Form 11. CH02-FR04-02 Modification Form 12. CH02-FR05-02 NDA - Non-Disclosure Agreement 13. CH02-FR06-02 Advisory Committee Nomination Form 14. CH02-FR07-03 NQF Scorecard Mapping Form 15. CH02-FR08-03 NQF Placement Application Form 16. CH02-FR09-02 Benchmarking Report Form
3	Chapter 6 and 7 now have been merged	September 2009	September 2023	CoP-Ch03-03-01	Learning Assessment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. CH03-GL02 -02 Mitigating Guidelines 2. CH03-GL01-02 Board of Examiners Guidelines 3. CH03-FR01-02 Mitigating Circumstances Form 4. CH03-FR02-03 Verification of Examination paper 5. CH03-FR03-02 Examination Paper Front Cover 6. CH03-FR04-01 Verification of Assessment plan 7. CH03-FR05-02 Moderation of Examination Script 8. CH03-FR06-01 Pre & Post Assessment template
4	CH04- Collaborative Provision	January 2009	September 2023	CoP-Ch04-03-01	Teaching and Learning	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. CH04-GL01-01 Lecturer Guide to Class observations 2. CH04-GL02-02 VOL Strategy Addendum 3. CH04-GL03-01 Lecturer Guide to Online Class Observation 4. CH04-FR01-02 Course Evaluation Form (Arabic) 5. CH04-FR02-04 Course Evaluation Form (Eng) 6. CH04-FR03-02 Class & Peer Observation Form 7. CH04-FR04-03 Course Material Approval Form 8. CH04-FR05-03 Lesson Plan Form 9. CH04-FR06-02 Learner follow-up Form 10. CH04-FR07-01 Monthly Meeting Agenda Template 11. CH04-FR08-01 Lesson Plan Arabic 12. CH04-FR09-04 Lesson Plan – Academics
5	CH03-Programme Design, Approval, Monitoring, Review	January 2009	September 2023	CoP-Ch05-03-01	Malpractice, Appeal & Complaints	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. CH05-GL01-01 CMARG - fixed penalties 2. CH05-FR01-03 Appeal Guidelines and Form

6	CH06-Assessment Strategy and Principles	01 December 2019	September 2023	CoP-Ch06-03-01	Institutional Effectiveness Monitoring	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> CH06-GL01-01 Corporate Governance & Compliance CH06-GL02-03 Annual Monitoring Report template CH06-GL03-04 Strategic Action Plan CH06-FR-01-01 Post AMR Action Planning Form CH06-GL01-01 Research Strategy
7	CH07-Assessment of Students	01 December 2019	September 2023	CoP-Ch07-04-02	Stakeholders Representation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> CH07-FR01-01 Employers Survey Form CH07-FR02-01 Training Managers Annual Meeting Agenda
8	CH08-Student Representation	01 December 2019	September 2023	CoP-Ch08-03-01	Collaborative Provision	
9	CH09-Malpractice, Appeals & Student Complaints	01 April 2020	September 2023	CoP-Ch09-02-01	Research and Community Engagement	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> CH09-GL01-01 Research Strategy
10	CH10-Faculty and Staff Development		September 2023	CoP Ch10-01-02	Pastoral Support	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> CH10-GL01-01 Org charts - Academic 2023 CH10-GL02-01 Internship policy Academics

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Related Policies or Documents	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> BIBF Aims BIBF Vision and Mission
Review Frequency	3 years
First Issue	January 2008
Last Review	September 2020

1. Scope

This policy applies to all types of courses and programmes at BIBF, delivered by all learning centres. The Policy covers the processes of admission and registration of learners into a programme or course.

For some academic or professional centre, admission is conducted as per pertaining policy and procedure of the awarding body. The involvement of the BIBF in such programs shall be clearly identified by agreement between the BIBF and the partnering institution.

2. Policy Statement

2.1. Definitions

The student recruitment recognizing the wide range of offerings at the BIBF, the following general definitions shall be applied, wherever applicable. Where additional variation of terms might exist, the alternative or additional term shall be indicated along with the applicable standard term suggested from the below list. Such variations might arise from the varying definition used by the external qualification body, academic partner, or some additional breakdown of terms that the Registration Department might use in their systems and operations.

- 2.1.1. **Academic Programme:** The academic programme consists of a combination of courses and/or requirements leading to an undergraduate or postgraduate academic degree, awarded by BIBF or by our international partners. (Alternative term(s): university degree)
- 2.1.2. **Professional Programme:** The BIBF offers a wide variety of professional programmes covering various specializations, knowledge areas and industries. The professional programmes consist of a single course or a combination of courses and/or requirements leading professional certification awarded by the BIBF (including NQF- placed or aligned qualifications) or an internationally recognized professional body. Such offerings include categories of programmes that are awarded by the BIBF on part time or distance learning basis, preparatory programmes for international examinations and programmes offered through partnerships with internationally recognized awarding bodies. (Alternative term(s): professional qualification)
- 2.1.3. **Standard Offering Course:** Standard offerings are skills-based courses that are essential to meeting the core training needs of various sectors. These courses are designed to develop the human capital's competencies and knowledge required in the workplace and the duration spans over a period of one to fourteen days. Standard Offering Courses are offered according to a fixed yearly schedule, which is published in the BIBF's Annual Training and Development Catalogue. (Alternative term(s): Internal/Public Courses or Offering)

- 2.1.4. **Special Offering:** Special offerings are course or professional programmes conducted for a specific client(s) according to specified training needs. All special offerings require a contractual agreement between the client and the BIBF. The Special Offering contract may be for a single course, variety of courses, or series of courses that are bundled together leading to a certain qualification or a professional qualification. Clients may select any range or category of courses that are offered at the BIBF. The selected course(s) may be straight off-the-shelf, slightly modified to be in line with the requirements of the client. Based on the location of the client, special offerings could be conducted on either the BIBF premises or other premises of the client's choice. (Alternative term(s): Customized course/customized programme)
- 2.1.5. **Masterclass:** The masterclasses are very short learning event, usually addressing contemporary or advanced topics related to the current market trends and advancements. The masterclasses are not considered within the annual training levy and are fees-bearing classes to both member and non-member organizations. (Alternative term(s): Workshop)

For the purpose of this Policy, the term "programme" might refer to any training or education provision that might consist of a stand-alone unit, or multiple of units.

2.2. References

The student Recruitment and Admissions at BIBF are consistent with the requirement and broad principles laid down by the Higher Education Council (HEC) of Bahrain, Education and Training Quality Authority (BQA) of Bahrain, as well as the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) of the UK (for the relevant academic programmes offered in partnership with UK-based higher education institutions).

As for the BQA referencing, BIBF observes the broad principles laid down by the relevant framework set by the Directorate of Vocational Reviews, Directorate of Higher Educational Reviews, and/or the General Directorate of Qualifications.

2.3. Equal Opportunities

2.3.1. BIBF is committed to equality of opportunity in all aspects of its business relationships. To this end, BIBF acknowledges the following basic rights of all those with whom it interacts (its staff, students and organizations):

- To be treated with respect and dignity;
- To be treated fairly with regard to all procedures, assessments and choices
- To receive encouragement to reach their full potential.

2.3.2. BIBF further acknowledges that these rights carry with them responsibilities; it

consequently expects all staff, students and other stakeholders to recognize these rights and act accordingly.

- 2.3.3. The underlying principle of BIBF's Equal Opportunities Policy is to ensure that no group or individual receives more or less favourable treatment. BIBF will therefore seek to ensure that all are treated solely on the basis of merit, ability and potential, regardless of gender, colour, ethnic or national origin, race, disability, age, sexual orientation, socio-economic background, religious or political beliefs, family circumstances or other irrelevant distinction.
- 2.3.4. All qualifications, products and services offered by the BIBF, legal or contractual requirements permitting, will be available to all those who are able to achieve the required standard and free from barriers which restrict access and progression;
- Free from overt or covert discriminatory practices,
 - Free from inappropriate content, language and images;
 - Free from age or other restrictions;
 - Consistent with BIBF's values.

2.4. Special Needs

- 2.4.1. Students with special needs such as physical, and educational needs, must be identified early in the process of admission and registration, in order that appropriate needed support mechanisms are provided.
- 2.4.2. Special needs shall include additional needs that a learner might have in using the online and virtual platforms for attending virtual classes or online assessment tools.
- 2.4.3. The registration process shall prompt the applicant learner to declare any special needs that he/she might have during the course of study at BIBF.
- 2.4.4. Once special needs are identified during the registration phase, the Registration Department shall communicate such needs to the relevant learning centre to arrange for the support mechanisms needed, where possible.
- 2.4.5. The head of the relevant learning centre or the programme manager are responsible to assess if the declared special needs can be adequately catered for, in coordination with other learning centres, or other support units in BIBF.
- 2.4.6. Identified cases with special needs, should be communicated with the concerned programme manager and the faculty delivering the qualification in advance.
- 2.4.7. Where pre-assessments are required, the applicants should be consulted by the relevant learning centre about the kind of arrangements that the institution could have in place to give them a fair chance for selection.
- 2.4.8. BIBF shall do utmost efforts to provide adequate support mechanisms to the learners who have special needs. In cases where the support mechanisms could not be reasonably and practically provided, the applicant shall be notified by the

Registration Department of the inability to provide the needed support, or to discuss any suitable arrangement that might suit the applicant, in coordination with the pertaining learning centre. In such extreme cases, the CEO of BIBF shall approve any final resolution, and records of communication between relevant parties shall be kept with the Registration Department.

2.5. Admission Requirements

- 2.5.1 BIBF shall ensure that the entry requirements for each programme are clearly defined and communicated to the prospective students and other interested parties.
- 2.5.2 Each course or programme must have clear admission criteria whenever applicable including credit transfer, attendance requirements and expected academic or prior learning standards. These requirements shall be specified clearly for each course/programme, and communicated to students and interested parties.
- 2.5.3 The Registration Department in coordination with the relevant programme manager and learning centre, shall ensure that students are properly assessed whenever applicable upon admission to a course, to establish their conformity with the said course admission requirements, as well as establishing their prior attainment for subsequent monitoring of their learning progress. The initial assessment may include, but not limited to, language ability if required.
- 2.5.4 For some academic and externally certified programmes, the admission requirements are normally set by the relevant certification body. The admission decisions in such cases are either carried out solely by the external body, or jointly with the learning centre at BIBF. In all cases, the process needs to be explained to prospective students, and records of enrolment and admission shall be kept with the relevant learning centre.
- 2.5.5 The final decision of the admission shall be made by the learning centre. And then recorded on the appropriate admission application. The learning centre shall communicate the final admission decision to the prospective students or their applicant sponsors.
- 2.5.6 In case of academic programs that the BIBF are made responsible of admission to, the admission decisions are taken by the Admission Committee as per the identified terms and conditions (refers to the terms of reference of the Admission Committee Academic Admissions Guidelines & committee ToR 2023).
- 2.5.7 The learning centre shall identify any need for foundation studies or bridging course(s) in case the admission requirements are not met, or the APL outcomes are not sufficient to support direct admission to a course.

2.6. APL and Credit Transfer

2.6.1 The BIBF recognizes that, in addition to meeting the minimum entry requirements for a given programme, students may also have demonstrated the academic achievement of certain elements of a programme prior to embarking upon it. In such cases, where appropriate evidence can be produced by the student, BIBF may grant the student additional credit against certain elements of the programme on the basis of such prior learning. Refer to BIBF APL form for guidelines.

2.6.2 Applicant can claim prior learning that has been achieved either:

2.6.2.1 As part of a formal course of education previously taken which has been independently certificated and is recognized by BIBF's APL committee. The award of credit on this basis is known as Accreditation of Prior Certificated Learning (APCL); or

2.6.2.2 Through prior experience and practice which is recognized by BIBF through an assessment process designed for this purpose. The award of credit on this basis is known as Accreditation of Prior Experiential Learning (APEL).

2.6.3 Requests for APL shall be submitted to the relevant learning centre and shall then be considered by a sub- group of BIBF's APL Committee. The terms of reference of the APL Committee, together with its membership and mode of operation, are set out in the BIBF APL Policy. Applications must be submitted on the appropriate form, with a folder of supporting evidence and the appropriate fee.

2.6.4 Credit awarded will be informed to the student and the APL Committee and formally noted on the student's application, showing details of the nature, level and amount of credit awarded. This information will also be clearly recorded on student transcripts.

2.7 Appeal against Admission Decision

2.7.1 Students have the right to appeal against any admission decision, including APL outcomes.

2.7.2 The appeal shall be logged in by the student in the appropriate appeal form to the QA Department (refer to the Complaint, Malpractice and Appeal Policy Chapter 5).

2.7.3 The QA department shall forward the appeal forms against admission decision to the BIBF Complaint, Malpractice and Appeal Review Group (CMARG) for their review and final decisions with regards to the logged appeal. The decision of the CMARG shall constitute a final decision and no further appeal against CMARG

outcomes are allowed, in such cases of appeals against admission and APL outcomes.

3. Communication & Dissemination

- 3.1. This policy shall be made accessible to all employees and available in the public domain of the intranet.
- 3.2. Furthermore, the admission criteria, requirements and process shall be clearly defined and made available to all students, prospective students and interested parties, either in soft copies in the public domain, on the request of students, or in hard copies if need be.
- 3.3. The admission information shared with students and other stakeholders shall include the requirements of external certification bodies, wherever applicable.
- 3.4. It is the responsibility of the learning centres to review the available information on admission to their respective courses and programmes, and to ensure that information in all distribution channels and forms are sufficient, consistent, accurate and up-to date.
- 3.5. The Registration Department shall keep records of history of all review and changes to the admission information.

4. Monitoring and Review

- 4.1 BIBF will regularly monitor and review the application of its Equal Opportunities Policy and the implementation of associated procedures and from the information gained will analyse potential barriers or areas where positive action may be required. The QA Department, in conjunction with the Registration Department, shall carry out a joint review for this purpose. The outcomes of the review shall be discussed in the Education Standard Committee or the Academic Steering Committee, and necessary actions shall be taken if appropriate.
- 4.2 The Registration Department shall keep records of all applications and their status throughout the admission and registration processes. A detailed statistical report shall be produced once every year to evaluate the performance of admission and registration processes, analyse trends in the prospective students, application status and any other information that might be of help to the learning centres or the BIBF executive Management Team.

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Review Frequency	3 years
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Last Review	September 2023

1. Scope

This policy applies to all types of courses and programmes at BIBF, delivered by all learning centres. The Policy covers the processes of course or program design, approval, monitoring and regular review thereafter. For the purpose of this Policy, courses and programs are classified into two categories; the first one requires comprehensive processes of review, approval, monitoring and review, whilst the second category goes through a shortened version of the processes.

For academic programs, the relevant policies and procedures of the mothering higher education institution that the BIBF is hosting shall be applied, wherever applicable.

2. Policy Statement

2.1 Definitions

Recognising the wide range of offerings at the BIBF, the following general definitions shall be applied, wherever applicable. Where additional variation of terms might exist, the alternative or additional term shall be indicated along with the applicable standard term suggested from the below list. Such variations might arise from the varying definitions used by the external qualification body, the academic partner, or some additional breakdown of terms that the Registration Department might use in their systems and operations.

Certified Programme: A single- or multiple-unit programme that is formally assessed by BIBF leading to NQF credits for NQF-listed qualifications, local completion certification by BIBF, a certification by a higher education institution that BIBF hosts; or a certification by an external professional accreditation body.

Non-Certified Programme: Any other programmes that are delivered by BIBF and does not lead to a certification as explained. Usually, learners in these programmes receive a certificate of attendance only. This includes offerings of certified programmes for learners who do not opt for formal certification or NQF credits.

Module: A discrete unit of study leading to the award of credit by BIBF. The minimum credit value for a module at BIBF is 1 credit (= 10 notional student effort hours). A module may be at any level on the NQF between Level 4 and 9 and may be designed to be free- standing, to be part of a programme, or both.

Programme: A coherent programme of study comprising two or more modules, designed in accordance with the Bahraini NQF.

Transcript: An official statement issued by BIBF confirming the award of credits and certification. Transcripts will bear the name of the award as validated (module and/or programme), the level of the award on the NQF and the number of credits awarded overall and for each module, if applicable. Transcripts must not be issued in support of certificates of attendance.

2.2.. References

The design, approval, monitoring and review at BIBF are consistent with the requirement and broad principles laid down by the Higher Education Council (HEC) of Bahrain, Education and Training Quality Authority (BQA) of Bahrain, as well as the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) of the UK (for the relevant academic programmes offered in partnership with UK-based higher education institutions).

As for the BQA referencing, BIBF observes the broad principles laid down by the relevant framework set by the Directorate of Vocational Reviews, Directorate of Higher Educational Reviews, and/or the General Directorate of Qualifications.

2.3. Programme Design

Module and programme design: All modules and programmes must be presented for approval using the relevant approved template. Once approved, these completed templates will constitute the definitive module and programme documents. Changes can only be made to definitive module and programme documents following the relevant formal review process listed below (Section 2.5 “Major and Minor Changes”). Module and programme definitive templates shall be saved separately by the relevant learning Centre, and should contain all information, including descriptive text, to be used externally to promote the module or programme.

Intended learning outcomes: All modules and programmes shall be expressed in terms of intended learning outcomes (ILOs.) ILOs should follow the conventions established in the NQF to describe achievement

at different levels and, where appropriate, describe intended learning outcomes in terms of the five sub-strands identified in the NQF.

Level and credit: All NQF-listed or aligned modules shall outcomes and the proposed assessment regime. Programme specification templates must include a summary of constituent modules, their levels and credit.

Indicative syllabus: All modules must contain an indicative syllabus. The purpose of the indicative syllabus is not to be exhaustive, but rather illustrative of the principal materials that will be covered to support the achievement of intended learning outcomes. Approval panels will expect to see a clear alignment between the indicative syllabus and the ILOs.

Learning and teaching: Module and programme templates need to indicate the key strategies of teaching and learning that will be deployed by the lecturer; including any special strategies for online or virtual delivery, wherever applicable.

Assessment: Module templates must contain a clear statement of the assessment protocol, together with details of assessment plan, wherever possible. The assessment protocol should the necessary details of the assessment plan, which should cover the type (e.g. two-hour unseen examinations, group projects, 2000-word essay etc.), the weightage of assessment tasks of the total mark, as well as the alignment of the assessment element with the relevant ILO(s) Pass requirements should be set out, for example, whether each item of assessment needs to be achieved in order to receive a pass in the module, or whether any combination rules between elements of assessment are to be introduced. Programme templates must contain a detailed assessment plan, showing the cumulative effect of assessment tools for individual modules.

External reference points: Module and programme templates must include a benchmark study which have informed their design. These may include external textbooks, comparable external programme structure, or relevant professional standards

2.4 Design and Mapping

Fundamental to BIBF's approach to the management of quality and standards is the principle that all courses and programmes must be subject to a process of initial approval. The extent of the process varies according to the type and complexity of the program. This section sets

out the expectations and processes to be followed for the approval of all modules and programmes. This is explained below in the following stages:

2.4.1 Stage 1: The Proposal

2.4.1.1 The intention to submit a new module or programme for approval must be indicated to the QA Department at the earliest opportunity so that the necessary meetings and approval stages can be scheduled.

A full proposal should be submitted to the learning centre head and should comprise:

- ☒ A detailed business case for the new provision (using the approved template of the business case). This should establish the feasibility of the new offering and should include, where appropriate, feedback from employers, evidence of market research or other evidence of both the demand and supply sides for establishing the market gap analyses; comparison with relevant benchmark courses or materials; as well as preliminary costing and financial feasibility analyses.
- ☒ Completed module and, if applicable, programme specification templates (using the approved templates).

2.4.1.2 The completed business case and module/programme specification form needs to

be duly signed by the relevant head of the centre.

2.4.1.3 For all qualifications that need to be placed on the National Qualification Framework (NQF) and the academic programmes, the BIBF Board approval is needed at this stage.

2.4.2 Stage 2: Mapping

If the new programme is required to be placed into the Bahraini NQF, the QA Department needs to be notified in advance so that a formal request can be placed to the BQA. The BQA

relevant Registration form shall be filled, signed and submitted to the BQA, to schedule the submission into the nearest available NQF placement phase.

- ⦿ The design team of the new qualification shall serve as the “mapping” panel for the purpose of the NQF application process. The main purpose of the mapping panel is to scrutinize the validity of the proposed qualification, and the mapping of the qualification to the nearest NQF level; as well as ascertaining the number of credits that a learner can obtain by completing the proposed qualification.
- ⦿ Evidence of completed mapping panel activity including the completed mapping scorecards in accordance with the NQF requirements. Records of all meetings and deliberation of the mapping panel shall be produced for further processing.
- ⦿ The completed mapping portfolio is then forwarded to the QA Office for pre-approval administration check. The QA personnel may return to the Mapping Panel for further evidence, clarification, or edits. The communication between the mapping panel and the QA needs to be archived along with the final portfolio of the qualification.

2.5 Approval

2.5.1 Stage 3: Confirmation

The confirmation is done by a Confirmation Panel, that is formed septically for the given qualification that will be placed into the NQF. The Confirmation Panel shall be comprised of external and internal members. The external members, who are practitioners or academician preferably in the same area of knowledge, are nominated by the learning centre. The internal members are designated by the QA Department. The final list of the Confirmation Panel needs to be approved by the BIBF CEO. The Confirmation Panel shall look into the final design of the qualification and gives one of the following decisions:

- 2.5.1.1 Firstly, the proposal may be approved without conditions or recommendations. Approval will normally be for three years and any departure from this must be explained and justified.
- 2.5.1.2 Secondly, the proposal may be approved but with conditions and/ or recommendations. Conditions must be met by the designated date; recommendations are advisory only, but the Centre’s response to these should be noted in the first annual report after delivery.

commences. The Chair of the Confirmation panel must confirm that any conditions have been met before final approval is given by the ESC.

- 2.5.1.3 Thirdly, the proposal can be rejected. Under these circumstances, a written statement of the reasons for rejection should be provided by the panel Chair. Full minutes of the deliberations and decisions of the approval panel must be kept.

2.5.2 Stage 4: Final Approval:

All recommendations made by the conformation panel are subject to final approval by the Chair of the ESC. For other special programmes, the strategic partner approval might be required as well before final approval.

2.5.3 Stage 5: Post-Confirmation Changes

All changes to definitive module and programme templates are subject to the relevant approvals process given below. The process to be followed will depend on whether the proposed changes are major or minor. The following general guidelines should be followed in deciding whether the change is minor or major. In the event of a dispute on whether a proposed change is to be treated as major or minor the decision will be taken by the Head of Quality Assurance.

2.5.3.1 Major changes: Normally changes will be considered major when one or more of the following applies:

- Significant changes (i.e., more than 30%) are proposed to the intended learning outcomes of a module or a programme;
- Change the title of a module or programme.
- Significant change (i.e., 30% or more) in the indicative syllabus of a module;
- In the case of programmes, significant changes to the structure (e.g., changes to the list of core modules or the number and level of credits required to pass);

Major changes to modules and/ or programmes require the scrutiny of the

confirmation panel. In the case of major changes to either modules or programmes, the procedure for initial confirmation should be followed, with the exceptions that the business case should be replaced.

Where appropriate, with a statement of rationale for the change and the comments of external panel members may be received without their attendance at the confirmation event.

The possible outcomes are the same as for the initial confirmation and final approval for change must be given by the QA department on behalf of the ESC on the recommendation of the panel.

2.5.3.2 Minor changes: Normally changes will be considered minor when one or more of the following applies:

- Minor changes (i.e. less than 30%) are proposed to the intended learning outcomes of module or programme;
- Minor changes in a module's mode of assessment; or the program assessment plan
- Minor changes to a module's indicative syllabus; in the case of programmes, minor changes to the structure (such as the specification of pre-requisites or the order in which modules must be taken)

Minor changes do not require the scrutiny of the confirmation panel. In the case of minor changes, either to modules or programmes, revised module or programme templates should be forwarded to the QA office with an accompanying statement of the rationale for the changes. This should be signed by the Head of Centre to indicate their approval of the changes and counter-signed by the Head of QA to confirm that these are duly approved. Once the changes have been approved by the Head of Centre and the Head of QA, the revised templates will become the definitive module or programme templates.

2.6 Monitoring

2.6.1 Monitoring is an important mechanism by which BIBF ensures that both academic standards are being maintained as well as the quality of learning opportunities offered to learners is maintained and enhanced. Monitoring occurs on an annual cycle by each Learning Centre for their

programmes.

2.6.2 It is the responsibility of the ESC to receive and review annual monitoring reports from each learning centre and discuss the outcomes at the ESC meetings.

2.6.3 The specific purposes of annual monitoring are as follows:

- To ensure that modules and programmes remain relevant to the needs of learners, employers and other stakeholders.
- To ensure that the academic standards of the module and programme are being maintained.
- To identify and share good practice.
- To ensure that acceptable levels of performance, retention and progression are maintained.

2.7 Periodic Review

2.7.1 Approval for modules and programmes is normally given for a period of three years. If at the end of this period, it is intended to continue offering the module and/ or programme, then periodic review must take place. Periodic review is similar to the process for initial approval but additionally takes into account the experience of offering the module and/ or programme for the previous period. Additionally, the NQF-listed qualifications require revalidation by the BQA as per their framework and schedule.

2.7.2 The purpose of the periodic review is as follows:

- To ensure that the module or programme continues meeting the needs of learners and is up to date in terms of content, delivery methods and assessment.
- To ensure that the cumulative effect of any minor changes over a period of time has not led to a significant departure from the course or programme as originally approved.
- To take account of the experience of delivering the module or programme over the period of approval and to make any improvements which this experience suggests.

2.7.3 Periodic Review Process:

2.7.3.1 As with an initial approval, the intention to undertake periodic review of a module or programme should be indicated to the QA office at the earliest opportunity.

2.7.3.2 A critical review document which reflects on the operation of the module or programme since initial approval or the most recent periodic review. This should cover:

- A summary of module/ programme performance data
- A summary of feedback from learners and other stakeholders;
- A clear statement of changes proposed with the rationale for these;
- Revised module and/ or programme specification templates (using the approved templates), with proposed NQF levels and credits, if applicable (highlighting the changes).

2.7.4 The Review Panel:

- As with initial approval, a periodic review panel will be convened on behalf of the ESC. Its composition will be approved by the Chair of the ESC, and shall be similar to the initial confirmation but preferably with different members.
- Periodic review events will normally take place in the BIBF premises and shall follow the same process of the initial confirmation event.

2.7.5 Periodic review outcomes: As with initial approvals, there are three possible outcomes of a periodic review, as explained above.

3. Monitoring and Review

3.1 BIBF will regularly monitor and review the application of its Design, Approval, Monitoring and Review policy and the implementation of associated procedures and from the information gained will analyse potential barriers or areas where positive action may be required. The QA Department, in conjunction with the relevant learning centre heads, shall carry out a regular quality audit to confirm full

compliance to this policy ESC meeting, and necessary actions shall be taken if appropriate.

3.2 Additionally, the QA Department and the learning centres shall report on annual basis, as part of the Annual Monitoring Reporting, statistics and trends of implementation of this policy, in terms of number of programmes that have been approved, changed, or re-validated.

3.3 The QA Department shall keep records of all the relevant programme design, approval and review.

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Related Policies or Documents	<p>CH02-GL01-03 NQF Level Descriptors CH02-GL02-01 Advisory Committee guidelines &ToR CH02-GL03-02 Mapping Panel Guidelines CH02-GL04-02 Confirmation Panel Guidelines CH02-GL05-01 Online Self- Paced Course Guidelines CH02-GL06-01 PILO-CILO Matrix CH02-GL07-02 Credit Framework Guidelines CH02-FR01-02 Business Case Form CH02-FR02-02 Module Specification Form CH02-FR03-02 Programme Specification Form CH02-FR04-02 Modification Form CH02-FR05-02 NDA - Non-Disclosure Form CH02-FR06-02 Advisory Committee Nomination Form CH02-FR07-03 NQF Scorecard Mapping Form CH02-FR08-03 NQF Form Aug 2020 CH02-FR09-02 Benchmarking Report Form</p>
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1.Scope

This policy applies to all “certified” programmes that lead to proper certification of learning. This type includes higher education academic programmes, professional courses that are externally accredited, programmes that are placed into the National Qualification Framework (NQF); as well as internal programmes that lead to BIBF completion certification. BIBF offers other programmes that are “non-certified” such as internal workshops, seminars and other educational events. This policy shall be applied to the “certified” type of programmes only. Although summative assessment is not mandated, “non-certified” programmes may deploy a range of formative assessments in order to ensure sufficient understanding and progress are achieved by learners.

For academic programs, the relevant policies and procedures of the mothering higher education institution that the BIBF is hosting shall be applied, wherever applicable.

2. Policy Statement

2.1 Definitions

Recognising the wide range of offerings at the BIBF, the following general definitions shall be applied, wherever applicable. Where additional variation of terms might exist, the alternative or additional term shall be indicated along with the applicable standard term suggested from the below list. Such variations might arise from the varying definition used by the external qualification body, academic partner, or some additional breakdown of terms that the Registration Department might use in their systems and operations.

Certified Programme: A single- or multiple-unit programme that is formally assessed by BIBF leading to NQF credits for NQF-listed qualifications, local completion certification by BIBF, a certification by a higher education institution that BIBF hosts; or a certification by an external professional accreditation body.

Non-Certified Programme: Any other programmes that are delivered by BIBF and does not lead to a certification as explained. Usually learners in these programmes receive a certificate of attendance only. This includes offerings of certified programmes for learners who do not opt for formal certification or NQF credits.

Module/Course: A discrete unit of study leading to the award of credit by BIBF. The minimum credit value for a module at BIBF is 1 credit (= 10 notional student effort hours). A module may be at any level on the NQF between Level 4 and 9 and may be designed to be free- standing, to be part of a programme, or both.

Programme: A coherent programme of study comprising two or more modules, designed in accordance with the Bahraini NQF.

Transcript: An official statement issued by BIBF confirming the award of credits and certification. Transcripts will bear the name of the award as validated (module and/or programme), the level of the award on the NQF and the number of credits awarded overall and for each module, if applicable. Transcripts must not be issued in support of certificates of attendance.

Verification: Refers to the process of checking that assessment tool is valid and fit for purpose before it is conducted.

Moderation: Refers to the quality assurance tasks that are carried out post-assessment to ensure reliability, fairness and consistency of marking. This might include a retrospective verification of appropriateness of assessment tools for the sake of improvement only.

2.2 References

2.2.1 The Learning Assessment at BIBF are consistent with the requirement and broad principles laid down by the Higher Education Council (HEC) of Bahrain, Education and Training Quality Authority (BQA) of Bahrain, as well as the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) of the UK (for the relevant academic programmes offered in partnership with UK-based higher education institutions)

2.2.2 As for the BQA referencing, BIBF observes the broad principles laid down by the relevant framework set by the Directorate of Vocational Reviews, Directorate of Higher Educational Reviews, and/or the General Directorate of Qualifications.

2.3 Design and Development of Assessment

2.3.1 All certified programmes are designed with pre-published intended learning outcomes (ILOs). The assessment plan associated with a

module is designed to use appropriate assessment instruments that allow the measurement of published intended learning outcomes (ILO) for that module.

- 2.3.2 Programmes consisting of multiple modules shall be prepared with a set of ILOs at module level for each module separately (referred to as Course Intended Learning Outcomes or CILOs), as well as an aggregate set at the overall programme level (referred to as Programme Intended Learning Outcomes or PILOs). The mapping of CILOs to PILOs using an appropriate matrix shall be used for each program.
- 2.3.3 The scheduling of the assessment associated with a programme, both overall and for each module, is designed and implemented to ensure an appropriate fit and alignment with the associated learning and teaching requirements of the programme/module.
- 2.3.4 The course instructor or the programme manager are responsible for preparing an "Assessment plan" for the programme detailing the assessment tools that will be deployed at a programme as well as course/module level.
- 2.3.5 All assessments are prepared in line with their associated marking schemes/assessment rubrics or criteria.
- 2.3.6 The assessment plan associated with a module is clearly detailed within the module or programme specification, which provides guidance regarding:
- The number of, and relative weighting across, the separate assessment components which contribute to the overall module assessment.
 - The type of assessment used within each assessment component along with key indications on size, length of coursework assignments, duration of examinations etc.
- 2.3.7 Assessment tools are designed to ensure that the assessments presented to students are:
- consistent with the set of learning outcomes associated with the module/programme.
 - appropriate to the level and complexity of the course being assessed;
 - in line with what is reasonably expected of the student to achieve or perform.
 - technically accurate and presented clearly in appropriate language;
 - consistent with published assessment criteria and/or grade descriptors;
 - is free of spelling and grammatical mistakes;
 - is suitable for Online delivery, if applicable;

- Supported with clear instructions for the learners; and
- completable within the time frame allowed.

2.3.8 As appropriate, clear guidance is provided to students with, or in advance of, any assessment on aspects such as:

- duration of, and regulations applying to, formal examinations.
- format, length, submission date and regulations applying to coursework, including penalties for late submission;
- requirements of the assessment task;
- nature of any supporting materials permitted in an examination;
- relevant assessment criteria and/or grade descriptors;
- access to BIBF policies and procedures on malpractice, reasonable adjustments; and appeals and complaints.

2.3.9 For online assessment tools, care should be taken to ensure the reliability, fairness and authenticity of assessments tools. QA Department in coordination with the IT & Operations department shall issue special guidelines to instructors on effective use of the available online and virtual platforms; in designing and conducting digital assessments.

2.4 Pre-assessment Verification

- 2.4.1 Every major assessment item that carries a weightage towards the final mark of a module/programme shall be subject to internal and external pre- and post-assessment verification and moderation. External verification and moderation shall be exercised wherever practically possible.
- 2.4.2 Every major assessment item shall be internally verified by another faculty member or programme manager prior to conducting the assessment.
- 2.4.3 Internal verification needs to verify the fitness of the assessment item for the intended purposes. Pre-assessment verification report is filled for each major assessment tool. The verification process shall cover all the criteria mentioned in Point item 2.3.7 above.
- 2.4.4 The scheduling of the assessment associated with a programme, both overall and for each module, is designed and implemented to ensure an appropriate fitness and alignment with the associated learning and teaching requirements of the programme/module.
- 2.4.5 Academic and externally accredited courses might be subject to the

external process of verification, depending on the requirements of the external partnering institution. Unless otherwise obligated by external accreditation/certification body requirements, assessment items shall be subjected to external verification, which is done usually retrospectively on sampling bases, as detailed in Section below

2.5 Assessment and Marking

- 2.5.1 For NQF-placed qualifications and academic programmes, every major assessment component that contributes towards a final award must either be double marked by an internal marker or subject to a process of internal moderation by a senior examiner. Major elements are those which contribute towards 40% or more of the overall grade for a module.
- 2.5.2 Double marking is done for a representative sample of the assessment. The sample shall be chosen randomly to represent at least 5% of the number of the learners who did the assessment, and shall cover the full range of mark distribution, as well as the borderline marks ($\pm 3\%$).
- 2.5.3 For smaller groups of less than 10 learners, a sample of 3 or more should be selected.
- 2.5.4 Depending on the programme, the Head of the Centre, or the Programme Manager, shall decide the type of double marking to be exercised. Double marking can be either:
- Blind double marking, in which the outcomes and feedback of the first marker are not made available to the second marker before the second marking; or
 - Non-blind double marking, where the outcomes and feedback of the first marker are shared with the second marker and the final results are moderated between the two. In cases where the two markers could not agree, the Head of the Centre is involved in the final moderation.
- 2.5.5 Wherever possible, the marking, and subsequent moderation of marking standards, of major assessment elements (contributing to 40% or more of the final overall grade for a module) is carried out without those involved having any knowledge of the student's personal details, e.g., name, age, nationality, gender, employer (i.e., anonymously), or of any reasonable adjustments approved in advance of the assessment. However, anonymized marking/moderation may be inappropriate in some cases, for example, with work-based learning.
- 2.5.6 The answer books of the learners shall be made available to fully anonymized learners and shall have a tracing reference that is known

- to the learning centre administrators only, who shall handle the logging of the marks subsequently.
- 2.5.7 Any adjustment to the marking of an internal examiner as a result of double marking or moderation is to be agreed and signed off by the Head of Centre, or the Program Manager, along with the consent of the 1st marker.
- 2.5.8 Where the initial marking has not been carried out in line with the approved marking scheme/assessment criteria, and/or is inconsistent in terms of the standards applied to the course/s, then all the affected work is to be re-marked by another marker.
- 2.5.9 The performance of individual markers and marking teams is monitored by the Head of Centre/Programme Manager and linked to any emerging trends in terms of mark distributions (by component and overall), relative contribution to overall award, etc.
- 2.5.10 An archive of assessment tasks and student work is maintained for each assessment component across all modules so as to allow for monitoring of standards both between modules and over time. All assessed work is retained for a period of 3 years following the study period concerned (5 years in case academic programmes).

2.6 Post-assessment Moderation

- 2.6.1 Post-assessment external moderation aims at validating the reliability of assessment, fairness and consistency of marking and assessment within cohorts and across time.
- 2.6.2 In addition to the double marking process, programmes shall be subject to the external moderation process that is carried out by an independent moderator, that are external to BIBF full-timers.
- 2.6.3 At pre-set frequency, preferably once every year, the Head of Centre shall form a panel of external moderators of subject matter specialist. The external moderation panel shall moderate all certified programmes offered in the centre.
- 2.6.4 External moderation shall cover all major assessment items that contribute to the final mark of the course/programme.
- 2.6.5 The external moderation panel shall complete the moderation and give their feedback to the Head of Centre in a dedicated form for this purpose (refer to the detailed procedure on verification and moderation).

Progress Measurement

- 2.6.6 In some courses that are not certified, formative assessment tools

- shall be deployed to measure the extent of which learners have achieved the learning goals and benefited from a course.
- 2.6.7 Measuring learners' progress shall be done by measuring the difference in the attainment level at the start of the course, and at the end of it (i.e., pre- and post-assessments).
- 2.6.8 The pre- and post-assessment shall be designed carefully to measure the attainments of learners with respect to the stated ILOs.
- 2.6.9 Depending on the course, the post-assessment can be either identical to the pre-assessment: or it can an extrapolative version of it (provided that it measures the reliable attainment of the same ILOs).
- 2.6.10 The difference in attainment (usually normalised to percentage) shall be used to indicate the progress of learners in the course and shall not be used as assessment of achievement for qualification purposes in any case.

2.7 Examination Board

- 2.7.1 Results of examinations of all NQF credit-bearing and academic courses need to be reviewed and approved by an appropriate examination board.
- 2.7.2 For programmes longer than 30 notional hours (or 3 NQF credits), the Examination Board shall consist of at least three senior members of the BIBF and a QA representative.
- 2.7.3 At the final examination, and before declaring the final results to learners, the examination board meets to consider the assessment of modules associated with the session prior to the release of results to students and taking into account feedback from a range of sources, such as:
- Analysis of detailed student performance data;
 - Faculty feedback on assessments;
 - Examiner feedback;
 - External Examiner feedback (if any)
- 2.7.4 The Examination Board shall confirm that learners have achieved all the intended learning outcomes (ILO) as detailed in the course/programme assessment plan developed earlier. This can be done using a detailed analyses of all grades that are linked with the CILOs or PILOs (using a template Excel sheet designed for this purpose); or by an exit survey that is designed specifically to get

the learners' own assessment on the extent to which they have achieved the PILOs.

- 2.7.5 On the basis of the inputs collected from the above sources, the Examination Board confirms the marks to be awarded for all modules on each programme.
- 2.7.6 Students are made explicitly aware, at the start of their programme of study, both of the existence of a range of mitigating circumstances provision and where they can access detailed guidance regarding BIBF's policy and procedures for either type of mitigating circumstance.
- 2.7.7 Mitigating circumstances cases are not normally taken into consideration during the marking processes.
- 2.7.8 Mitigating circumstances must normally be supported by independent evidence of need and be submitted in sufficient time to allow the appropriate arrangements to be put in place.

2.8 Award of Credits and Certification

- 2.8.1 The credits associated with a module are clearly stated in the module specification as well as in the relevant programme Specification (s).
- 2.8.2 The credits associated with a module are normally gained on passing that module; they cannot be subdivided and allocated to individual assessment components within the module.
- 2.8.3 The pass mark for a module is defined within the relevant module specification. Within a module, different pass thresholds may apply to particular assessment components.
- 2.8.4 Achievement of the pass mark may occur as a result of aggregation of either the first attempt at each assessment component, or any subsequent attempt allowed by the regulations pertaining to the programme.
- 2.8.5 BIBF Certifications shall be issued officially by the Registration Department only and shall contain the BIBF unique identification reference number (refer to the Registration Department procedure for more details).
- 2.8.6 For NQF related certificates, the number of credits and the NQF level shall be clearly stated in the final certificate, as per the NQF guidelines.

3. Monitoring and Review

3.1 BIBF will regularly monitor and review the application of its Learning Assessment

Policy closely by the Head of Centres. Indicators of effectiveness of application of this policy shall include, but not limited to:

- Indicators of moderation and verification outcomes, including indicators of number of iterations that occurred between the marker and subsequent verifiers and moderators
- Analyses of learners' results within cohorts and across time
- Analyses of cases of appeal, mitigating circumstances, reasonable adjustment and assessment related malpractices

3.2 The outcomes of the above monitoring tasks shall be collated by the learning centres and shall be discussed in the ESC meeting, and necessary actions shall be taken if appropriate.

3.3 The QA Office shall keep copies of records of all the relevant reports and indicators.

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Related Policies or Documents	Guidelines and Forms CH03-GL01-02 Board of Examiners Guidelines CH03-GL02-02 Mitigating Guidelines CH03-FR01-02 Mitigating Circumstances Form CH03-FR02-04 Verification of Examination paper CH03-FR03-03 Examination Paper Front Cover CH03-FR04-02 Verification of Assessment plan CH03-FR05-03 Moderation of Examination Script CH03-FR06-01 Pre & Post Assessment template
Review Frequency	3 years
First Issue	September 2009
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1. Scope

This policy aims at ensuring that courses and programs are prepared and delivered to provide the learners at BIBF a great and valuable learning experience that is designed to meet learners' individual and varying needs and expectations.

This policy covers the full cycle of teaching; from preparing course materials and handouts, lesson planning, provision of extra-curricular to other supporting learning activities. The policy outlines specific requirements upon starting a course and those before closing off the course. Such requirements are deemed necessary to enable the respective learning centres and quality assurance to monitor the quality of teaching and training, and to ensure full compliance with the requirements set in this policy.

2. Policy Statement

2.1 Definitions

- 2.1.1 Extra-curricular activity: any additional learning activity that is provided to learners outside the prescribed curriculum of the program, which aims at enriching the learning experience of learners.
- 2.1.2 Differentiation activity: learning activity that is delivered inside a learning session which aims at supporting the less able or slow-progressing learners; or stretching the learning and challenging the more-able or fast-progressing learners.

2.2 References

- 2.2.1 The teaching and learning policy is consistent with the requirements and broad principles laid down by the Higher Education Council (HEC) of Bahrain, Education and Training Quality Authority (BQA) of Bahrain, as well as the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) of the UK (for the relevant academic programs offered in partnership with a UK-based higher education institutions).
- 2.2.2 As for the BQA referencing, BIBF observe the broad principles laid down by the relevant framework set by the Directorate of Vocational Reviews, Directorate of Higher Educational Reviews, and/or the General Directorate of Qualifications.

2.3 Student Induction

- 2.3.1 At the start of each program, students are given a brief introduction to their chosen programs and course/subject of study delivered by BIBF Faculty, Program Coordinator, Centre Head or a representative of the QA Department. This should prepare them for their studies at their respective Centre and/or programs; help motivate them to study; identify any special needs and offering appropriate support; and provide an orientation to the source of learning support; as well as relevant policies such as academic integrity and appeal policy.
- 2.3.2 Each learner receives a relevant student handbook (either in hard or a soft format), containing general information about the relevant information about BIBF and the specific policies and requirements pertaining to the chosen program of study, including sources of learning support, wherever relevant.
- 2.3.3 In addition to the necessary information on the program, study requirements and assessment, the induction at the beginning of the program/course should cover all necessary guiding notes on safety and health measures. The Operations Department shall be responsible for identifying all necessary safety and health measures that need to be communicated to learners.

2.4 Learning Materials

- 2.4.1 BIBF develops learning materials for each BIBF program and/or works jointly with international organizations for collaborative programs through case studies, short review questions and other learning activities. They are also designed to prepare students for the assessment methods used in their programs.
- 2.4.2 The design of learning materials shall be in line with the stated learning outcomes of the course, as well as the approved indicative syllabus (Refer to Chapter 2 on the BIBF policy on Program Design, Approval, Monitoring and Review).
- 2.4.3 Prior to the start of the program/course, the course materials need to be approved by the Head of Learning Centre or the Program Manager. The approved materials shall be archived in a system within the program administration team of the respective learning centre, as part of the end-of-course folder using the BIBF Archiving system (refer to Section 2.9 below).

- 2.4.4 The approved learning materials shall remain the property of BIBF (unless the course is co-branded or otherwise indicated by a binding contract or agreement with an external provider).
- 2.4.5 Faculty shall use approved learning materials only for any course to inform the lesson plans. However, it is the ultimate responsibility of the faculty member to tailor-make the materials in response to the particular needs of the group of learners or their employers, as deemed necessary.
- 2.4.6 Any adjustments or bespoke amendments made to the approved materials need to be logged in the BIBF Lesson Plan; the records of which needs to be kept along with the end-of-course folder .
- 2.4.7 Each learner shall receive a copy of text learning materials after registration, in a hard or soft format. Reading references and additional links of supporting materials are incorporated into the learning materials.
- 2.4.8 For academic and some longer professional programs, learners are given access to the BIBF Learning Management System for all learning materials, as well as assessment and feedback of tutors on learning and assessment.
- 2.4.9 The design of online and virtual materials shall be carefully done to ensure effective learning in digital mode of delivery. QA department in coordination with the IT & Operations department shall issue special guidelines to lecturer on the design and delivery of the course using available online learning platforms.

2.5 Additional Learning Resources

- 2.5.1 It is expected that BIBF will enhance a participant's experience through the provision of access to the following resources and services, wherever applicable:
 - 2.5.1.1 A formalized mechanism for feedback by faculty on the learners work or continuous assessment. Records of such feedback need to be recorded wherever practically possible and shall be kept part of the end-of-course folder (refer to Section 2.9 below).
 - 2.5.1.2 Membership of library and information service with a suitable stock of physical reading references and use of IT resources to facilitate access to comprehensive learning environment (offered either by the BIBF or the external partners) .
 - 2.5.1.3 Extra-curricular activities such as guest lectures, master classes, short courses, site visits, learning competitions, conference, webinars etc. Learning Centre shall

keep detailed records of such activities and, wherever possible, reports on the learning impact of such activities or learners' self-reflections, as part of the end-of-course folder (refer to Section 2.9 below).

- 2.5.1.4 Additional support that might be deemed necessary such as extra or remedial classes. For additional support, "the Learners Follow-up form" need to be filled for record and follow-up purposes. Additional support can be requested by a learner or can be initiated by a faculty member upon observing a learner that is in need for extra support to augment his/her learning. The extra support can be delivered by the same faculty, or someone else that the Learning Centre might assign.

2.6 Lesson Planning

- 2.6.1 Lesson planning process shall be based on the stated ILOs of the training course, and the indicative syllabus as approved by the Learning Centre prior to the start of a course.
- 2.6.2 The course instructor shall prepare tentative plans for all the sessions prior to the start of a course using the approved BIBF "Lesson Plan" template (unless the lesson plan is dictated by an external professional or accreditation body). The lesson plan shall be reviewed and concurred by another course facilitator, program manager or the centre head.
- 2.6.3 The lesson plans shall include wherever applicable: ILOs, topics, activities, special resources required, timing, assessment tools, differentiation notes, special arrangements for online/virtual delivery and assessments; as well as notes that need to be brought to the attention of the program manager/centre head.
- 2.6.4 The lesson plans shall incorporate the varying needs of learners as revealed from the outcomes of the initial assessment, as well as the continuous formative assessments during delivery of the sessions. Any amendments or customisation that need to be done and that are not stipulated in the tentative lesson plans, shall be noted down by the course instructor in the running lesson plans.
- 2.6.5 The lesson plans shall be used dynamically as running documents that are updated continuously throughout the course. The course admin, nominated by the program manager or centre head, is responsible for collection of the copies of the final running lesson plans and keep them part of the end-of-course folder in the digital archiving system.

2.6.6 The QA Department shall develop, in coordination with the IT & Operations team, a system to enable lecturers to have one online version of the lesson plan, the initial plan, that can be dynamically updated online reflecting the changes that otherwise are logged separately in the running lesson plan.

2.7 Teaching and Training Pedagogies

2.7.1 Teaching and training sessions of BIBF shall be planned and delivered to:

- Be tailored-made to the varying needs of the learners in the group and cover the full range of abilities of learners in the same group.
 - Be appropriate to the stated ILOs and the nature of skills it intends to develop (such as theoretical knowledge, practical application, basic or advanced numeracy and analytical skills, decision making and autonomy).
 - Place the learner at the centre of the teaching process, engage and involve all learners sufficiently during the sessions.
 - Be informed by the recent pedagogical (or andragogical to be more precise!) approaches in starting a session, delivering materials, checking and assessing understanding of learners, engaging them throughout, and finally wrapping up a session.
-
- Make use of a variety of activities as much as practically possible.
 - Be informed by recent academic and professional advancements, such as; outcomes of scholarly research and professional practices relevant to the specific topics of the course.
 - Take opportunity of advanced ICT applications, e-learning and online resources.
 - Foster principles of life-long-learning, and encourage self-development, critical thinking and other higher-order thinking skills within learners.

2.8 Attendance and Punctuality

2.8.1 Attendance in all programs shall be recorded.

2.8.1 Unless otherwise stated, attending minimum of 75% of sessions is a prerequisite for granting the qualification, credits or certification of completion of a

- course/program.
- 2.8.2 In addition to attendance, punctuality of learners shall be recorded as well.
- 2.8.3 Coming later than 30 minutes after the start of a session or leaving one hour earlier than agreed finishing time is considered to be a “punctuality case”. Three cases of punctuality shall be equated to one day of absenteeism.
- 2.8.4 Attendance and punctuality rates shall be monitored and reported upon completing a course, and the analyses of such data shall be constituting part of the annual monitoring of all programs and courses that the learning centres conduct.

2.9 Course Folder

- 2.9.1 Upon completing a course or a program, the learning Centre is responsible to compile in one “course folder” all relevant document pertaining pre-course processing, during-the-course delivery; as well as post-course processes to facilitate effective monitoring, retrieval and subsequent quality assurance.
- 2.9.1 The course folder shall comprise, but not limited to, the following items wherever possible (please refer to the QA Course Folder template checklist and guidelines):
- ✓ Program/course design and approval documents, such as; business case, mapping, confirmation and approval files.
 - ✓ Program syllabus and curriculum.
 - ✓ Timetable and a planned schedule for conducting the program.
 - ✓ Lecturer’s CV.
 - ✓ Lesson plans (initial and running plans).
 - ✓ Course materials, handouts and presentation slides.
 - ✓ All summative and formative assessment tools, including; marking scheme or assessment rubrics, samples of marked sheets or learners’ works, as well as assessment verification and moderation (internal and external) documents.
 - ✓ Class and/or peer observation forms.



- ✓ Attendance and punctuality records.
- ✓ Cases of mitigating circumstances, if any.
- ✓ End-of-course evaluation sheets (by learners) and summary report.
- ✓ Records of additional support and guidance given to learners.
- ✓ Any supporting media items such as videos and pictures.

2.9.2 The program administrator (or the program manager in the absence of a program administrator) is responsible for collating all the items for the course folder, using the specially designed Archiving System, that are needed before the start of a course, during the course and upon completion of the course.

2.9.3 The Learning Centre are responsible for monitoring the completion rates (refers to collection of all mandatory items of the Archiving system) continuously to ensure timely collection of related course folder items. The same indicator is reported annually at the ESC as part of the Centre Annual Monitoring Report.

3. Monitoring and Review

3.1 BIBF will regularly monitor and review the application of its Teaching and Learning Policy closely by the Head of Centres, Program Managers; as well as QA. Indicators of effectiveness of the application of this policy shall include, but not limited to:

- Completion of course folder items as reported by the Archiving System.
- Compliance of guidelines and quality of teaching and training as revealed by class and peer observations.
- Analyses of improvement indicators in attendance, punctuality, and outcomes of class and peer observations. Such analyses need to be used as part of the annual monitoring reporting by centre heads.
- Compliance indicators as verified by internal audit exercise coordinated by QA department.

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1. Scope

This chapter outlines the BIBF policy towards handling cases of complaints, malpractices and appeals. The scope of this chapter covers the academic-related complaints that learners might have, appeals against outcomes of admission, progression and assessment outcomes, as well as cases of learners' malpractices that might be raised by a teaching staff, examiner, marker, invigilator or other member of BIBF support staff.

The chapter outlines the guiding principles and the key steps in handling cases of complaints, malpractices (academic and non-academic) and appeals. It identifies the basic rights and obligations of all parties involved in raising or handling such cases, throughout the cycle of initiation and processing.

For international programs that the BIBF is hosting, the relevant policy and procedures of the mothering institution are applied, unless it is indicated otherwise.

2. Policy Statement

2.1 Definitions

Complaint: is the expression of a specific concern about the provision of a course/module, or a program of study, or a related service.

Appeal: a request for a review of a decision on student admission, progression, assessment or awards.

Malpractice: any act where a student engages in unfair practices to gain an advantage over other students; or to allow other students to gain an advantage on BIBF programs; or to cause direct or indirect disruption to the studies and/or assessment of other students following BIBF programs. Assessment activities where malpractice may occur include observed examination, take-home assignment, as well as group/collaborative projects. Instances of malpractice may occur in the following ways:

- As a result of fraudulent claims for entry and/or credit
- As a result of fraudulent claims for extenuating circumstances
- Within a formal supervised examination
- Through plagiarism

- Through collusion
- Through fraudulent production or falsification of data
- Through students attempting to make direct contact with any examiner

Plagiarism: The passing off work (either completely or in part and whether intentionally or unintentionally) of another person as one's own. The reproduction of another's work can take many forms including, but not limited to, the following:

- Written work (formal or informal)
- Thoughts (e.g., notes, correspondence)
- Inappropriate use of artificial intelligence generated materials.
- Conversations (e.g., radio programs, phone discussions)
- Electronic communications (e.g., e-mails, web pages, faxes)
- Graphics (e.g., diagrams, tables, exhibits, models)
- Purchase or acquisition of work from internet sites which is then submitted as a student's own

Collusion: is a type of plagiarism, whereby students co-operate with each other inappropriately in an attempt to gain an unfair advantage, i.e., inappropriate co-operation between students on the work submitted for assessment in cases where this is required to be a student's own work.

Behavioural Misconduct: a behaviour which, in its broadest sense, constitutes improper interference with the functioning or activities of the BIBF, or those who work and study in the institution. The BIBF may take disciplinary action in relation to behaviour, which affects members of the public, which is not honest and peaceable, and which damages the standing of the institution.

For all academic and professional programmes: All enrolled students are expected to seriously follow the guidelines for Student Code of Conduct and Discipline given in the programme Students Handbook. That include, but not limited to, the following:

- Dress-code,
- Classroom behaviour
- Usage of mobile phones
- Usage of social media

2.2 References

Malpractice, Appeals and Student Complaints policy at BIBF is consistent with the requirement and broad principles laid down by the Higher Education Council (HEC) of Bahrain, Education and Training Quality Authority (BQA) of Bahrain, as well as the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) of the UK (for the relevant academic programmes offered in partnership with a UK-based higher education institutions).

2.3 Guiding Principles

- 2.3.1 Complaints and appeals may be made by individuals or, inappropriate circumstances, collectively by a group of individuals.
- 2.3.1 Complaints may be dealt with effectively through informal, as may appear in their earlier stages.
- 2.3.2 For complaints and appeals to be resolved well, all individuals and/or groups involved – staff and students – need to act reasonably and fairly towards each other, and to treat the processes themselves with respect and not abuse them.
- 2.3.3 Complaints and appeals and their outcomes can have significant consequences for the individuals or groups lodging them and for BIBF and the individuals associated with the complaint. BIBF will ensure that the interests and well-being of all faculty, staff and students associated with a complaint, or an appeal, are properly safeguarded. At the same time BIBF will recognize that there is a need for sound evidence and procedural fairness.
- 2.3.4 In both complaints and appeals, however, BIBF aims to ensure that all the parties have the benefit of access to fair procedures so that the complaint or appeal can be considered fairly.
- 2.3.5 BIBF will effectively handle complaints or appeals by responding in a timely manner and bring matters to a conclusion as speedily as possible within a period of normally two weeks of receiving the complaint. Procedures and correspondences will include indicative timescales for responses.
- 2.3.6 Who has access to BIBF's complaints and appeals procedures?
 - Individuals who applied for a BIBF program and got a reply and a

decision on their application.

- Individuals accepted to study at BIBF or joint awards.
- Current students, including those studying for BIBF's award or qualification.
- Recent graduates (graduated within two months).
- Students studying with a partner institution in collaborative arrangements.

2.3.7 It is important to maintain confidentiality when receiving or handling a complaint or an appeal, unless disclosure is necessary to enable the complaint or appeal to be progressed. Where this is the case, person(s) complaining or appealing will be notified before any disclosure is made and to check that they wish to proceed before doing so.

2.3.8 BIBF complaints and appeals procedures (and any associated guidance) are available publicly to ensure that those who need to know about the procedures have ready access to them. This will be stated in the Code of Practice's intranet and will be available publicly. All students commencing studies with BIBF will be made aware of such information during induction.

2.3.9 BIBF ensures that students have access to its rules and regulations regarding malpractice, and that they are provided with appropriate guidance to enable them to avoid committing malpractice from the respective faculty and/or Program Manager and /or Head of Centre or the QA normally during induction.

2.3.10 It is the students' responsibility to ensure that they understand the rules regarding malpractice and seek advice and guidance as needed from respective faculty and/or Program Manager and/or Head of Centre.

2.4 Malpractices Handling

2.4.1 Clear designs of BIBF's malpractices, complaints and appeals procedures will enable them to be conducted in a timely, fair and reasonable manner within a period of two weeks of receipt of the case.

2.4.2 BIBF will ensure that suitable briefing and support is provided for all staff and students involved in handling malpractices, complaints and appeals.

2.4.3 For dual/joint awards, involvement of the partnering institution may be sought at any point during investigation of an alleged case of malpractice in accordance to the agreement and arrangement between BIBF and the partnering institution.

2.4.4 In case of plagiarism and artificial intelligence where in doubt the

panel may request for a viva or interview to be arranged to a certain any violation of assessment against guidelines or instructions of using AI that are provided.

2.4.5 Malpractice within a Formal Supervised Examination: malpractice within a formal supervised examination can take a number of forms including, but not limited to, the following examples:

- Copying from the work of another student or communicating with another student .
- Introduction, into the examination, of any books, notes, electronically stored information or other unauthorized material or equipment other than that permitted by the appropriate regulations.
- Unauthorized removal of examination material from the examination venue.

- Impersonating a fellow student or arranging/allowing impersonation of staff.
- And using a mobile phone

2.4.6 In case, the student is found violating the examination rules such as talking and using hand gestures. The invigilator shall mark the exam paper with a tick and signature as warning. The marker shall then consider deducting marks up to 3 of the total examination marks.

2.4.7 In all cases, when a student is found in possession of any study materials and or using a mobile/ tablets or smart suspected of malpractice in a formal, supervised examination, the invigilator shall inform by means of a formal, written report submitted to the Quality Assurance Department, who shall register the case officially through the system and keep a record of the malpractice, appeals, and complaints by the student/faculty/staff name, nature of the issue and raises it to CMARG.

2.4.8 Suspected cases of malpractice within an examination will be referred to the Quality Assurance Department in the first instance, will record the case.

2.4.9 If it is decided that there is a case to answer, the Quality Assurance Department will contact the student outlining the issue and asking for a written response by a given date, normally within THREE working days of receiving the QA letter/email.

2.4.10 The Head of the Quality Assurance Department shall form an ad-hoc

CMARG for the purpose of handling a reported case of malpractice. The CMARG shall comprise of at least three senior members of staff (preferably including one head of a learning centre) and a QA representative. The members of CMARG need to be members who are not involved in the delivery/teaching of the learner(s) under investigation.

2.4.11 Reports from the QA and the relevant Centre along with the written response from the student are then considered by the CMARG, which considers all the evidence before making a judgment on the case. In case of need for a hearing, the learner(s), Centre representative and witnesses (if available) can be co-opted.

2.4.12 **Handling of Academic Malpractices:** If the judgment of the case is that malpractice has occurred, then a range of measures may be taken by the CMARG which include, but are not limited to, the following (For deciding on the outcome refer to the list of penalties Addendum):

- Deduction of certain percentage of marks up to pass mark for the assessment component in which malpractice has been deemed to have occurred.
- Awarding a minimum pass mark for the assessment component in which malpractice has been deemed to have occurred.
- Awarding a mark of zero in the assessment component in which malpractice has been deemed to have occurred.
- Awarding a mark of zero for all the examinations/assessments for the examination period concerned.
- Requiring the student to re-submit or re-sit the examination component.
- Recommending to the Head of Centre and the CEO of BIBF, the exclusion of the student from the program of study for a certain period of time
- Recommending to the Head of Centre and the CEO the withdrawal of any relevant award(s) made to the student.

2.4.13 **Handling of Behavioural Malpractices:** If a student is found responsible for violation(s) of the BIBF's student Code of Conduct, the following disciplinary penalties/actions may be imposed by the CMARG committee:

- Attention notice verbally, or in writing.
- Properly taking out the student from the classroom/lecturer hall.

- Evicting the student from the BIBF building, or denying his/her access therein.
- Depriving the student to utilize the services of the BIBF facility or more, for the period specified in the conviction decision.
- Depriving the student from exercising a student activity or more for the period specified in the conviction decision.
- Subjecting the student to a fine for not less than the value of the things that the student intentionally damaged.
- Deeming the student, a "Fail" in an examination or in a course/module.
- Cancellation the student's registration for a course or more in the Semester during which the violation occurred.
- Depriving the student temporarily or permanently from the financial assistance, if applicable.
- Stopping the student from study for a semester or more, in conjunction with denying the student to recover (refund) study fees.
- Final discharge (dismissal) from the Institute.
- Cancellation the resolution by which the degree was offered, a decision in this respect shall not be concluded unless cheating and forgery to obtain the certificate is proved.

2.4.14 The QA Department shall keep a hierarchy of measures that can be applied in malpractice cases. The hierarchy shall indicate the measures taken against first-timer learner, as well as those with repeat records of malpractices. The purpose of the hierarchy is to achieve consistency in applying the measures over time and across similar cases. Nevertheless, this hierarchy needs to be used for guidance purposes only, and each case needs to be investigated thoroughly in its given context, circumstances, and merits.

2.4.15 **Handling of Suspected Plagiarism and Collusion:** evidence of suspected plagiarism may arise from a variety of sources, such as an examiner, marker, and faculty, or by plagiarism detection technology.

2.4.16 The identifier of the potential plagiarism should submit a formal report outlining his/her concerns to the QA Department, who will decide if there is a case to answer. A formal request should be initiated through the QA ticketing-based electronic portal.

2.4.17 Where plagiarism is suspected, the work may be submitted to plagiarism detection technology, such as Turnitin, to aid any investigation. The report of such detection technology needs to be considered as part of the evidence and the CMARG shall resolve to further sources of evidence to prove plagiarism.

- 2.4.18 Any cases of plagiarism to answer are subject to the same process as malpractice in a formal supervised examination.
- 2.4.19 Any cases of proven plagiarism are subject to the same range of penalties as laid out above.

2.5 Complaints and Appeals Handling

- 2.5.1 Complaints that could not be resolved informally in the Centre (as minor complaints are encouraged to be resolved informally within the Centre) shall be referred to a CMARG formed specifically to handle the case of complaint. The formation of CMARG shall follow the same principle described above.
- 2.5.2 Complaints and appeals shall be put in writing to the QA Department, using the right forms and the ticketing-based electronic portal, by the complainant along with all relevant pieces of evidence that support the case of complainant or appellant.
- 2.5.3 Appeals can be logged in by complainant against decisions on application for admission, progression, or outcomes of assessment (on the grounds described below only), or against CMARG outcomes.
- 2.5.4 Complaints against the behaviour or misconduct of a teaching faculty or BIBF staff towards an individual learner or group of learners shall be forwarded to the concerning head of centre, and shall be handled by the HR Department in accordance to the established HR rules and regulation.

2.6 Appeals Handling

2.6.1 BIBF offers the opportunity to appeal under certain conditions, known as the grounds for appeal as follows:

- 2.6.1.1 That there were procedural irregularities in the conduct of either the assessment itself or of the examining process.
 - 2.6.1.2 That there is evidence of prejudice or bias on the part of the examiners.
 - 2.6.1.3 That there were serious circumstances that impacted their performance, and which they were unable, for sound reasons, to make known prior to the meeting of the Examination Board.
- 2.6.2 Appeals requests that warrant re-marking or checking marks are adding

up correctly, can be forwarded directly by the QA Department to the relevant Centre for remarking and/or mark checking. In case of re-marking a report of second marker is forwarded to the QA Department. A variation of upto 5% of marks between the first marker and the second marker is permitted, whilst cases of more than 5% shall be decided by the relevant Head of Centre, who can either appoint a third marker or decide on which mark is approved.

- 2.6.3 Appeals against assessment results can only be done after the announcement of the final results of a course to the learners (for academic and professional programmers once the grades have been approved and concluded by the internal exam.
- 2.6.4 The written appeal shall be recorded by the QA Department and handled into possible two escalating stages:
- 2.6.5 Appeal Stage 1: In the first stage, the QA Department will decide if the case needs to be returned to the learning centre or handled by a form a CMARG formed specifically for the given case.
- 2.6.6 The QA Department might decide to return the case to the concerned learning centre for additional marking (by second or third marker). The outcomes of subsequent marking shall be communicated back to the QA Department, who shall check and approve the outcomes. The final outcomes of the additional marking shall be communicated to the appellant(s) by the QA Department.
- 2.6.7 Second, or subsequent, marking must use the same assessment rubric or marking criteria that was used for the first marking only. Additional marking to the first marking shall not challenge the adequacy of the established assessment rubric or marking criteria.
- 2.6.8 Depending on the case of the appeal, the QA Department might otherwise refer it to a CMARG for further investigation and decision. The formation of the CMARG shall follow the same terms as detailed above.
- 2.6.9 The First Stage outcomes of the appeal handling shall be approved by the Head of QA Department and shall be communicated by the QA Department to the student.
- 2.6.10 Appeal Stage 2: In the case where the appellant is not convinced with the outcomes of the first stage of appeal process, the appellant has the right to challenge the outcomes of the first stage formally by logging a new formal appeal against the outcomes of the first stage.
- 2.6.11 The appeal against the outcomes of the first stage of appeal should be based on the same grounds of the first stage, and no extra evidence



should be produced other than the same evidence base that the appellant produced for the first stage.

- 2.6.12 The second stage of appeal and complaints shall be handled by the second stage CMARG committee as appointed by the BIBF CEO, to investigate the appeal/complaint. The second stage of CMARG shall consist of members that are different than the members of the first stage of CMARG, with the exception of the QA representative.
- 2.6.13 The second stage of CMARG outcomes shall be final, and no further appeal can be raised against the outcomes. The outcomes shall be approved by the CEO, and hence after, shall be communicated to the appellant by the QA Department.

3 Monitoring and Review

- 3.1 BIBF will regularly monitor and review the Complaints, Malpractice and Appeal policy by the Quality Assurance Department. Indicators of effectiveness of the application of this policy shall include, but not limited to:
- The number of complaints made by public, professional, academic, external and special offerings respectively, and by students on full-time and part-time modes of study.
 - The gender and nationalities of those making complaints and appeals.
 - Number of cases raised to QA, number of cases deemed non-answerable and returned back to the Centre, number of cases raised to CMARG, number of cases escalated to second stage of appeal/complaint handling.
 - Analyses of cases per type of case such as plagiarism, other mal-practice, violation during formal examination, appeal, and complaint.
- 3.2 The outcomes of the above monitoring tasks shall be collated by the Quality Assurance Department and shall be discussed in the ESC meeting, and necessary actions shall be taken if appropriate.



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1. Scope

Monitoring of institutional effectiveness is a distributed function that is discharged at various levels within the Institute. The previous chapters of the BIBF Code of Practice defines the various processes through which the institutional monitoring processes are discharged. This policy, nevertheless, sets a structural framework in which the BIBF, either at the learning centre, cross-functional level or at the institute level, monitors the achievements of learners in the professional and academic programs, performance of staff, as well as the effectiveness of its programs in meeting the needs of stakeholders.

Furthermore, the policy sets an outline of the institute's strategic performance management system to continuously improve the overall effectiveness of the institute. The requirements for other quality-related cross functional committees, as well as the key requirement ensuring the safety and well-being of learners and all staff are also highlighted in this policy.

2. Policy Statement

2.1 Institutional Monitoring at the Learning Centre Level

2.1.1 Monitoring of Learners' Achievements

- 2.1.1.1 At the learning centre level, monitoring of learners' achievements starts with the review of learners' achievements data of a particular course or program at the examination board deliberation, wherever applicable once the results of all assessments are produced and presented for approval at the centre, or at the regular meetings of the Centre, wherever applicable.
- 2.1.1.2 For approving the final results in the examination board meeting, the learning centre shall look into the learners' achievement data across the cohort or group (please refer to CoP-CH03 for more details on examination board meeting).
- 2.1.1.3 The second venue for monitoring learners' achievements is the Annual Monitoring reporting, whereby the analyses of such data constitute a key element of the monitoring exercise (please refer to Section 2.2.2 the Annual Monitoring exercise). The analyses should include indicators on achievement and progress rates, demographic analyses, as well as trend

analyses of the same indicators on a yearly basis.

- 2.1.1.4 The third venue for monitoring of learners' achievements is during the program regular review exercise. For the purpose of reviewing the effectiveness of a program, learning centres shall consider the analyses of learners in the program under review, and hence suggest any amendments to the program that might further enhance the learners' level of attainment and progress in the program (refer to CoP-CH02 for more details on program monitoring and review).

2.1.2 Monitoring of Staff Performance

- 2.1.2.1 The Human Resources Department is responsible for defining and driving the HR strategy of BIBF, and articulates the talent management philosophy of the organization, and drives key human resources activities like recruitment, staffing, retention, compensation structuring, wellbeing and employee benefits administration, employee relations, management development and performance management.
- 2.1.2.2 The BIBF HR Policy and Procedures are designed around the legislative framework of the law No. 36 of 2012 (Bahrain labour law for the private sector) and implements amendments that may be issued from time to time.
- 2.1.2.3 The institute's performance appraisal system is covered in detail in the HR Procedures Manual which aims to establish clear objectives and individual responsibilities for each employee. The appraisal system also identifies promotion potential, rewards employees with standard and outstanding performance, identifies employees with below-standard performance, develops improvement and training plans and ensures effective communication between the Centre heads and employees.
- 2.1.2.4 As far as the teaching and training faculty is concerned, a class and peer observation systems are in place to monitor the teaching/training effectiveness in classrooms. The system shall be designed to assess the main aspects such as session planning, teaching and assessment, as well as learners' performance and progress during a lesson. The system shall be used to:
- Provide constructive feedback to faculty on how to improve further.

- Give a reliable indicator to the management team on how the teaching/training staff perform in classrooms, and to what extent their performance has improved over time.
- Feed in the HR systems of performance measurement and teaching, performance-based incentives as well, wherever available.

- 2.1.2.5 The class and peer observation shall cover all full-time instructors, as well as part-timers whom the learning centre use frequently (at least 60 hours and above a year).
- 2.1.2.6 Wherever possible, the class observation shall be conducted by independent observers or observers outside the relevant learning centre, whereas the peer observation shall be done by peers within the institute.
- 2.1.2.7 The class observation is done based on a summative overall judgment on the effectiveness of the session, to enable reliable monitoring of the improvement of staff performance over time. The peer observation shall be used primarily to share good practices and provide internal feedback to the instructor on how to improve further.

2.1.3 Monitoring of Stakeholders' Satisfaction

- 2.1.3.1 Addressing the stakeholders' needs starts at the design stage of any program. According to the BIBF Design, Approval, Monitoring and Review Policy (CoP-CH02), it requires that new program proposals must be accompanied by a detailed business case which explicitly addresses the issue of market needs. Such proposals must also take account of previous learner and employer feedback, which helps to ensure that our programs are fully aligned to the needs of the market.
- 2.1.3.2 Once the program is approved, monitoring of stakeholders' satisfaction with the quality of programs in matching their needs continues through the annual monitoring of programs, which provides the opportunity for a formal evidence-based review, during which, areas for further improvement in the quality of programs are assessed and identified (Refer to CoP-CH02). The exercise involves feedback from learners, employers, faculty, and staff involved in the design and teaching of the programs.
- 2.1.3.3 In addition to the annual monitoring of programs, programs shall be subjected to a periodic review process, which is of a deeper evidence-based scrutiny,

similar to the initial internal confirmation/validation event, in order to ensure continuing the programme validity (refer to CoP-CH02).

- 2.1.3.4 In addition, each learning centre shall have a centre level Advisory Board constituting of members from the industry, alumni as well as members of faculty, who shall meet to review relevance of all existing and new programs and qualifications.
- 2.1.3.5 Learner Evaluation forms shall be used at the end of each course or semester (as well as in the middle of a long semester for academic modules) and shall be used effectively by the learning centres to obtain direct feedback on the effectiveness of programs, quality of teaching and other learning support services from a learner's perspective.
- 2.1.3.6 Feedback from learners and faculty members involved in the teaching of programs are also collected at the end of longer programs for the purpose of the Examination Board review (refer to CoP-CH03).
- 2.1.3.7 On an annual basis, the BIBF shall conduct a focus-group meeting with a number of training managers representing the financial sector. This event provides a valuable opportunity to gauge market opinions on the range of BIBF programs, and to understand the emerging trends in the labour market.
- 2.1.3.8 The outcomes of the annual meetings with the training managers shall be recorded and analysed by each learning centre, who shall then take the necessary improvement actions, or update the strategic and action planning of the centre accordingly.
- 2.1.3.9 In addition, a comprehensive online survey shall be distributed amongst all BIBF alumni and stakeholders, at least once every three years. The information gathered is then analysed by the BIBF Marketing and Corporate Communications Department, and the outcomes are shared with the learning centres for their consideration and action.
- 2.1.3.10 In addition, for academic and NQF-approved programs, the Registration Department in coordination with the Quality Assurance Department and the relevant learning Centre, shall conduct exit and alumni survey, at least once every three years per program.
- 2.1.3.11 For the academic programs, the Student Council shall be the official representative body of learners in the Annual Board of Studies and the external Examination Board of the respective academic program.

2.2 Institutional Monitoring at the Institute Level

2.2.1 Internal Quality Auditing

- 2.2.1.1 The QA Department is responsible for establishing and maintaining an internal quality auditing system.
- 2.2.1.2 In delivering the duties of the auditing system, the QA Department shall assign and develop a number of internal quality auditors. The auditors' team shall be comprised of teaching and support staff from all the learning and other support centres.
- 2.2.1.3 Scheduling of internal quality audit is the responsibility of the QA Department. All learning centres, as well as the relevant support services shall be subjected to at least two audits per year.
- 2.2.1.4 The audit type can be either:
- 2.2.1.5 Policy audit, in which, the internal policies and procedures of the auditee is reviewed against relevant external requirements such as those of the BQA or HEC.
- 2.2.1.6 Process audit, whereby the actual practices of the auditee are reviewed against the established policies and procedures in the BIBF.
- 2.2.1.7 System audit, which will most likely be an audit trail in which a number of related processes are reviewed for checking the seamless integration of all the relevant processes and their performance as a whole, compared to the expected outcomes of internal or external frameworks/policies.
- 2.2.1.8 The outcome of internal quality audit may be in the form of either:
- 2.2.1.9 Suggestion of minor areas for improvement- The status of implementation of such outcomes needs to be followed up on the subsequent quality audit which will be regularly scheduled for the audited centre.
- 2.2.1.10 Suggestion of major areas for improvement- This will be either non-conformity notes or an improvement area that may have a significant impact on the performance or compliance of the auditee. Major areas for improvement need immediate attention and shall be closed normally in a month's time from issuing the audit report.
- 2.2.1.11 The QA Department shall maintain a workflow system to track the processing of the internal quality audit system, as well as the closure of any major areas for improvement that an internal audit highlights.
- 2.2.1.12 All areas for improvement shall be addressed to the head of the audited centre/department, who shall be responsible for taking the necessary corrective and preventive actions accordingly.

2.2.2 Annual Monitoring

2.2.2.1 Although this process is initiated at the centre level, the annual monitoring is further performed at the institute level, whereby the reports of the centres are further reviewed and discussed by the top management team.

2.2.2.2 The annual monitoring process lies at the heart of the BIBF's quality management system. Each learning centre is required to compile an annual report for the Educational Standards Committee (ESC). These reports follow a common template and are designed to report on:

- The educational performance of learners, including wherever possible year-on-year analyses of data, benchmarking with regional and international programs, or any other data that indicate the level of achievements of learners in the respective programs of the centre.
- Performance of teaching and training staff, which includes the outcomes of class and peer observations.
- Stakeholders' satisfaction data drawn from various surveys as well as oral and written feedback from learners and employers, if available.
- Outcomes of external accreditation or assessment, such as program validation, NQF qualification placement and alignment, as well as external institutional accreditation or effectiveness review exercises
- Major innovations and quality improvements and any matters affecting quality which need to be addressed at the institutional level.
- Examples of good practice to be disseminated throughout the institution.
- Centre-level action plan for the coming year. The progress against these plans is monitored at the regular meetings of the ESC, and thereafter.

2.2.3 Safety and Health Assessment

- 2.2.3.1 To ensure the safety, health and well-being of all learners and staff at the BIBF premises, a dedicated Safety and Health Policy shall be developed and enacted.
- 2.2.3.2 The Safety and Health policy shall cover the process of regular assessment and management of all safety and health-related risks associated with the operations of the BIBF.
- 2.2.3.3 The Operations Department is responsible for maintaining the premises at a high standard to promote a healthy and safe learning environment for all learners, staff, and visitors.
- 2.2.3.4 As further assurance, a fully equipped and staffed health care unit shall be maintained in the BIBF premises to provide first aid and preliminary health assistance to learners and staff.
- 2.2.3.5 In addition, a number of BIBF staff are trained and certified as first aiders to provide the necessary first aid at any time needed in the premises.
- 2.2.3.6 On an annual basis, the Operations Department shall arrange for an institute-wide evacuation drill in coordination with the General Directorate of Civil Defence at the Ministry of Interior.
- 2.2.3.7 The Operations Department shall report on the number and types of safety and health incidents to the BIBF executive management team.

2.2.4 Strategic and Action Planning

- 2.2.3.8 The BIBF has an established mission and vision statement, which is prepared by the top management and duly approved by the BIBF Board of Directors. The vision and mission statement shall be communicated to the staff at all levels and shall be informed to the strategic planning team, as well as the day-to-day operations team.
- 2.2.3.9 As per the governance rules set the Board of Directors, the BIBF strategic planning shall start with a high-level three-year strategic plan informing the institute and the learning centres on the key strategic pillars that the BIBF shall strive to align its plans and operations with.
- 2.2.3.10 Quality and learning perspectives shall form an integral and explicit part of the institute's strategic management system, at all times.
- 2.2.3.11 The proposal for key strategic priorities shall be done by the BIBF's senior management team, led by the CEO, based on detailed strategic inputs and an



overall strategic analysis of the BIBF’s current position, internal environment, as well as the external environment.

- 2.2.3.12 The BIBF Strategic Plan shall then be approved by the Board of Directors.
- 2.2.3.13 Once adopted by the Board, the Strategic Planning team will inform the learning centres of their respective annual plans, objectives and other metrics/KPIs, which form the core of the BIBF’s strategic performance management system.
- 2.2.3.14 At the learning centre level, the strategic and action plans (developed by the centre and approved by the CEO), shall be monitored, and reviewed on a regular basis. The learning centre shall report the progress of their strategic and action plans to the CEO.
- 2.2.3.15 At the Institute level, the progress of the strategic plans, collated from all the centres, shall be reviewed, and discussed by the BIBF’s executive management team at least once a year.

2.2.5 Cross-functional Institutional Effectiveness Committees

In addition to the institutional effectiveness discharged at the learning centre level, the BIBF shall have a cross-functional committee structure with defined areas of responsibility and links to the management. Committee constitutions set out the membership and its terms of reference for each body as per the details in the table below, and the key quality-related committees are as follows:

	COMMITTEE	TERMS OF REFERENCE	MEMBERSHIP
1.	Academic Steering Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Make decisions that are related to introducing new programs. 2. Approve new partnerships and monitor existing ones. 3. Final BIBF consent to offer academic awards, which might be then subject to final approval of the awarding institution. 4. In matters where the BIBF has jurisdiction, to approve or amend administrative, academic, and financial policies and procedures relating to the BIBF’s undergraduate provision and the International Foundation Programme. 5. In the case of matters which fall within the purview of our university partners or a formal Committee of the BIBF (such as the Educational Standards Committee) 	<p>Chair: The CEO</p> <p>Constitution: The CEO, Chief Operations Officer, The Head of Finance, The Head of the Academic Centre, The Head of Registration,</p>



		<p>to formulate draft policies and recommend their adoption by the appropriate body.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. In exceptional circumstances, and when necessary, to consider individual cases which cannot be satisfactorily resolved by the application of existing policies and procedures. 7. The student representation is to receive stakeholders' feedback of learners and share with them the latest updates. 	<p>The Head of Quality Assurance, Two other members of staff,</p> <p>Minimum of 4 learners, including 2 current learners (representing the Student Council, and 2 alumni nominated by the HoC)</p> <p>Frequency: Minimum 2 meetings per year</p>
<p>2.</p>	<p>Accreditation of Prior Learning Committee (APLC)</p>	<p>The APL Committee is responsible for the Professional and Academic Qualifications required for:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Implementing the BIBF's APL Policy as defined in the QA CoP CH01. 2. Monitoring the APL policy and related procedures and materials to provide guidance to APL claimants in an advisory capacity. 3. Assessing claims for the Accreditation of Prior Learning in light of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Subject content and knowledge o Volume of learning o Level of learning o Evidence of achievement o Information regarding the student's knowledge in relation to the course requirements o Any relevant restrictions imposed by professional or statutory bodies. 4. Making decisions on behalf of BIBF in light of the assessments as mentioned above on whether or not to approve the claim and confirming the decision to Registration (for records and notification to the student) and to the relevant centre. 5. Assessing external and the BIBF qualifications in maintaining the BIBF Register of qualifications deemed to be acceptable for the APL against specific BIBF modules. 6. Reporting any suspected fraudulent claims for APL to the CMARG panel, if any. 	<p>Chair: Head of QA</p> <p>Constitution: Head of QA</p> <p>Three staff/faculty members nominated by QA and approved by the CEO.</p> <p>Frequency: Ad-Hoc, as required</p>

3.	Complaints, Malpractice and Appeals Review group (CMARG)	<p>The purpose of the CMARG is to review complaints, malpractice, and appeals issues with a view to protect the BIBF’s interests while ensuring fairness and consistency for the client/student.</p> <p>Please refer to the Chapter 5 of the BIBF Code of Practice on Complaints, Malpractice, and Appeals for details.</p>	<p>Chair: QA Representative</p> <p>Constitution: QA representative, At least three senior faculty members (preferably including one head of a learning centre)</p> <p>Frequency: Ad-Hoc, as required</p>
4.	Board of Examiners (BoE)	<p>To consider the assessment of modules for the session and to confirm the marks/grades/final qualifications to be awarded based on:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The analysis of detailed student performance data 2. Faculty feedback on assessments 3. Examiner feedback 4. External Examiner feedback (if any) 	<p>Chair: Head of Centre or the Program Manager</p> <p>Constitution: Head of Centre/Program Manager, at least two senior teaching staff members, and a QA representative. For academic programs, external examiner is required.</p> <p>Frequency: Upon the completion of final exams (prior to grade distribution). In case of academic it is conducted at the end of each semester.</p>
5.	Educational Standards Committee (ESC)	<p>A. The Educational Standards Committee is the authoritative body responsible for academic standards and the quality of learning opportunities across the institute. In discharging this responsibility, it will:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Approve and maintain oversight of the policies, procedures and regulations which comprise the BIBF Quality Code, and ensure that these take account of all relevant external reference points. 2. Approve all taught programmes (academic programmes are approved by the Academic Standards Committee) and ensure that they have undergone the required processes of validation and periodic review. 3. Ensure that the BIBF has in place appropriate learning, teaching and assessment strategies together with associated policies and procedures to ensure their implementation. 4. Receive and review annual reports and action plans from each of the institute’s learning centres. Establish and monitor the achievement of KPIs for the quality of learning opportunities. 	<p>Chair: The CEO</p> <p>Constitution: Chief Operations Officer, Head of QA, Head of Banking & Finance, Head of Digital Transformation & Project Management, Head of Leadership and Management, Head of Insurance, Head of Islamic Finance & Head of Registration</p> <p>Substitution: Ex-officio members may, with the express permission of the Chair, nominate</p>



		<p>5. Oversee the progress of the institute-wide research strategy and associated policies and procedures to ensure its implementation, in coordination with the BIBF Research Council</p> <p>6. Approve arrangements for the delivery of programs through partner organizations. Recommendations are made to the ESC and the CEO (who must approve the appointment of any new partners). A contractual relationship is then entered between the partner organization and the BIBF.</p> <p>B. The ESC may establish sub-committees with delegated responsibility for aspects of its work and time-limited working groups to conduct specific tasks and projects on its behalf.</p>	<p>alternatives in the event that they cannot attend a particular meeting.</p> <p>Frequency: At least 2 meetings a year.</p>
<p>6.</p>	<p>Programme Confirmation</p>	<p>The main responsibility of this committee is recommending the placement of qualifications on the National Qualifications Framework, or the internal confirmation panel before the final approval of non-NQF programmes.</p> <p>Please refer to Chapter 02 of the BIBF CoP for more details of the roles and scope of the programme confirmation panels.</p>	<p>Chair: Head of Quality Assurance or QA Manager</p> <p>Constitution:</p> <p>At least 2 members of the BIBF teaching staff with the appropriate experience of learning, teaching and assessment, and</p> <p>at least one of whom has relevant subject expertise,</p> <p>At least one external panel member (normally two in case of major programme approvals) with relevant expertise.</p> <p>Frequency: Prior to each submission to the NQF placement, or the internal approval of major programmes.</p>

<p>7.</p>	<p>Centre Advisory Panel</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To advise the BIBF Learning Centre on current industry trends and emerging needs in Bahrain and the Gulf region. 2. To offer industry and employer feedback on the BIBF's courses and other activities. 3. To provide advice and feedback on proposals for new courses and programs. 4. To facilitate deeper and more productive relationships between the BIBF and the industries it serves 5. The student representation will be to receive stakeholders' feedback and share the latest updates. 	<p>Chair: Head of Learning Centre</p> <p>Constitution:</p> <p>At least one member of the Centre's teaching staff,</p> <p>At least three senior practitioners from the relevant sector,</p> <p>One QA representative,</p> <p>As well as a minimum of 2 alumni as nominated by the Centre.</p> <p>Frequency: minimum once per year.</p>
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3. Monitoring and Review

This policy sets the monitoring framework for all quality-related policies set in the BIBF. The Code of Practice, which has the details on the monitoring parameters of each policy separately.

Furthermore, the effectiveness of the internal quality assurance processes is monitored through:

The outcomes of the internal quality auditing.

The outcomes of the external program and institutional inspection, validation and accreditation processes that are regularly conducted by the BQA, HEC and other certification bodies and partnering institutions.

The outcomes of benchmarking exercises, wherever applicable.

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Related Policies or Documents	Guidelines and Forms CH06-GL01-01 Corporate Governance & Compliance CH06-GL02-03 Annual Monitoring Report template CH06-GL03-04 Strategic Action Plan CH06-FR-01-01 Post AMR Action Planning Form
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1. Scope

The BIBF recognises that learners and employers are the ultimate stakeholders, whose needs and expectations must be used to inform the design and delivery of all the learning offerings at the institute. Satisfying learners and employers is rather the cornerstone principle on which the quality management system of the institute is established.

This policy sets the generic guidelines and venues through which the BIBF collects the views and feedback of learners and employers, analyses such inputs, and uses the outcomes to improve the range of academic and professional programs, or to further enhance the learning experience of the students at the BIBF.

2. Policy Statement

An essential aspect of the student's learning and teaching experience at the BIBF is the existence of input and feedback processes through which students can evaluate and impact their learning experience. One of the keyways in which students can have an impact on their learning and teaching experience is through participation as student representatives in the institution's committee structure. This policy aims to structure minimum requirements for student representation. One of the main principles of this policy is to provide a close loop of feedback to the stakeholders. The BIBF through its committees shall provide formal feedback on the actions taken based on the stakeholders' views in the following venues.

2.1 Learner Representation

2.1.1 Learner Representation in Committees

2.1.1.1 Learners' views are collected in various quality assurance committees and focus groups. The appointment of learner representatives to these committees enables students' views on the delivery of the BIBF programs to be represented at the module, program, and strategic level.

2.1.1.2 Representatives will be reminded to collect feedback from the students preferably in writing and submit to the committee secretary for meeting discussions. Students are required to share their feedback, actions, and outcomes from the committee participation with their colleagues via the student council.

2.1.1.3 Learners' views are formally sought for the deliberation of committees and events:

- **Annual Monitoring:** Learners' views are sought formally at the learning centre level to form a key input in the annual monitoring

exercise of each learning centre, and the action plans that shall be based on the outcomes of the monitoring reporting.

- **Program Review:** At the end of the validity cycle of learning programs, learners and/or alumni are invited to express their views on the relevant program for the purpose of program review and revalidation (refer to the BIBF CoP Chapter 2).
- **Student Council and Alumni Group:** Through these venues, learners' views and needs are communicated to the BIBF management. The councils are utilized mainly for learners in the academic programs of both undergraduate and postgraduate levels. Elected members of the student council, representing all academic programs, shall constitute the membership in the Academic Steering Committee. The Chair of the Steering Committee shall invite alumni of academic programs to attend the committee meetings as well.
- **Advisory Panel:** In addition, alumni and/or learners, or their representations, are invited to the Advisory Committee meeting as detailed in chapter 6.

2.2 Employer and Market Representation

2.2.1 Employer Survey

- 2.2.1.1 The first channel in which the BIBF gathers market and employers' needs is through a purposely designed online survey, using Survey Monkey or a similar tool.
- 2.2.1.2 The online survey needs to be distributed to a wide audience, covering employers who currently use the BIBF programs, as well as those who do not or have stopped doing so for a considerable time.
- 2.2.1.3 The survey needs to be carried out at least once every three years.
- 2.2.1.4 The outcomes of the survey shall be recorded, analysed, and distributed to all learning centres, who shall then use the outcomes to update the centre strategic and action planning. Actions taken in response to such outcomes need to be identified and recorded.

2.2.2 Post-course Client Evaluation

- 2.2.2.1 The second channel of collecting input to the analyses of market views is the post-training visit and/or survey conducted by the learning centres for all special offerings tailor-made to their respective clients.
- 2.2.2.2 The client shall be asked to fill a formal "Post-Course Client Evaluation".

The evaluations are administered by each respective learning centre, the head of which shall review the outcomes and take the necessary measures/actions in response. Records of such measures shall be kept along with the outcomes of the evaluation.

2.2.3 Employer Representation in Committees

2.2.3.1 In the BIBF, the voice of the market and employers are represented formally in the following committees and events:

- **Advisory Panel:** Each learning centre forms an Advisory Panel that comprises of academicians and practitioners in the respective field of knowledge. The main purpose of the Advisory Board is to advise the learning centre on the market needs and any industrial emerging trends that need to be reflected back on to the BIBF's offerings.
- **Annual Monitoring:** In addition to learners' views, employers' views are sought formally at the learning centre level to form another key input in the annual monitoring exercise of each learning centre.
- **Program Review:** At the end of the validity cycle of the learning programs, employer representatives are invited to express their views on the relevant program for the purpose of program review and revalidation (refer to the BIBF CoP- Chapter 2).

2.2.4 Satisfaction Survey and Questionnaires

- 2.2.4.1 The first channel through which learners of the BIBF express their views is the end-of-course satisfaction evaluation sheet.
- 2.2.4.2 Towards the end of a course, learners are required to express their satisfaction and suggestions/views in the "Post-Course Evaluation" sheet.
- 2.2.4.3 The "Post Course Evaluation" shall be preferably done electronically using the online platform. However, in cases where the electronic survey is not possible, the sheet can be distributed by hard copy.
- 2.2.4.4 In some longer courses, such as academic and other professional courses, learners' views might be sought in the middle of a course, in addition to the end-of-course evaluation.
- 2.2.4.5 For academic and NQF-placed programs, a graduate exit survey and alumni survey shall be conducted.

- Graduate exit survey: This survey shall focus on the extent to which the learners have achieved the overall aims/goals of the program, as well as the transferable skills wherever possible. The exit survey shall be conducted immediately upon releasing the official program certification to the graduates of the program.
- Alumni survey: The alumni survey shall be conducted a) twice per cohort for academic programs; after 6 months and 18 months after graduation; and b) once for other professional programs; preferably after 6–8 months after graduation. The alumni survey shall focus on assessing the employability rate; as well as the destinations of alumni upon the completion of a course, and to what extent the program has helped them in their academic or career progression.

2.2.4.6 The inputs collected from the learners shall be analysed and aggregated. The analyses shall include the quantitative analyses of the satisfaction rate with the various aspects of the learning experience that the evaluation sheets represent, as well as the qualitative analysis of the open-ended questions such as those pertaining to further needs and suggestions that learners might express.

2.2.5 Customer Service Enquiries

2.2.5.1 The second channel of inputs comes from various telephonic online and social interactions. The Customer Services unit shall keep a log for any enquiry received from interested learners via telephonic or online communication.

2.2.5.2 The same logbook is to be used to record any oral enquiries or interest that might be expressed through social gatherings, professional events, trade shows, or ad-hoc focus group interviews.

2.2.5.3 The Customer Services unit shall forward any enquiry that needs immediate attention to the concerned learning centre for further consideration and response.

2.2.5.4 In addition, the Customer Services unit aggregates all the inputs of learners and employers and sends the reports to the learning centres. The report shall indicate any emerging trends in need or demands of learners and employers, as well as further suggestions that might be solicited from these channels.



2.2.6 Learners' Complaints and Suggestions

2.2.6.1 Learners at the BIBF have access to official system of logging complaints or suggestions. The complaints can be either generic in nature addressing related learning and support services in the BIBF, or it can be specific complaints pertaining to an academic issue in a course that can be addressed otherwise through the BIBF Complaint, Malpractice and Appeal Review procedures.

2.2.6.2 All learners can raise any quality-related complaints or suggestions officially through the QA dedicated email address- qa@bibf.com or website.

2.2.6.3 The QA representatives shall access the email and forward any complaint or suggestion raised through the QA complaints automated workflow for handling, follow-up, and closure.

2.2.7 Market Needs Analyses

2.2.7.1 The Quality Assurance department shall regularly collate the outcomes of employers' views and satisfaction into one report for the attention of the centre heads through the Executive Management Team. The report shall include outcomes of the BIBF's own data collection, as well as other relevant market analyses reports that are published by the government agencies, professional bodies, as well as awarding bodies.

2.2.7.2 Market analyses reports shall be produced at least once every five years. The outcomes shall be reviewed thoroughly by the heads of learning centres, and wherever necessary, appropriate measures/actions shall be taken in response. Such improvement actions need to be recorded for follow-up purposes.

3. Monitoring and Review

3.1 At the process level, monitoring of this policy shall be done through the internal quality auditing, to verify full compliance to the requirements of this policy, and to check that views of learners and employers are sought regularly, analysed, and used in meaningful ways.

3.2 Monitoring at the process level shall also include reporting on quantitative indicators such as:

- Number of evaluations and surveys conducted and response rates.

- Number of enquiries received from prospective learners and employers.
- Number of complaints received from learners and the rate of their responses.
- Number of relevant meetings with learners' and employers' representatives in various committees as defined in this policy.

3.3 At the outcomes' level, the monitoring of this policy shall be achieved using regular reporting on the following indicators:

- Satisfaction rate of learners and employers gathered via various surveys.
- For academic programs, this may include employability rates gathered through graduate and alumni destination surveys.

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1. Scope

This policy applies to all types of collaborative provision arrangement between the BIBF and its partner organisation, locally or internationally, by which partners offer BIBF programs and qualifications. The policy applies to all academic and non-academic programs that are delivered through such collaborative arrangements.

In the delivery of its awards, BIBF will rely on flexible and distributed collaborative provision arrangements with centres in Bahrain and abroad. Before entering any partnership arrangement, BIBF conducts a rigorous approach covering search; screening (with centre suitability assessed against core criteria); implementation; and review.

In terms of its collaborative arrangements, BIBF will favour 'validated programs' through which the partner organization delivers a program of study towards an award that is developed, properly assessed (in the English or Arabic language) and awarded by BIBF or jointly, with clear agreement on shared responsibilities for programs and curricula design, delivery, assessment, as well as quality assurance.

In managing this aspect of its work, BIBF's approach is based on the following key principles:

- Learning opportunities are made available without prejudice to the academic/ professional standards of the award(s) or the quality of what is offered to students/ participants, wherever they may be;
- The arrangements for assuring quality and standards are rigorous, secure and open to scrutiny;
- Delivery is conducted in a style consistent with ensuring protection to both students and partners and in an atmosphere conducive to building trust and confidence amongst the stakeholders.

2. Policy Statement

2.1 References

- 2.1.1 The BIBF Collaborative Provision policy is guided by the requirement and broad principles laid down by the Higher Education Council (HEC) of Bahrain, Education and Training Quality Authority (BQA) of Bahrain, as well as the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) of the UK (for the relevant academic programmes offered in partnership with UK-based higher education institutions).



2.2 Principles and Guidelines

2.2.1 Responsibility for educational standards:

The hallmark of BIBF provision, irrespective of the method of study followed, is that students are required to take common assessments as set and marked centrally by BIBFs' respective centre.

Additionally, there is central control of program review and the appointment of faculty, as per the BIBF Faculty Approval Form (for collaborative provision).

2.2.2 Arrangements for the delivery of programs through partner organizations:

2.2.2.1 BIBF has set down academic, brand reputation and commercial criteria to inform the process of application and acceptance of partner organizations

2.2.2.2 Recommendations are made to the ESC and the CEO (who must approve the appointment of any new partners). A contractual relationship is then entered between the partner organization and BIBF.

2.2.2.3 The structured approach to collaborative provision means that academic/training standards are consistent, and there is little likelihood of misunderstanding in terms of the standing of awards.

2.2.2.4 Any localization to content of programs should be clearly identified in approval document and signed by both parties

2.2.3 Safeguarding against risks, financial or other irregularities.

2.2.3.1 BIBF continually monitors its processes and systems to protect the integrity of its awards and the quality of learning opportunities provided and to facilitate the identification and investigation of possible malpractice.

2.2.3.2 A comprehensive risk assessment shall be conducted to safeguard the partnership, the students as well as the partnering parties from all major plausible risks. Such risk assessment and management plan shall be conducted prior to the start of partnership, and shall be reviewed and updated every two years.

2.2.3.3 Trends in student registrations, and the resulting impact on the negotiated funding arrangements, are monitored and discussed outside the (academic) review process. The results needs to be reported by the relevant head of the learning centre to the ESC on annual basis as part of their AMR.

2.2.4 Control of academic standards:

2.2.4.1 BIBF has built its reputation on the quality and relevance of its awards and its commitment to bringing the academic education and vocational training together. It seeks to match these values and objectives in its selection of partners.

2.2.4.2 The contracts between BIBF and the partners shall be designed to allow BIBF full control over the education standards of its awards.

2.2.4.3 Prior BIBF approval is required in the case of any geographical expansion in terms of delivery by any partner organization, and it is fundamental that training is provided on exactly the same basis as on Bahrain premises with any new facilities subject to inspection during the review process.

2.2.4.4 In terms of collaborative provision, careful attention is paid to resources with guidance given through the screening phase, and quality management expectations are specified and measured as part of the validation process.

2.2.4.5 All partner organizations are asked to get approval for their nominated teaching faculty that will be deployed on the program(s).

2.2.5 Recruitment, admission to programs and assessment:

2.2.5.1 Entry requirements to programs are centrally determined and monitored and regulated through the BIBF Policy on Recruitment and Admissions.

2.2.5.2 No distinction is made by BIBF in terms of assessment across programs. All students complete centrally prepared assignments and written examinations that are conducted in accordance with BIBF assessment strategy and principles.

2.2.5.3 Where coursework assignments are initially assessed by partner organizations, this is completed in accordance with the accompanying regulations and to a prescribed marking template with moderation and subsequent reporting to ensure consistency.

2.2.5.4 Certificates and transcripts issuance, the principle of central control does not allow for deviation or any distinctions in respect of those studying under collaborative arrangements with all documents issued by BIBF and subject to security provisions.

2.2.5.5 BIBF manages the process of centre invigilation for all exams and assessments. Each invigilator is required to follow guidelines and report on

the conduct of the examination.

2.2.5.6 The management of assessment and handling of malpractices and plagiarism in assessment should be in line with the BIBF Code of Practice, and the details of the assessment management processes and responsibilities shall be clearly defined in the agreement between BIBF and its partners.

2.2.6 Learner Support:

2.2.6.1 BIBF recognizes the need for students/participants to understand the nature of their relationship with it and the respective roles of the parties in terms of delivery of the programs. This is captured from the outset of the relationship in the Student Charter.

2.2.6.2 In addition, full details, including on how complaints and appeals should be progressed, are clearly explained through the relevant BIBF central policy of this Code of Practice and the relevant student handbook.

2.2.6.3 Partner organizations rely mainly on centrally produced material and are contractually obliged to clear any tailored promotional campaigns (which are often co-produced, and presented) with BIBF.

2.2.6.4 The BIBF relevant Student Handbook articulates the support available to students and provides guidance for them.

2.2.6.5 Partner organizations are required to articulate a clear schedule of learning support for students enrolled.

2.2.6.6 A handbook shall be developed that articulates the expectations of each party in the 'learning contract', and brings together the existing information and advice provided to prospective students.

3. Monitoring and Review

3.1 BIBF accepts its responsibility to ensure that the terms and conditions of collaborative agreements have been, and continue to be, met and any matters of interpretation/understanding resolved. The overall governance of the collaborative agreement is the responsibility of the Education Standards Committee (ESC) through the respective learning centre in BIBF.

3.2 The review phase focuses shall cover all aspects that maintains the academic integrity of the programs including program design, admissions and assessment. The review phase might be delivered through regular visits to partner organisation if necessary.

3.3 Annual review also presents the opportunity to monitor continuing compliance with

the terms and conditions of the arrangement with periodic institutional review.

- 3.4 The Program Review Committee (PRCS) and the ESC review educational and program aims on an annual basis (for each program of study). The review considers, inter alia, student performance, student and faculty feedback and partner organization reports.
- 3.5 Where programs leading to a dual or joint award are proposed, the capacity of the partners to engage is monitored. In this way, the standards and quality of any awards are defined and assured.

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1. Scope

This policy applies to the Academic Studies Centre at BIBF but is encouraged to be followed by all other centres. The Policy covers the research and community engagement. The purpose of this policy is to state BIBF's position in terms of research and communal engagement, integrate research and community engagement at BIBF's operations, align Research and Community Engagement with the Higher Educational Council requirements to maintain consistency and set up ground rules.

2. Policy Statement

2.1 Definitions

Recognising the importance of research and research activities in addition to communal engagements and social responsibility, and in view of the breadth of BIBF's mission, it is important that research and community engagement are defined in such a way as to reflect this breadth and to ensure that these activities are undertaken in a way that supports BIBF's principal objectives. Following Boyer (1991), research and scholarly activity at BIBF includes the following:

- 2.1.1 **Discovery:** the building of new knowledge through traditional academic research. Typically, depending on the discipline, this will involve empirical investigation, either carried out directly by the researcher, or the secondary analysis of data gathered by others. In some fields (e.g., mathematics, philosophy) theoretical analysis alone may take the place of empirical investigation. The results of 'discovery' will normally be published in traditional (peer reviewed) academic journals, monographs or presented as conference presentations.
- 2.1.2 **Integration:** the integration of knowledge across disciplines to contribute to a larger body of knowledge. This can include, for example, inter-disciplinary work where the insights or methodological approaches of several disciplines are applied to a common problem or set of problems. Research problems in the field of banking, for example, might benefit from the application of macro-economic theory, techniques drawn from the field of inferential statistics or the methodology of social psychology. The results of 'integration' will typically be outputs similar to those of 'discovery'.
- 2.1.3 **Application:** the use of research findings (broadly defined) to provide solutions to concrete societal, commercial, organisational and professional problems.

This could include consultancy or advisory services provided for commercial or not-for-profit clients or it might involve contributions to the development of a profession, a professional body or professional standards. Outputs from this kind of activity include, but are not confined to, confidential reports and presentations to clients, publications in professional journals and magazines, engagement with professional bodies through such activities as giving technical presentations and the setting and monitoring of professional standards.

- 2.1.4 **Teaching and learning:** developing teaching models, technologies and practices in order to optimise learning. This could include significant curriculum innovations, pedagogical developments such as the introduction of novel teaching methodologies, developments in assessment practice or developing technology-based pedagogical interventions. The outcomes of this category of scholarly activity should be disseminated: this may take the form of traditional publications in peer-reviewed journals (probably those more oriented towards educational and pedagogical themes) and conference presentations but dissemination could take many other routes. These could include the publication of textbooks, articles in professional journals and magazines, presentations at workshops and professional development events, both internal and external, and through mentoring other teaching staff.
- 2.1.5 **Research Integrity:** It is the honest adoption of professional and ethical rules, standards, regulations and principles which are important for accountable research activities to be carried out. These rules follow international and national guidelines of research.
- 2.1.6 **Community Engagement:** It is the widely known term of social corporate responsibility in which the organisation engages in uplifting activities in the community through free seminars, lectures, workshops in addition to participating in the communal that help the society to develop socially, professionally, economically and environmentally.

2.2 References

The Research and community engagement at BIBF are consistent with the requirement and broad principles laid down by the Higher Education Council (HEC) of Bahrain, Education and Training Quality Authority (BQA) of Bahrain, as well as the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) of the UK (for the relevant academic programmes offered in partnership with UK-based higher education institutions).

As for the BQA referencing, BIBF observes the broad principles laid down by the relevant framework set by the Directorate of Vocational Reviews, Directorate of Higher Educational Reviews, and/or the General Directorate of Qualification.

2.3 Expectations and general Principles

- 2.3.1 BIBF expects that all full-time teaching staff members will be engaged in at least one form of research and scholarly activity. Proposed research and scholarly activity should be identified as part of the annual objective setting process and monitored through the annual appraisal process. The proportion of time to be dedicated to research and scholarly activity and, hence, the scale and nature of the outputs to be expected, will be determined on a case-by-case basis and will reflect local needs and the availability of resources.
- 2.3.2 Research process must adhere to professional standards and research ethics, and to refrain from biased, partial and pre-concluded research, and to abide by BIBF's general HR policy.
- 2.3.3 Faculty should have the right to select the subject matter, subject to the strategic objectives of the centre.
- 2.3.4 BIBF strives to commit to research, support the general research interests that serves the institutional aims and provide appropriate facilities.

2.4 BIBF Research and Scholarly Activity Council

The BIBF Educational Standards Committee will establish a Research and Scholarly Activity Council. Its role is to oversee, promote and co-ordinate research and scholarly activity at BIBF and to provide regular reports to ESC on its activities.

2.5 Community Engagement

- 2.5.1 Community Engagement activities should encourage and foster relationships with various communities, social centres, in ways that support knowledge, skills and attitude improvement in a reciprocal way, that both BIBF and the communities benefit from.
- 2.5.2 Community engagement can vary depending on requirements and needs, it could be research initiatives, seminars, workshops, forums, in addition to scholarships, sponsorships, partnerships and participation in sustainability initiative
- 2.5.3 The director and the board approve the strategic pillars of the institute which include community engagement.
- 2.5.4 The heads of centres at BIBF shall incorporate the community engagement activities in their strategic plans of the pillars of

BIBF’s strategy, and these plans shall be monitored in a quarterly and annually.

Where applicable, the HR department shall determine the opportunities for volunteering and unpaid charity works from its own staff and faculty.

3 Monitoring and Review

BIBF will regularly monitor and review the application of its Research and Community Engagement Policy closely by the Head of Centres; as well as QA. Indicators of effectiveness of the application of this policy shall include, but not limited to:

Quarterly review of the Centres Strategic Plan on each pillar including research and community engagement.

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1. Scope

This policy aims at ensuring that all learners are supported and provided with pastoral support such as career pathway guidance, academic advising, personal guidance, and other support throughout their time at the BIBF for a valuable learning experience that is designed to meet learners' individual and varying needs and expectations.

The policy covers the advisory guidance on various aspects, which includes academic, personal, and career counselling, offered to all the BIBF learners. Learning centres and the Quality Assurance Department monitor the quality of the support to ensure effectiveness of such support services and full compliance is in line with the requirements set in this policy.

2. Policy Statement

2.1 Definitions

Academic Advising: Academic advising provides the necessary tools and information to our learners, allowing them to take full responsibility for developing plans, and helps them navigate through their academic issues towards achieving the overall aims of the academic program.

Personal Counselling: Personal counselling provides the learner with the necessary personal support and guidance during their years of study at the BIBF to overcome personal, psychological, or otherwise, family, and social circumstances that might affect their academic performance or general wellbeing.

Career Counselling: Career counselling refers to guidance the BIBF provides to prospective and/or enrolled learners to help them choose a program that fits their personal qualities and ambitions or gives them information on academic and progression pathways upon completing a program.

2.2 References

2.2.1 The Career counselling and Academic Advising guidance policy is consistent with the requirements and broad principles laid down by the Higher Education Council (HEC) of Bahrain, the Education and Training Quality Authority (BQA) of Bahrain, as well as the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) of the UK (for the relevant academic programs offered in partnership with a UK-based higher educational institution).

2.2.2 As for the BQA referencing, the BIBF observes the broad principles laid down by the relevant framework set by the Directorate of Vocational Reviews, the Directorate of Higher Educational Reviews, and/or the General Directorate of Qualifications.

2.3 Implementation

2.3.1 The first point of service provision for learners shall be the Registration & Customer Services Department. A specialist team at the Registration & Customer Services department will lead the learners to the appropriate learning centre that delivers the concerned programme.

The second point of the service provision shall be the relevant learning centre. The centre is responsible to guide the learners and ensure the appropriate services are provided with set pathways that are customized to meet their needs. Staff at the BIBF are expected to contribute to the career counselling and academic advising guidance programme through their roles as administrators, subject specialists, and programme managers, or teaching faculty members. The general implementation guidelines should be adhered to; however, the process may vary within the centres due to the nature of the programmes offered.

For the Academic Centre, a dedicated function is assigned to look after student affairs, including the provision of career, academic and personal counselling for learners that are enrolled in the programs.

2.3.2 **Academic Advisory:** Administrative support for the academic advisory is available through each learning centre for their program, whereby, learners are given a brief introduction to their chosen programs and course/subject of study delivered by the BIBF faculty/program coordinator by the Centre head.

The Academic Centre will ensure that every learner enrolled in an academic program is provided with the Academic Advisory support as deemed appropriate. The learners shall be informed of their dedicated academic advisor including the learners at risk and special cases that require additional attention and support by the Centre head (or nominated member of the academic centre staff). They shall directly be in charge of the close monitoring and reporting of the case. Records of the counselling and progress of learners shall be maintained within the centre.

2.3.3 **Personal Counselling:** Each learning centre shall make the necessary arrangements as deemed appropriate based on when the received cases are made available.

At the Academic Centre, a dedicated function is assigned to look after student affairs, including the provision of personal counselling for learners that are enrolled in academic programs.

- 2.3.4 **Career Counselling:** The BIBF Registration & Customer Services Department provides the information on the available programmes. For specific and detailed information and further career counselling that they might need, learners are guided to the relevant learning centre administrative staff and the programme leaders.

2.4 Roles, Responsibilities, and Reporting:

- 2.4.1 The Registration and Customer Services Department shall be responsible for the guiding the learners to such services, as a first point of contact, and keeping records accordingly. These records shall be used to produce a BIBF-wide report as part of the annual monitoring report.
- 2.4.4 The learning centre is responsible for providing any additional academic, career or personal counselling for learners that are enrolled in long professional (non-academic) programmes. However, the Academic Centre will have a dedicated function to support student affairs and pastoral support.
- 2.4.5 The Centre head will be responsible for monitoring the effectiveness of pastoral support services provided to learners and shall report this through their respective annual monitoring reports.
- 2.4.6 The BIBF may opt for outsourcing the provision of the service to qualified counsellors/ advisors as needed. However, the monitoring effectiveness and the reporting shall be maintained within the centre.
- 2.4.7 Learners will be made aware of the available pastoral services and access through the induction programme, published policies and student manuals or program brochures, as well as through the BIBF website.

3. Monitoring and Review

- 3.1 The BIBF will regularly monitor and review the application of its pastoral support closely by the Centre heads, Program leaders, as well as QA officials.
- 3.2 Analyses of improvement indicators and outcomes of the end-of-course evaluation shall be reviewed. Such analyses need to be used as part of the annual monitoring reports by Centre heads.



3.3 Compliance as verified by the internal audit exercise are conducted by the QA department.

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