

Quality Assurance and Quality Improvements "The Case of the Arab Open University (AOU)"

¹Ahmad M. Mashal; ²Issam Odeh and ³Mofeed Abu-Mosa

¹Faculty of Business Studies

Arab Open University/ Jordan, P.O.Box 1339 Amman, 11953 Jordan

²Alzaytoonah University of Jordan, Amman - Jordan

³Faculty of Education Studies

Arab Open University/ Jordan, P.O.Box 1339 Amman, 11953 Jordan

Corresponding Author: Ahmad M. Mashal

Abstract

The quality assurance (QA) in higher education has a major role to play in signaling excellence and to improve the institution aspect. This paper is to investigate the Arab Open University (AOU) commitment to the QA system. The AOU is the first university which offers the open learning system in the Arab countries. It consists of seven branches distributed in the Arab world, with headquarter in Kuwait. Quality assurance in AOU covers areas such as curriculum content and design; course materials; teaching; learning and delivery channels. This study tries to answer a number of questions regarding the processes AOU follows to insure QA: To what extent does AOU satisfies the QA standards for the open learning; is there a significant difference related to programmes and gender in assessing the quality of tutoring; learning resources and the quality of the courses. The study shows that the quality assurance objectives at AOU-Jordan have been met through the umbrella of the Open University Validation Services (OUVS) of the United Kingdom and the Ministry requirements of the Higher Education in Jordan, Further analysis has been accomplished and finally some suggestions for quality improvements have been introduced. The study reveals a high commitment to QA. Descriptive and statistical analyses show that AOU satisfies most of the QA standards for the open learning

Keywords: quality assurance, open learning, higher education, AOU, OUVS

INTRODUCTION

The issue of quality assurance (QA) in higher education has received growing interest from researchers over the past two decades. Given the unique position of higher education in the Knowledge Based Society, QA has a major role to play in signaling excellence. Quality assurance can be defined as "a planned and systematic review process of an institution or program to determine that acceptable standards of education, scholarship, and infrastructure are being maintained and enhanced" (Sorin and Shinji, 2009). In other words, Quality Assurance (QA) is a process that aims to set quality standards for any institute such as a university with its learning system. The QA is also interested in how to improve the institution in all aspects (Alan, 1997).

Countries understand More than ever that it is important to build a national commitment to QA in higher education According to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) "a strong quality culture in tertiary education institutions-shared by the academic leadership, staff and students- helps to reinforce the QA system" (O'reagain and Keegan, 2000, P. 9).

QA studies have recently become very important for higher education world wide. Many countries have

applied the QA to their universities. The QA has been applied to universities in a number of ways (Alan, (1997), for example the university wants to ensure that the standard of education that have been offered meet at least the general standards. The results of researches present in the specialized literature emphasize that the evaluation of both e--services and traditional services is based on the customers' individual experiences (Balog, A., Ivan, I., 2006). There are many issues related to QA. The first one is that there is no explicit meaning of quality and its assurance (Mishra, 2007). The other one is the heritage of traditional education which is based on face-to-face tutoring and the assumption that this kind of education is the quality teaching. Another one is related to distinguishing among quality processes like framework, benchmarking, quality assurance and quality improvement (Inglis, 2005).

Quality Assurance is a process oriented to guaranteeing that the organization services and practice are carried out against some predetermined standard. Quality assurance makes no assumptions about the quality of competing organizations (O'reagain and Keegan, 2000). It can be said that QA is standardized process, but in practice, however, quality assurance standards would be expected to reflect norms for the relevant industry (O'reagain and

Keegan, 2000). The process of quality assurance therefore compares the quality of the performance of the organization with a minimum standard set either by the producer or provider or by some external government or industry standards authority (O'reagain and Keegan, 2000).

Quality Improvement is concerned with raising the quality of organization performance. Therefore, quality improvement is concerned with comparing the quality of what is about to be produced with the quality of what has been produced in the past (O'reagain and Keegan, 2000). So it can be said that quality improvement is more concerned with the organization performance, and it is a self reflecting process. In the case of AOU a mixed framework is used to process the QA. A comprehensive QA framework has been used to complete QA process. Also, QA process in AOU is performed in this sequence: Benchmarking, QA, QI.

One of the aims of the QA is the controlling of the system of learning at the university, whether it's a face-to-face learning in the traditional learning frame or an open learning, and how to improve both of them. Traditional learning has been known for a long time. Recently, due to the development of technology communication, a large number of universities have applied the open learning/e-learning system to their traditional way of learning. This study makes use of the procedures and results of the previous studies. A descriptive approach is used to elaborate the QA process in AOU. The open system of learning which began in the UK has spread internationally. The Arab Open University (AOU) which is affiliated with the UK Open University, was established in 2002 in Kuwait with (6) branches. The seventh branch was established in 2008. AOU follows the UK Open University standards for QA.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The previous introduction emphasizes the need to declare QA standards and the main processes to be applied since there is no concurrent definition for QA. Also, it is clear that formulating clear and concurrent standards is still new especially in the Arab countries. The main problem to be discussed in this paper is formulated as open questions namely: what processes does AOU follows to insure QA and to what extend AOU satisfies the QA standards for the open learning. AOU as an Open University follows Open University Validation Services (OUVS) of the United Kingdom and the requirements of the ministry of higher Education in Jordan.

In this paper we are going to discuss the QA and the quality improvement for the AOU as an example of open learning university. Specifically, this paper aimed to answer the following questions:

1. What QA standards and processes are followed by the AOU?
2. To what extent AOU satisfy the QA standards for open learning?
3. Is there a significant difference between the means of students' response in evaluating the quality of the courses at ($\alpha = 0.05$) in relation to different programmes?
4. Is there a significant difference between the means of students' response in evaluating the quality of tutoring at ($\alpha = 0.05$) in relation to different programmes?
5. Is there a significant difference between the means of students' response in evaluating the quality of learning resources at ($\alpha = 0.05$) in relation to different programmes?
6. Is there a significant difference between the means of students' response in evaluating the quality of the courses at ($\alpha = 0.05$) in relation to gender?
7. Is there a significant difference between the means of students' response in evaluating the quality of tutoring at ($\alpha = 0.05$) in relation to gender?
8. Is there a significant difference between the means of students' response in evaluating the quality of learning resources at ($\alpha = 0.05$) in relation to gender?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Many studies have been carried out concerning QA issues. The current study benefits from these studies. In a study of Sidonia (2009) which is conducted for evaluating the e-services provided by „Bogdan Vodă” University from an attitudinal perspective, based on 5 indicators of the services quality dimensions (tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy). The study was performed to establish the quality of the e-services provided by the university and whether those services influence the university image. Two basic and well structured questionnaires were used in conducting this study: the first reflects the subjects' expectations, and the second conveys their perceptions. Assuming that the most motivated evaluators of the quality of the e-services provided by the university are its own students. A sample of 70 Bogdan Vodă” University junior was chosen. The indicators interpretation is made according to their values: 0 meaning the satisfactory level of the e-services and dimensions quality, the positive values indicating a higher than expected service quality while the negative values translate into lower than expected service quality.

Sorin & Shinji (2009) examine the current academic literature surrounding QA in higher education in the Asia-Pacific region, emphasizing the case of Japan. Based both on literature review and the experience of a Japanese visiting professor, the paper deals with the emergence and development of QA systems in higher

education in the Asia-Pacific region, and focuses on the case of the Japanese higher education system (JHES). The paper shows that the need for international arrangements and approaches to QA in higher education is clearly demonstrated by the case of Asia-Pacific region. It also shows that, facing the challenges of a highly competitive knowledge driven global economy, the region has begun to establish and implement an agreed set of QA principles in higher education. Commitment to quality by all higher education providers from the region has proved to be essential. The importance of quality provision in cross-border higher education made the JHES implement a new approach in QA.

Tian & Amin (2007) examine the experiences of University Terbuka (UT), which has initiated and implemented an innovative strategy of quality assurance (QA) for continuous improvement. The pronounced statement of the UT quality assurance system is "We write what we do. We do what we write. We check. We improve continuously!" Implementing a quality management system at the UT, a mega-university with a student body of more than a quarter of a million and which involved a network of participating institutions and regional centers, was a formidable task to accomplish. To achieve its lofty goal, UT adopted and contextualised the draft of the Asian Association of Open Universities (AAOU) QA Framework to launch its own quality assurance program. This has taken a great deal of commitment and participation of all staff involved. QA at the UT required systematic and step-by-step processes, including development of the QA framework and job manuals, raising awareness and commitment amongst all staff involved, internal assessment, and integration of QA programs into the university's annual action plans, external assessment and benchmarking. The paper concludes that quality assurance must be developed as institutional policy and strategy for continuous improvement.

METHODOLOGY

The QA in AOU mainly relies on the Open University Validation Services (OUVS) of the United Kingdom in addition to the standards of the Jordanian Ministry of higher education for the Jordan branch only. So it can be said that the AOU framework of QA is a mixed one; it uses benchmarking and external standards. A descriptive methodology is used to answer the questions of the study. To answer the first two questions: What are the QA standards and processes followed by the AOU? To what extent AOU satisfies the QA standards for open learning? A detailed description of the QA process in AOU is introduced. Moreover, a statistical analysis is carried out to show the degree of satisfaction of students and tutors on many aspects. Mainly One Way Anova analysis is used to answer the remaining questions.

In any open learning system the objectives of the Quality Assurance addresses the following requirements:

- 1- The course materials are well prepared and self explanatory.
- 2- The course materials are comparable with those of traditional learning.
- 3- The course materials are covered through the semester. .
- 4- The course materials are up to date, which can be done the Tutor Marked Assignment TMA1's. The TMAs are adjusted according to the recent technology in the related field.
- 5- An appropriate level of learning resources is available for programme and staff.
- 6- To insure that there are sufficient financial resources and supports.
- 7- To insure that the quality of delivering the course materials through audio, internet, texts, etc are met.
- 8- To make sure that the students have met the minimum attendance of classes which is 25%.
- 9- To make sure that the university has met the requirements of space for students, programme, staff and employees.
- 10- To ensure that there are a minimum level of full time programme, in addition to part time faculty.
- 11- To ensure that the university has an efficient registration system.
- 12- To achieve and maintain high quality standards.

Quality Assurance at the AOU

The AOU was founded in 2001 and has been in partnership with the UK Open University (OU), since 2002. With the help of its partner, an institution recognized as the pioneer in open learning, the AOU has offered its students three OU-based degree programmes in Business Studies, English Language and Literature Information Technology and Computing in addition to a programme of Education which is studied in Arabic and was not under the umbrella of OUVS (but it is now).

The AOU has in place confirmed agreement of cooperation and affiliation with the UK Open University. In according with said agreements, the AOU shall utilize and proven course materials produced by the UK-OU, and appropriate modified in adherence to AOU's mission and philosophy of education. The AOU operates in seven countries with, to a greater or lesser degree, differing socio-economic-legal systems. While the AOU is a single entity, with a common mission and set of values, it celebrates strength in diversity. Local accreditation agreements in each of the member states serve to further the interests of its students in securing recognition of achievements in their home countries.

1 Tutor Marked Assignment

Local accreditation in all territories is granted on the understanding that students study 36 credit hours of General University requirements in addition to the 96 credit hours for the OU award. The AOU student therefore has to complete successfully 132 credit hours for graduation. Local accreditation also means that there is a further rigorous check on resources and academic standards in addition to that of OUVS .

QA Processes

AOU quality assurance committees are linked directly to the University Council and indirectly to the Academic Committee to ensure that all issues concerning QA are discussed at the highest level in the university so that appropriate actions can be taken. All Branches have an identified Quality Assurance Coordinator who supervises the extensive surveying of student and tutor opinion conducted each semester, and ensures that the analyses of these returns is discussed by the branch QA committee before onward reference to the QA department at headquarters.

Internal Review

The QA Coordinator also works with Staff Tutors and the Branch Director to ensure that under-performing tutors are identified and appropriate remedial action taken. The questionnaires used to survey student and tutor opinion have been revised and more clearly focused to improve the quality of the information gathered. To this end a process of Internal Review was undertaken which required all branches to interrogate the whole range of their operational and service functions reporting their findings to headquarters through the Branch QA committee. The value of the process of internal review has been recognized and it has now been adopted by the central QA committee as an annual requirement.

External Reviews

At the end of each semester a group of external reviewers come to the head quarter in Kuwait to examine a random sample of TMAs, Quizzes and finals. These external reviewers write their comments and recommendations. These comments and recommendations are to be sent to each course coordinator and tutor. During the past years, the AOU has benefited from three key inputs from external reviewers .

- Academic Audit of Assessment Procedures was held by many consultants.
- Workshop on Assessment, Learning Outcomes and Student Workload.
- Academic Review of Branches and Programmes.

The first two activities were undertaken in direct response to a number of comments received from External Examiners relating to inconsistencies in

grading of assessments and examinations across the seven Branches of the AOU and at times, insufficient explicit link between assessment elements and intended learning outcomes. The Academic Review involved visits to all Branches by the consultant as well as discussions with Deans, central services staff and senior management at Headquarters. All aspects of course presentation were interrogated by the process so that clear and accurate representation of the AOU's effectiveness in delivering the three OU licensed programmes can be presented in the self assessment document .

Local Accreditation

In the last seven years, all seven branches have received local institutional accreditation. Branches have achieved local programme accreditation (validation) from Ministries of Higher Education in their respective countries. In each case the process has involved a detailed examination of staffing and facilities, and critical assessment of the curriculum presented in each of the OU programmes by a team of reviewers drawn principally from other local universities .

Student and Tutor Feedback

At present the main formal mechanism for obtaining student and tutor feedback is by means of three questionnaires which are completed towards the end of each semester. Students comment on the performance of their tutors, on the programme and on branch facilities. Tutors are asked to comment on aspects of course presentation and delivery and on teaching facilities including training support. The questionnaires have once again been re-designed, but more importantly, Branch QA coordinators were provided with a template which encouraged evaluation and reflection when interpreting and reporting the data. In particular, Branches were asked to identify how the information collected had resulted in local action, particularly in respect of tutors identified as underperforming .

These Branch reports are considered initially by the Branch Quality Assurance Committee and subsequently by the Central QA Committee. However, it is important to acknowledge the informal mechanisms by which student views are brought to our attention, particularly at Branch level. The requirement that 25% of student study hours must be in the form of face-to-face provision means that students are present in the Branch on a regular basis, with direct access to a range of staff who can respond directly to their concerns and complaints – unlike the situation in an institution which teaches entirely at a distance. Staff, therefore, rapidly build up experience of student needs and are able to respond accordingly in terms of the service provided .

Progression and Retention

Progression and Retention is one of QA indicators. Table 2 presents comparative progress and retention data for the three OU based programmes. In the early stages of study (up to 31 credit hours) it is clear that students are entering the English Language and Literature programme experience considerable difficulty, leading to significant numbers withdrawing, transferring and failing at the end of the year. English language proficiency is also a factor in the Business Studies programme, although to a lesser extent. This problem is well understood within the university and comprehensive plans are in place to address the issue by better filtering students on entry by means of a revised placement test, improved introductory English language courses and the introduction of a number of short course aimed at developing skills such as essay writing. The University recently created an English Language Unit to address these issues of concern .

Another factor at work in the early stages of study is students' unfamiliarity with the AOU system which requires them to take responsibility for their own learning. This is particularly acute for recent high school graduates. It will be instructive in future years to present progression and retention data for individual Branches, as the demography of students varies considerably from Branch to Branch. A Branch such as Jordan, with a higher percentage of mature students enrolled, might be expected to show better retention rates as such students are better able to cope with independent learning. As a result of the filtering effect of weaker students dropping out, and increased understanding of the nature of open learning, together with increased competency in the language of instruction, for those remaining, progression rates improve to satisfactory levels and come closer for the three programmes .

Case Study: Jordan Branch

The Jordan Branch is one of the first Branches of the Arab Open University which was established in 2002. Since then, the Arab Open University-Jordan has been striving to set standards for open and blended learning; a concept that was not existent or confused with other concepts of 'study by correspondence' or 'distance education.' The University adopts the concept of blended learning whereby the traditional classroom face-to-face lecturing is blended with modern techniques of e-learning that maintain direct and constant contacts with students via LMS, SIS, videoconferencing, multimedia and computing laboratories. The University which is accredited locally and internationally provides a rigorous curriculum with programs in English Language and Literature, Business Administration, and IT and Computing licensed from the UK Open University and taught in English. A joint degree from both universities is awarded to the student upon

graduation. Another program in Education is offered in Arabic. Plans are now underway to expand vertically and horizontally. New programs at the Master's level are to start from the 2011 -2012 first semester.

The University is seeking to reach its students residing in remote areas via the Learning Centers it has established in Irbid (North) and Kerak (South). It shall soon be able to reach its students at home via its prospective "Video on Demand" project. The ultimate objective is to provide educational opportunities to all sectors of society that enables everyone to actively participate in forging a new future. Now the University has the means to offer a rich package of extracurricular activities and social services to its students. As a matter of fact, the Arab Open University seeks to contribute effectively and efficiently to a continuous and comprehensive Arab development by adopting flexible educational and learning methodologies. It is hoped that students already registered at the University would find their study at the University rewarding both academically and entertaining socially. The university invites fresh graduates, employed personnel and housewives to join the University with a view to sampling a new experience of education and a different methodology of instruction that is worthwhile.

Students' Views

At the end of each semester the students are asked to fill an online questionnaire (Likart 5) to measure the satisfaction of the students about the courses and tutoring. Table4 shows the items of the questionnaire related to all courses offered by AOU and the average response of all the students in Jordan Branch on fall 2010. The following equation is used to calculate the average response. Since the scale we used is Likart (5), it is considered that if the average is 3 or more then the result is considered "satisfied". The same result is illustrated in figure 2, where each column represents one of the questionnaire items.

From table 2 it is clear that AOU students are satisfied with the courses. Item CR6 "Amount of work you had to do" and CR5 "usefulness of course calendar" has the highest average. But item CR8 "helpfulness of TMAs in studying this course" and CR3 "clarity of learning outcomes" have the least average. The previous results give the stakeholders indicators about issues that should be improved. The standard deviation for the items indicates that there is an agreement among the students in the course domain. The same procedure and the same equation (1) in the last domain is used to get the

Table 3 illustrates satisfaction with tutors and tutorials. It is clear that item TT6 "Usefulness of the advice you received from the tutor about your progress in the course" gains the highest average.

Where the item TT1 “How good was the teaching you received from your tutor” gains the lowest average. Depending on the previous results we may say that students still prefer traditional ways of teaching and learning. Open answers indicated that they prefer to have face- to – face tutorials more than online tutorials. Moreover, it can be noticed that the students in general are homogeneous in their responses, as clear from the values of SD.

The Use of Students’ Questionnaire

At the end of each semester tutors are provided with a graph sheet as the one shown in figure3. The graph sheet is an indicator for the tutor. It tells him his position compared with his colleagues in the same programme. The average (mean) response of each programme on every item of the scale is calculated (columns in Fig3 represent that average). Also the average tutor on each course is calculated (the line in Fig3 represents the tutors average). As an example: one tutor was chosen randomly and his graph sheets are illustrated in Fig3. The tutor is from the education programme.

Figure 1 tells us that the chosen tutor is: above average in this course. This sheet may help the tutor to improve his performance next semester. In addition this sheet also gives the tutor indicators about the weaknesses and strength related to his tutoring. The last analysis gives us part of the picture which is related to the students’ view of the tutor compared with his colleague at the end of each semester. The question now is there any indicator that gives a feedback to the tutor about his performance during teaching the course? The answer is yes. Moodle the Learning Management System (LMS) provides every tutor with a statistical summary about his online activities. Table 6, show an example of online actions and activities for the same tutor mentioned in the Fig. 1. From the previous table we may see that the actions of the tutor vary from one course to another. It can be noticed that the actions of the tutor on the first course was very high compared to the other two courses. Moreover, we may say that there is a direct relation between students’ satisfaction on tutor actions and the amount of online communication the tutor employs in his course.

Tutors’ Views

At the end of each semester each tutor is asked to fill an online questionnaire (Likart 5) to measure his satisfaction about the courses, tutoring. Table 9 shows the items of the questionnaire related to one course ED241 offered by the programme of education. The following equation is used to calculate the average response.

Table 5 show that item TC_9 “Usefulness of course calendar” earns the highest average. On the other hand items TC_3, TC_1, TC_2 earn “unsatisfactory”

result. This result shows the agreement between students and tutors on the importance of the study calendar. Also the result shows that tutors are unsatisfied with the quality of teaching materials, competency of student’s English language and readiness for the course. This result gives AOU stakeholders indicators to improve the issues related to the above “unsatisfactory” items.

Further Analysis

In order to gain more comprehensive picture about students’ opinions, further analysis was carried out. The following analysis answers questions 3, 4 and 5 of the study, namely:

- Is there a significant difference between the means of students’ response in evaluating the quality of the courses at ($\alpha = 0.05$) in relation to different programmes?
- Is there a significant difference between the means of students’ response in evaluating the quality of tutoring at ($\alpha = 0.05$) in relation to different programmes?
- Is there a significant difference between the means of students’ response in evaluating the quality of learning resources at ($\alpha = 0.05$) in relation to different programmes?

One Way Anova is used to accomplish the answers. From table 6 the answer of the third and fourth question is yes there is a significant difference between programmes. But for the fifth question: it is clear that there is no significant difference between programmes. Previous results ensure the conclusion that all students agree that the learning resources are not appropriate enough. This result gives AOU a hint for the improvement needed.

Post Hoc Tests Multiple Comparisons Tukey HSD test is used to determine the significant differences between programmes. We can conclude that the difference between programmes is concentrated between IT on the one hand and the other three programmes on the other. It can be said that the IT students' do not assess their tutors as the other three programmes. This result leads us to ask about the reasons. Stakeholders need to make necessary improvements to bridge the gap between programmes.

To answer the last three questions namely:

- Is ant difference between the means of students’ response in evaluating the quality of the courses at ($\alpha = 0.05$) in relation to gender?
- Is there a significant difference between the means of students’ response in evaluating the quality of tutoring at ($\alpha = 0.05$) in relation to gender?
- Is there a significant difference between the means of students’ response in evaluating

the quality of learning resources at ($\alpha = 0.05$) in relation to gender?

To see if the difference is significant or not one way Anova is shown in table 8.

Table 7 illustrates clearly that there is a significant difference between females and males in evaluating tutoring and learning resources. But there is no significant difference between them concerning the quality of the courses.

CONCLUSION

The AOU experience in setting its quality assurance system has made tremendous progress compared to other universities in the region. This experience may provide useful insight and guidance. However, AOU solution to questions of quality depends on external imposition through agreement with UKOU and internally generated development. Its' solutions to questions of quality may not have been the best, but it did ensure that students were provided with a high quality education.

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APPENDIX

Table 1: Progression and Retention

Level	Programme	Enrolled	Withdrawn %	Transferred %	Deferred %	Failed %	Progressed %
1 (0-31) credit hours	Business	4798	9.3	9.6	6.3	20.2	57.2
	English	1135	24.2	13.3	12.9	24.0	33.9
	IT	4438	6.6	3.6	7.2	14.2	69.4
2 (32-63) credit hours	Business	1826	9.4	7.2	5.9	11.7	65.6
	English	454	16.9	4.8	8.1	24.2	51.1
	IT	1511	10.2	4.8	5.2	8.7	70.8
3 (64-96) credit hours	Business	852	4.3	9.4	4.6	5.0	88.1
	English	327	11.0	3.7	3.4	7.6	70.1
	IT	881	9.6	5.3	2.2	9.9	71.7
4 (96+) credit hours	Business	795	4.2	3.8	0	0.9	90.6
	English	145	17.24	1.4	0.7	0.7	78.6
	IT	1167	1.02	0.7	1.54	1.9	94.5

Table 2: views of AOU students on all AOU courses first semester 2010

Code	Items of students' questionnaire related to courses	Average response	Standard Deviation SD	Result
CR6	Amount of work you had to do?	3.36	0.30	Satisfied
CR5	Usefulness of course calendar	3.35	0.34	Satisfied
CR2	How good was the teaching of the subject in the course materials? (printed text, Videos, DVDs, etc)	3.30	0.42	Satisfied
CR7	Usefulness of electronic learning resources (LMS, E-Library)	3.28	0.49	Satisfied
CR10	Was the date and time of the final examination convenient for you?	3.22	0.51	Satisfied
CR9	Helpfulness of MTAs* in studying this course	3.20	0.52	Satisfied
CR4	How easy did you find this course?	3.15	0.51	Satisfied
CR8	Helpfulness of TMA's in studying this course	3.10	0.54	Satisfied
CR3	Clarity of learning outcomes	3.05	0.58	Satisfied

Table 3: views of AOU students on tutors and tutorials first semester 2010

Code	Items of students on tutors and tutorials first semester 2010	Average response	Standard Deviation SD	result
TT6	Usefulness of the advise you received from the tutor about your progress in the course	3.70	0.34	Satisfied
TT7	Usefulness of tutor's comments on your TMA	3.65	0.36	Satisfied
TT4	Tutor encouraging you to participate in discussions	3.60	0.33	Satisfied
TT5	Availability of tutor during his/her office hours	3.55	0.41	Satisfied
TT8	Returning your TMA on time	3.53	0.44	Satisfied
TT3	Tutor's knowledge of subject of the course	3.50	0.31	Satisfied
TT2	Helpfulness of your tutor's answers to your questions	3.45	0.35	Satisfied
TT1	How good was the teaching you received from your tutor?	3.32	0.47	Satisfied

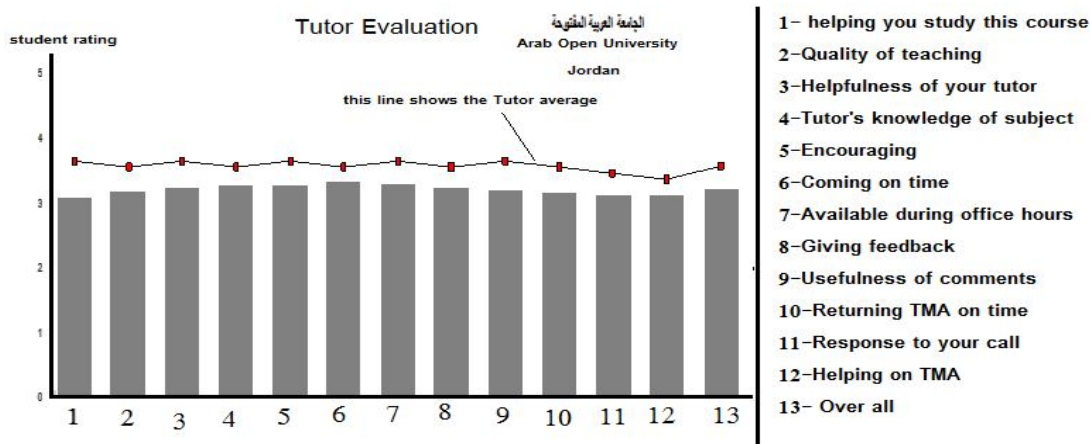


Fig1: Student's opinion and the position of one tutor compared with his colleague from the programme of education

Action	Number of times the tutor do the action
(the Tutor add resources to his course)	7
(adding action other than resources)	7
(post or replay to his students on the course forum)	56
assignment AOU edit submission	2
(view the students submissions for the assignment)	1
(deleting some thing from the course)	2
(editing quiz questions)	21
(make discussions with his students on the course forum)	59
view the results of a quiz which was published in a scorm format Sharable Content Object Reference Model (SCORM) is a collection of standards and specifications for web-based e-learning . It defines communications between client side content and a host system called the run-time environment, which is commonly supported by a learning management system . SCORM also defines how content may be packaged into a transferable ZIP file called "Package Interchange Format". ¹	9
the tutor view reports about his students participation	63
the tutor submit questionnaire at the end of the course	1
assignment update grades	517
course view	370
user view all	69
forum view discussion	145
forum view forum	138
forum view forums	13
assignment view submission	122

Code	Items of views of the tutor on ED241	Average response	Standard Deviation SD	Result
TC_9	Usefulness of course calendar	3.45	0.22	satisfied
TC_8	Effectiveness of course related supplementary materials produced by AOU (if applicable)	3.28	0.25	satisfied
TC_6	Helpfulness of TMAs to students	3.24	0.31	satisfied
TC_4	Amount of work your students had to do	3.20	0.33	satisfied
TC_5	How easy did the students find this course	3.19	0.34	satisfied
TC_7	Helpfulness of MTAs to students	3.16	0.39	satisfied
TC_10	Usefulness of electronic resources	3.06	0.41	satisfied
TC_3	Quality of teaching in the textbooks and related materials for this course	2.93	0.44	unsatisfactory
TC_1	Competency of student's in English language	2.36	0.45	unsatisfactory
TC_2	Readiness of your students for this course	2.34	0.52	Unsatisfactory

Since the scale we used is Likart (5), it is considered that if the average is 3 or more then the result is considered "satisfied". The same result is illustrated in figure2, where each column represents one of the questionnaire items.

		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Course average	Between Groups	8.500	4	2.125	2.420	.046
	Within Groups	2763.499	3147	.878		
	Total	2771.999	3151			
Tutor Average	Between Groups	21.712	4	5.428	4.590	.001
	Within Groups	3721.975	3147	1.183		
	Total	3743.687	3151			
Resources Average	Between Groups	5.927	4	1.482	1.607	.170
	Within Groups	2901.740	3147	.922		
	Total	2907.667	3151			

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Course average	Between Groups	1.179	1	1.179	1.340	.247
	Within Groups	2770.820	3150	.880		
	Total	2771.999	3151			
Tutor Average	Between Groups	16.801	1	16.801	14.200	.000
	Within Groups	3726.887	3150	1.183		
	Total	3743.687	3151			
Resources Average	Between Groups	5.384	1	5.384	5.843	.016
	Within Groups	2902.284	3150	.921		
	Total	2907.667	3151			