



BRITISH ACCREDITATION COUNCIL INSPECTION REPORT

INTERIM VISIT (International Centre)

INSTITUTION: Haward Technology Middle East

ADDRESS: PO Box 26070
Abu Dhabi
United Arab Emirates

HEAD OF INSTITUTION: Dr Abdel Jalil Ghanem

ACCREDITATION STATUS: Accredited

DATE OF VISIT: 10 January 2018

ACCREDITATION COMMITTEE DECISION ON ACCREDITATION: Continued accreditation 22 March 2018

PART A - INTRODUCTION

1. Background to the institution

Haward Technology Middle East (the Institution) was established in 2004. It is a company limited by shares and has two directors. The Institution is registered in Abu Dhabi and provides training courses in various locations although the majority of the delivery takes place within the United Arab Emirates (UAE). The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) is the head of the Institution and he is supported by the Academic Director/General Manager (ADGM).

The Institution's vision is to be the leading provider of technical training programmes and to excel through continuous improvement and new initiatives in training and professional development services.

The Institution has branches and offices in the United States of America, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and virtual international contact offices in Australia, Japan, the United Kingdom and China. It has more than 700 part-time instructors worldwide. There are 154 full-time employees, who are based in Abu Dhabi.

In order to deliver the courses, instructors are assigned to a pre-planned schedule of courses. They are contracted for each course they undertake. In addition, the Institution has two full-time instructors. They are allocated to courses based on their particular speciality.

The Institution currently has agreements with representatives and an agency agreement. The representatives are based in various locations such as Oman, Bahrain, Nigeria, Jordan and Kazakhstan. The agent is located in Iran.

2. Brief description of the current provision

The Institution provides professional development courses, seminars and workshops and related engineering services to the oil, gas and power industries and government agencies in various locations worldwide.

The Institution provides about 480 public accredited courses and 320 in-house short courses per year. The courses are normally of a week's duration. On average, five delegates attend each public course. A maximum number of 20 delegates is set. The emphasis is on small group participation with personal attention being provided to each delegate. The range of courses includes City and Guilds accredited courses at Levels 1 and 2 and the Institution's customised courses, which are recognised by various international accreditation bodies such as the National Examination Board in Occupational Safety and Health (NEBOSH) and the Institute of Leadership and Management (ILM). The Institution also has a portfolio of short courses, principally in the field of process engineering and associated subject areas. All courses are taught in English.

Activities on and visits to clients' sites supplement some of the courses to provide practical on-going training. The site's facilities are subject to an inspection and are risk assessed before courses commence. Practical oriented courses and simulation-based courses use various technologies such as software and desktop training kits. The Institution also provides an electronic learning portal through its website.

All courses are run in client company premises or in hotels. These facilities are also inspected before courses commence, under contractual arrangements. A course co-ordinator is assigned to each course. The instructor and course co-ordinator both report on the suitability of the facilities in the hotels both before and after the course has taken place.

Learners are all working professionals. They are recruited from the UAE, other gulf states and other regions of the world such as Kuwait, India, Africa and Saudi Arabia. Courses are run throughout the year and, therefore, enrolment takes place throughout the year. The Institution does not recruit any learners under the age of 18.

Learners and instructors receive the exclusive Haward Smart Training Kit which consists of a

comprehensive set of technical content. The content includes an electronic version of the course materials, sample video clips of the instructor's actual lectures and practical sessions as well as any other extra materials used during the course.

3. Inspection visit process

The desk-based inspection was carried out on a single day using electronic video conferencing facilities. The video conference was held with the ADGM, the Senior Manager Business Development, the Quality Manager and a long-standing member of teaching staff. Documentation was provided to the inspector by the Institution and e-mail correspondence took place prior to the video conference.

4. Inspection history

Full inspection:	9-10 June 2012
Interim inspection:	25 August 2014
Re-accreditation	25-26 May 2016

PART B – JUDGMENTS AND EVIDENCE

The following judgments and comments are based upon evidence seen by the inspector(s) during the inspection and from documentation provided by the institution

1. Significant changes since the last inspection

The Academic Director, who also acted as the Deputy General Manager, has been promoted to the role of Academic Director/General Manager. The Administration Manager is now the Senior Manager, Business Development.

The operational administration of the Institution is now carried out from different premises in the city of Ajman, which is one of the Emirates. This is located on the outskirts of Dubai. The main offices of the Institution remain in Abu Dhabi. No courses are run on the Institution's own premises.

The Institution has upgraded its ISO 9001 accreditation from the 2008 to the 2015 version. As a result, the Institution is up-to-date in line with the latest ISO 9001 standard quality management system.

The Institution is developing electronic online learning courses in order to meet the increasing demand for this type of service provision. At the time of the inspection, one such course over a six-month period had been run for 25 learners. It is intended to expand this form of provision.

Future developments include increasing the provision of management development courses and an expansion of the operations in Asia in order to continue to increase the Institution's operational portfolio.

2. Response to action points in last report

There were no action points in the last report.

3. Response to recommended areas for improvement in last report

It is recommended that senior management consider introducing a shift system for the course orientated staff who currently work five and a half days to facilitate courses beginning on Sundays. It may not be necessary for all such headquarters staff to work on Saturdays, which is a common day off work in the UAE. The performance of the course preparation might be facilitated on a shift / rota system obviating the need for all such staff to attend every Saturday.

Although Saturday is a common rest day in the UAE, the Institution has made it clear that this is not the case for private companies. Saturday is an important day for preparing courses and finalising those that commenced the previous week. Therefore, the existing work schedule, including Saturday working, as set out in the job offer letter, contracts of employment and employee handbook will remain as at present. As a result, the Institution can continue to operate its courses effectively and in accordance with the demands of its clients.

It is recommended that the strengths, weaknesses and development needs of staff are included in the staff appraisal documentation and that the staff member and manager concerned both sign the staff appraisal form confirming their agreement to its content.

The staff performance evaluation report form has been amended to include the strengths, weaknesses and development needs of staff. In addition, it is now signed by the staff member, the manager and countersigned by the CEO. Therefore, the employee formally owns the appraisal report and is able to state clearly his or her staff development aspirations, which are acknowledged by the manager. In addition, the Institution is now aware of the agreed strengths and weaknesses of its staff. After reviewing the identified areas for improvement, appropriate internal or external training is provided. Internal staff development is now an on-going activity within the Institution.

Senior managers should ensure that all feedback reports are fully completed after each quality assurance visit and that any discrepancies between various end of course reports are investigated to ensure that the copy made available to the client is fully accurate.

A space for the ADGM or CEO to sign the learner feedback reports has been added to the report form. This provides a further check on the accuracy and completeness of the forms so that any issues can be investigated by the quality assurance department. In addition, guidelines for the completion of the feedback reports have been put in place. Consequently, any discrepancies can be effectively identified and properly investigated so that issues can be brought to the attention of the appropriate staff member and their performance can be improved as a result.

It is recommended that there is the formal establishment of documented action plans, at least annually, to support the Institution's on-going review of its performance.

Documented plans have been implemented. These indicate the staff member responsible for taking the agreed action and the deadline by which the action should be completed. This is followed up with an action report. This provides for a full record to be maintained of agreed action and progress towards completion to be monitored thus enabling improved organisational governance.

In addition, an annual performance review is carried out. The results of the feedback questionnaires are consolidated allowing for the production of an overall average score on performance for public and in-house courses. As a result, the Quality Manager produces recommendations for further action, normally in the form of an improvement target in relation to the average overall score to be achieved in the following year. Subsequent performance is reviewed on a monthly basis by the Quality Manager who presents a report on performance to the Senior Manager, Business Development. As a result, any slippage in meeting the target is picked up on a month-by-month basis. The average scores presented for 2017 were high at 95 per cent satisfaction for public courses and 92.4 per cent satisfaction for in-house courses. A course is regarded as having failed if it achieves a score of less than 80 per cent.

It is recommended that the annual appraisal of full-time instructors shows the Institution's graded appraisal of the instructor's performance as well as the graded appraisal by learners.

The Instructor's Performance Evaluation form now includes a section identifying the trainer's strengths and weaknesses, the ADGM's assessment of his or her overall competence and recommendations for future development. It is signed by the trainer, the ADGM and countersigned by the CEO. This makes the form much more meaningful and useful for the trainer. It also acts as a clear record of the proposals made for staff development and enables an appropriate audit trail to be established.

4. Compliance with BAC accreditation requirements

4.1 Management, Staffing and Administration (spot check)

	Met	Partially met	Not met	NA
The standards are judged to be	✓			
Comments				
New quality assurance procedures relating to appeals, plagiarism, scanning and shredding have been developed.				
The Appeals Policy procedure identified only the ADGM as a member of the Appeals Committee. However, there are other members of the Appeals Committee. The operation of the appeals process is provided and details clearly how the process works.				
The Plagiarism Policy procedure states that all instances of plagiarism will be examined thoroughly and penalties applied as appropriate. However it does not provide sufficient detail about the range of penalties which can be applied if a case is proved.				

The Institution has taken appropriate action in response to learners' feedback, for example by changing unsuitable venues and providing additional staff support during courses, including the provision of additional teaching staff at short notice following adverse comments. These examples indicate that the Institution is applying effective quality control measures and consequently achieving its aim to deliver high quality provision.

The main risks are considered to be increasing competition and teaching staff, particularly those who are contracted on a course by course basis, being recruited by competitors. The Institution is, therefore, enhancing the training and development opportunities for staff and ensuring that they receive appropriate remuneration for their work. In addition, margins on courses have been reduced by lowering the prices. This has been done without compromising the quality of the provision. Therefore, the Institution is taking appropriate measures to mitigate the main risks that it faces.

4.2 Teaching, Learning and Assessment (spot check)

	Met	Partially met	Not met	NA
The standards are judged to be	✓			
Comments				
<p>The Institution makes the content and objectives of the courses clear to learners. A learner profile is provided to the instructor so that he or she is aware of the learners' backgrounds and prior level of education and language ability. If necessary, translation is available for the benefit of learners who require it.</p> <p>Instructors use a variety of methods to assess the depth of learning, including good question and answer techniques. This enables the instructor to revise certain aspects of the course that he or she feels have not been satisfactorily grasped. The effect of this is that the instructors are able to constantly monitor the learners' level of understanding of the course material.</p> <p>Course materials are presented in an interesting way so that the courses provide an enjoyable experience for the learners. Emphasis is placed on enhancing the learner experience so that the courses effectively stimulate the learners' interest in developing their knowledge of the subject area after the course has concluded. It also encourages learners to seek permission from their employers to undertake further training with the Institution.</p> <p>Effective classroom observations are carried out. Each course is assigned a co-ordinator, who observes the teaching delivery and produces a report on the quality of the course. The report is reviewed by the Quality Manager. In addition, at least one hour of teaching delivery of each public course is recorded on video and returned for review by the quality department. This means that there is an extensive review of each instructor, particularly those engaged in delivering public courses. The video recordings are an example of good practice. However, they are not reviewed by senior peers or extended to in-house courses.</p> <p>All new instructors are monitored for the whole of the delivery for their first course and feedback presented to the quality assurance department and to the instructor.</p> <p>Thorough procedures are in place for the internal verification of marks awarded on courses leading to an accredited award. Where weaknesses are found in the marking, the Institution takes corrective action in respect of the individual candidates' marks as presented to the award provider. Action is also taken to assist with the on-going improvement of the assessor's performance. As a result, the award providers are confident that the procedures for reviewing assessments are thorough.</p>				

4.3 Learner Welfare (spot check)

	Met	Partially met	Not met	NA
The standards are judged to be	✓			
Comments All learners receive the same induction in order to ensure consistency. It is recognised that all learners are mature and have little or no need for pastoral care. Many of the learners, who are resident outside the UAE are accompanied by family members.				

4.4 Premises and Facilities (spot check)

	Met	Partially met	Not met	NA
The standards are judged to be	✓			
Comments All courses are run in client company premises or in hotels. The hotels that are used for the course delivery offer accommodation and are city based. This is welcomed by learners who seek to enjoy the city's recreational attractions during the evenings or rest days. They appreciate the convenience of being resident where the course is held. The training facilities are inspected before the courses commence. A course co-ordinator is assigned to each course. The instructor and course co-ordinator report, pre and post-course, on the suitability of the hotel facilities. The inspection arrangements ensure that high quality facilities are available.				

PART C – SUMMARY OF STRENGTHS AND ACTION POINTS

STRENGTHS

A long established and efficiently run institution with committed and well qualified staff.

The Institution has a clear strategic focus and takes action to mitigate risks in order to be prepared to respond quickly to changes in its commercial environment.

The Institution is well respected and seeks to maintain high quality delivery in order to maintain its strong reputation.

The Institution continues to be re-accredited by recognised awarding bodies. This indicates that they have confidence in its programmes and delivery.

ACTIONS REQUIRED

Priority H/M/L

None

RECOMMENDED AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

The Appeals Policy Procedure should be amended to identify the full membership of the Appeals Committee.

The Plagiarism Policy Procedure should be amended to include the full range of penalties that may be applied following the proving of a case of plagiarism.

It is recommended that the video recording of public courses be expanded to include in-house courses and for a recording of each instructor's performance to be peer reviewed on an annual basis.

COMPLIANCE WITH STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

Declaration of compliance has been signed and dated.

YES

Further comments, if applicable