



香港學術評審局

HONG KONG COUNCIL FOR
ACADEMIC ACCREDITATION

HKCAA

ACCREDIT
NOTE

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EDITORIAL

The atmosphere in Hong Kong around this Christmas and New Year is a curious mix of buoyancy and frustration, fuelled on the one hand by the lack of progress in the talks between China and the UK, and on the other hand, by the miraculous upward shoot of the local stock market. The last round of talks between the political representatives of China and the UK has ended in stalemate, and unlike previous occasions, no date was set for the next round of talks. Following closely on the heels of this, the Governor of Hong Kong arranged for the proposals concerning the 1995 elections to be tabled in the Legislative Council, which immediately excited reactions from the Chinese Government.

In education, the latest development in the implementation of the Education Commission Report No. 5, is the conducting of a consultancy study for the Institute of Education which is due to be set up in September 1994. The Director of the Institute has recently been appointed. HKCAA was commissioned to conduct the consultancy study which took place in November and December and a report will be submitted to Government in February 1994. (Also see page 3)

While the HKCAA's present efforts are being directed towards the review and preparatory work for the Institute of Education, it has also been relieved of some of its programme validation work, mainly in respect of the two Polytechnics and the Baptist College which have recently gained accredited status. This reduction of validation work at the degree programme level will mean that validation panels, drawing upon members on the Register of Subject Specialists, will not be formed at the same rate as before. At the same time, Government has also approved in principle the quest from these three institutions to change to university title/status, but the necessary formalities have yet to be effected. The HKCAA welcomes this new development, and will nevertheless continue to give support to these institutions as well as others in quality assurance development. Meanwhile, the three institutions concerned are busy searching for new names to support their change in title.

The HKCAA offers its best wishes for a happy and prosperous 1994 to all readers of *Accredit Note*.

W S Wong

COUNCIL MEMBERS

We continue with profiles of our Council members:

Professor Sir Colin M Campbell

The HKCAA is delighted to offer its congratulations to Professor Colin Campbell on his award of a knighthood in the New Year's Honours List, for services to education.

Professor Colin Campbell's five years as Vice-Chancellor of the University of Nottingham have seen tremendous progress towards the realisation of the University's mission to be one of Britain's leading research institutions of higher education. Research Grants and Contracts awarded on an annual basis have risen from £12m to £27m in the period.

Professor Campbell graduated with First Class Honours in Law from the University of Aberdeen in 1967. He held appointments at the Universities of Dundee and Edinburgh before becoming Professor of Jurisprudence in The Queen's University of Belfast in 1974. While at Queen's University, he served as Dean of the Faculty of Law and was a Pro Vice-Chancellor of the University and served on a variety of public bodies. He was a member of the Standing Advisory Commission on Human Rights for Northern Ireland, and the Mental Health Legislation Review Committee. He also chaired various Committees of Inquiry in Northern Ireland.

A former member of the University Grants Committee, Professor Campbell is an elected member of the Council of the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals of the Universities of the United Kingdom and is a Vice Chairman of the CVCP. He is also a member of the Higher Education Funding Council for England.

Since 1987, he has been Chairman of the Northern Ireland Economic Council. In 1990, he was appointed Chairman of the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority and in 1991 he became Chairman of the Standing Advisory Committee to Review Medical Manpower. He was appointed a member of the Inquiry Team into Police Responsibilities and Rewards in 1992.

Professor Campbell is also determined to see the University play a full role in the local community. He is proud of Nottingham's unrivalled total of 1,700 students enrolled for voluntary community service and has been instrumental in the establishment of a £5m community-

based Arts Centre on the campus.

Married with two children, he enjoys cricket, rugby and association football and swimming in his spare time. He is a regular attender at Nottingham Forest's Football Ground.

Mr Eddy Fong

Eddy Fong currently practises as a Certified Public Accountant with Coopers and Lybrand Hong Kong. He was previously educated in Hong Kong and obtained his Bachelor of Arts in Social Science from the University of Kent at Canterbury in the United Kingdom in 1969 and qualified as a member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales in 1972.

Apart from practising as an audit partner and as a member of the Executive Committee of the firm, he has been involved actively in the development of the human resources function of the firm. He previously served as the staff partner of the firm and as the Chairman of the Training Committee which had the responsibilities in formulating and implementing the firm's policies in recruitment, development and training of staff members. He also served four years as the Asian representative on the firm's International Training Committee.

Eddy Fong is active in local community affairs. Apart from being a council member of the HKCAA, he is currently a council member of the Hong Kong Academy of Performing Arts, a member of the Establishment and Finance Committee of the Hong Kong Housing Authority, an appointed member of the General Committee of the Federation of Hong Kong Industries and a member of Admissions, Budgets and Allocation Committee of the Community Chest of Hong Kong.

Eddy Fong is married with a daughter aged 12 who is at present studying in the UK. His hobbies include golf and travelling.

Professor Kwong Lee Dow

Professor Kwong Lee Dow has been Dean of the Institute of Education in the University of Melbourne, since its establishment in 1989. The Institute was created by amalgamation of the former Faculty of Education of the University (in which he was Dean since 1978) with the Melbourne College of Advanced Education, to form the largest teacher education Institute in Australia.

Between 1983 and 1986 he was Pro Vice-Chancellor in the University of Melbourne and during this period he chaired a committee of the Australian Vice-Chancellors Committee concerned with developing procedures, at national level, for monitoring of academic standards in Australian universities. Much earlier, he had written and researched on 'The Assessment of University Teaching', publishing a monograph on this subject for the Society for Research into Higher Education (United Kingdom) in 1971.

Professor Lee Dow has held a number of Australian

Government appointments in education. From 1976 to 1983 he was Chairman of the Victorian Institute of Secondary Education, a statutory body with responsibility for curriculum and assessment in the final years of secondary education, and for assisting in the transition from school to work or further study. Since 1988, he has been a member of the national Higher Education Council which provides independent advice to the federal Minister for Employment, Education and Training, a member of the Australian Language and Literacy Council, and member of one of the standing committees of the Australian Research Council. In Victoria he presently chairs the Migrant Skills and Qualifications Board.

Professor Lee Dow has recently chaired an international panel for an HKCAA consultancy study for the Hong Kong Institute of Education, which amalgamates five local teacher training colleges to become a degree-awarding institution.

An Australian born Chinese, he has been educated in the University of Melbourne, initially training as a chemist, and subsequently taking a degree in Education. His parents, too, were Australian born, but three of his grandparents had emigrated from southern China in the last years of the nineteenth century. He is married with two adult daughters and a first grandson. The family is well suited to the multicultural environment of contemporary Melbourne.

In 1984, he was made a Member of the Order of Australia in the Queen's Birthday Honours List.

Mr Wong Hon Yee

Born and bred in Hong Kong, H Y grew up together with the electronics industry. He was one of the few electronic engineering graduates at Hong Kong University in 1969 when the electronics industry was still at its infancy. After graduation, he worked in a multinational company, Ampex, in its computer products division on product development. Determined to go abroad to see the world and to further his study, he took a year of absence to study for his master's degree in computer engineering at the University of California, Berkeley in 1970. Although he was encouraged to remain in the USA, he returned to Hong Kong where he felt he belonged. Back at Ampex, H Y became the manager of its design engineering department in 1974. Over the years he has trained hundreds of engineers and many of them have now become prominent technologists, managers, and businessmen in Hong Kong. H Y's engineering department earned high esteem in Hong Kong as a place of advanced electronic product development and has often been referred to as the training school of the electronics industry. Over the years, the products designed by his team have won numerous design awards, including three Governor's awards. H Y was also the pioneer in bringing two new technologies into Hong Kong, the Winchester hard disk and the Betacam video tape recorder.

H Y is active in community service. He has long been serving on many advisory committees in organizations such as tertiary institutions, the Vocational Training Council, the University and Polytechnic Grants Committee, and the Industry Department. He is currently a divisional manager in the Hong Kong Productivity Council. H Y is married with two children. To stay physically fit, he plays badminton every Sunday and jogs occasionally. Currently he is learning Putonghua which he describes as a rather demanding sport. Regarding the future of Hong Kong, he is quite optimistic and confident that Hong Kong will maintain its prosperity in the wake of the rapid economic expansion in Asia.

COUNCIL MEETING, DECEMBER 1993

The Council's biannual meeting was held in early December. Among the matters reported to Council was a report on the recent consultancy study for the Institute of Education, given by the chairman of the review team, Professor Kwong Lee Dow, a Council member (see below). Other topics included:

- links with Taiwan and the Taiwan accreditation system
- proposed consultancy on accreditation for professional bodies
- the provision of services relating to the use of subject specialists
- the development of quality assurance for Hong Kong higher education
- accreditation in Canada (see page 5)

CONSULTANCY STUDY FOR THE INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

In November the HKCAA conducted a consultancy study for the proposed Institute of Education, to be formed from an amalgamation of the five existing colleges which provide non-graduate teacher training. The setting up of the Institute of Education was recommended in the Government's Education Commission Report No. 5.

The Institute is to operate initially at sub-degree level but is envisaged to offer a proportion of courses at degree level as soon as feasible.

The Institute is to be established formally by September 1994 and in the meantime a Provisional Governing Council for the Institute has been set up. The HKCAA was commissioned by the government to conduct a consultancy study whose terms of reference included a review of the existing colleges of education and their potential contribution to the future Institute of Education,

an assessment of the staffing and resource needs for the setting up of the Institute, and the staff development needs of the existing colleges, and recommendations on the syllabus and curriculum for the programmes of the Institute.

The consultancy study covered the four colleges of teacher education which provide pre-service training courses at sub-degree level. Grantham College of Education, Northcote College of Education, and the Sir Robert Black College of Education take in students at Form 5 and A-level respectively for their 3-year and 2-year courses. The Technical Teachers College provides pre-service training in technical and commercial subjects to those who will be teaching these subjects in secondary and technical schools, and pre-vocational schools. The study also covered the Institute of Language in Education (ILE) which is different from the other four colleges, in that it specializes in language training through short courses in the English Language, or Chinese Language, for serving teachers.

The Education Commission Report No. 5 which recommended the setting up of the Institute of Education has argued for an improvement in the quality of the teaching profession, in particular at the primary level. It recommended the creation of graduate posts at the primary level, which hitherto has only non-graduate teachers trained from the teachers' colleges. The future Institute of Education is envisaged to offer graduate training at the primary level.

At present, teachers who have completed their training at one of the teacher colleges, may teach at the primary level, and the junior secondary level, and are paid on a non-graduate pay scale. However, at the secondary level, teachers do not have to be professionally trained. Graduates from the local tertiary institutions and those with equivalent qualifications may teach in a secondary school upon graduation, without any further training. For teachers who wish to advance in their careers, professional courses (postgraduate certificates/diplomas) are offered at one of the universities in either full-time or part-time mode. However, not all graduate teachers pursue professional training. Of the 12,263 graduate teachers in 1992/93, less than 70% are trained.

It is envisaged that the new Institute of Education, while continuing to provide teacher training at sub-degree level, will give a thrust to the development of graduate programmes for primary education. There are also ambitions for it to become a centre for research and development in education generally and in teacher education specifically.

The consultancy study was conducted by a team of education experts drawn from the UK, Australia, and Hong Kong. The team comprised a total of nine, five of whom are teacher education specialists and four HKCAA professional staff. The study was chaired by Professor Kwong Lee Dow, HKCAA Council member, well known

educationist, and Dean of the Institute of Education at Melbourne University. Prior to the visit to the Colleges, team members were sent documentation from the colleges and background information.

The on-site visits were conducted over a period of two weeks during which discussions were held with members of senior management and staff, students and graduates, and facilities and premises were reviewed. The HKCAA will be submitting its report to Government by early February.

Initially the Institute will operate from temporary headquarters and from the separate campuses of the four colleges and the ILE until the new permanent campus, situated in Tai Po, is completed in 1998. The HKCAA will be making recommendations about transitional arrangements prior to the establishment of the permanent campus, taking into account the existing facilities and arrangements at the colleges, while paving the way for phased and gradual involvement into the Institute's new structure.

Other pertinent changes for the colleges of education relate to their current status as part of the Government bureaucracy, the Education Department. The new Institute will be set up as an autonomous body under a separate ordinance. Existing staff of the colleges, employed on Civil Service terms and conditions of service, have to be fitted into a new structure of employment which should be made compatible with other tertiary institutions.

STUDY VISITS TO TAIWAN

In October 1993 an HKCAA delegation visited higher education institutions and education policy makers in Taiwan, under the auspices of the Ministry of Education of Taiwan. The delegation was headed by Council Chairman, Dr Andrew Chuang. It met members of the Higher Education Department of the Ministry and discussed the higher education system and in particular the quality assurance practices in Taiwan. Visits were made to seven institutions in five different cities and these covered both public and private universities, comprehensive universities and teacher education universities, and also a sub-degree level technical college.

The delegation, owing to the HKCAA's current work in teacher education, was particularly interested in Taiwan's colleges of education and it is noteworthy that visits to three teacher education institutions were made. The delegation was surprised to learn that teacher training is provided free of tuition fees at the public-funded universities and colleges in Taiwan, as an incentive for more young people to join the teaching profession. Teaching is a graduate profession at both the primary and secondary level. Training for the primary and secondary level is being provided at teachers' colleges, and universities respectively, both of which offer degrees.

A full report on the Taiwan education system, from

information gathered on this visit, is available from the HKCAA. *

A second visit was conducted in November by an HKCAA staff member, W S Wong, to observe the process of accreditation undertaken at two universities in Taiwan. Quality assurance of degree programmes in Taiwan has hitherto been the responsibility of the Higher Education Department of the Ministry of Education, which has in the past conducted discipline (sectoral) reviews. It has recently instituted a pilot scheme of discipline reviews in which it delegates the reviews to the relevant academic associations. The disciplines to be reviewed in this pilot project are electrical engineering, mechanical engineering, and management study. The relevant departments/graduate schools were free to choose whether or not to join the reviews. Although reports will be submitted to the Ministry, it has been declared that the results of the reviews will not be tied to funding.

A report on the observation visits, which details the methods and procedures used and interviews conducted with participants, is available from HKCAA. *

(* at £2/US\$3/HK\$25 each, payable to the Hong Kong Council for Academic Accreditation)

PRC CONTACTS

Contacts which were made with PRC education institutions and personnel continued to be followed up. In July, while on a visit to China, David Woodhouse took the opportunity to meet Professor Wang Jisheng (Director, National Center for Higher Educational Research), and Professor Wang Zhonglie (Director of the Academic Degrees Committee of the State Council) (ADCSC). The visit provided further information on accreditation activities in the PRC.

In August, Allan Sensicle and Wong Wai Sum visited Harbin, Beijing and Shanghai. This visit was in response to an invitation to Allan Sensicle to speak at a seminar on "Sino-American Higher Education Quality Evaluation" held at the Harbin Institute of Technology. There were 70 participants at the seminar from institutions throughout China, comprising, in about equal numbers, senior administrators and senior academics. The HKCAA representatives were asked to present details of accreditation methods in Hong Kong and how they related to those in the UK and the USA. In addition, there was particular interest in the development of internal quality assurance cultures and the mechanisms and procedures for quality assurance within an institution.

The seminar was initiated by Professor Wang Jisheng who arranged for the HKCAA members to travel to Beijing and visit the Beijing Bureau of Higher Education to give talks on accreditation. The Beijing Bureau of Higher Education administers 13 institutions in the municipality. It is of particular interest that this bureau is setting up an independent centre for higher education

quality assurance for the institutions under its aegis.

In September a seminar was held at Tongji University to discuss the accreditation and recognition of engineering qualifications. The main purpose of the seminar was to establish a better understanding of such matters to achieve mutual recognition for Hong Kong and Chinese professional engineers.

AUSTRALIA STUDY VISIT

In October 1993 Irene Edgar, an HKCAA Registrar, joined a study visit to Australia, organised by Professor Ian McNay of the Centre for Higher Education Management at Anglia Polytechnic University in the UK. The study visit was intended for senior staff in institutions and agencies - governmental or "independent" - with an interest in higher education.

The visit was arranged to provide opportunities to meet counterparts in Australian institutions of higher education and individuals researching into aspects of higher education. The programme ran from 4-13 October 1993 and included visits to the University of Wollongong; Australian National University; University of Canberra; University of Sydney and University of Technology, Sydney. The study group also met members of staff from the University of Western Sydney informally.

The topics which were covered in the visit included, quality assurance and assessment methods, the extent of government intervention, diversity of provision within a national unified system, equity and access, funding policy, institutional management in a climate of economic constraint, institutional mergers, links with the technical and further education sector; research management and funding; and the "internationalising" of education.

The expansion of the higher education system in Australia and the implications for funding of that system, have contributed to place the issue of quality and its assessment high on the higher education policy agenda. Since 1988 Academic Standards Panels, established by the Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee, have examined standards and criteria for the award of honours degrees in the disciplines of Physics, History, Psychology, Computer Science, Economics, Biochemistry and English. Whilst the Panels were initially concerned with honours level work, in 1990 the AVCC agreed to extend the remit of the Panels to cover standards in undergraduate teaching. However, in view of the developments described below, the AVCC has now decided to discontinue the system of Academic Standards Panels.

The Government White Paper of 1988 endorsed two specific quality assurance strategies viz. (i) major reviews of key disciplines and (ii) the introduction of performance indicators. Reviews of the disciplines of law, engineering, teacher education in mathematics and science, and computer science education have been completed to date.

The binary system of universities and Colleges of

Advanced Education was replaced in 1989 by a Unified National System with 35 universities (including former CAEs re-designated as universities and institutions which had to merge or amalgamate to meet the minimum criteria stipulated by the Government to gain entry to the Unified National System). The Federal Government has now agreed to allocate additional yearly funding of \$75-80 million for a quality assurance and enhancement programme to be overseen by the Committee for Quality Assurance in Higher Education. This Committee has been charged with the task of making recommendations to Government on the distribution of the incentive funding to universities able to demonstrate good practice. The first grants are to be allocated in 1994. Institutions wishing to apply for funding must submit a "portfolio" or submission (maximum of 20 pages), supported by appendices in a separate document as appropriate. This will then form the basis for discussion between visiting panels and staff within the institution. Funds are to be allocated to no more than 50% of institutions submitting bids. For 1993, the visits have taken an overview of the quality assurance policies and practices adopted in relation to teaching, research and community service. Subsequent reviews will focus on particular areas of interest. The 1994 round of review visits, for example, will emphasize undergraduate and postgraduate teaching and learning.

In addition to the above, institutions within the UNS annually provide information and discuss resource allocation and performance issues with the Federal Government. Each year, DEET senior officers and members of the Higher Education Council (the Federal Government's major advisory body on the universities) team up to conduct visits to institutions in the UNS to discuss and negotiate issues pertaining to an institution's performance and funding requirements in the light of its agreed "profile".

There are clearly many similarities between the Australian and British higher education policy agendas although there may be differences in the stage of development over individual issues. Consequently, the visit served to give all the parties concerned a foretaste of things to come and provided an opportunity to learn from the experience of others.

Irene Edgar

ACCREDITATION IN CANADA

Education systems among the Canadian provinces are diverse and managed independently at the provincial level. Primary and secondary schooling each generally lasts 6 years (with the exception of some provinces, where secondary schooling lasts 7 years, and in Quebec, 5 years).

It is required by law that institutions must have either a provincial charter or authorization from provincial government. This strict requirement limits the

development of private institutions in Canada. Institutions are heavily subsidized by the provincial governments and government supervision is adequate since there are usually few universities within a province.

Most Canadian institutions are members of the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC). AUCC will only accept a new member after examination and scrutiny of the functional role, courses, programmes, etc. of the institution. However, AUCC is not an accrediting agency. Once the institution is admitted as a member, it will not be subject to further examination.

Quality Assurance in the Provinces

In Quebec, in the past 20 years, the Council of Quebec Universities has been responsible for reviewing all new programmes by appointing external agencies. The Conference of Rectors and Principals of the Universities of Quebec (CREPUQ) assumed this function in 1988 and requests reviews of new and existing programmes. Each university has agreed to review its own programmes by using procedures whose features are accepted by all universities. The features include review by external experts, publication of results, and monitoring compliance with recommendations. Three years ago, the Conference of Rectors created an independent Commission, comprising academics from local universities and external experts, to evaluate all new programmes, and to audit each university to check that its procedures comply with the general scheme. The Commission has so far audited three universities.

In Ontario, for the past 20 years, the Council of Ontario Universities has systematically reviewed all graduate programmes. The review is conducted by external experts and performed every seven years. For undergraduate programmes, Ontario is planning to introduce a general scheme similar to the one existing in Quebec, with each university responsible for its own internal evaluation.

Another province which has recently set up its own system of evaluation is Nova Scotia, which has many small universities but only one large technical university. This Province has set up a Council for Higher Education to evaluate university programmes starting with programmes for education, engineering and computer science. In British Columbia, the Government has requested the University Presidents' Council to prepare an evaluation procedure for their programmes and the proposed procedures will shortly be submitted.

Quality Assurance at College Level

Little evaluation is being done at college level but this will change rapidly. A new Commission for the evaluation of colleges has been established in Quebec to evaluate institutional quality assurance policy and programmes and validate new awards. In Ontario, a new agency was set up this year called the Colleges' Standards and Accreditation Council tasked to establish standards and

validate programmes. Actual validation will commence next year. In British Columbia, a new evaluation system is taking shape with emphasis on integrated auditing or value for money audit.

(extract from talk given by Dr Jacques L'Ecuyer)

HKCAA STAFF

Jan Dixon, one of the registrars who started work in the first year of the Council's operation, 1990, left her position in September 1993 before her contract expired in order to take up a new job in the UK. Jan has contributed significantly to the work of the Council and her previous UK experience with accreditation has certainly been an asset to the work undertaken by the Council.

The Council will be losing another two members of its staff in early 1994. David Woodhouse, Deputy Director since April 1990, will be taking up a new post as the founding Director of the New Zealand Universities Academic Audit Unit. David has made a significant contribution to the development of the HKCAA and has been a driving force in the establishment of the International Network of Quality Assurance Agencies, and its newsletter QA. His input to the work of the Council and his cheerful and sincere personality will no doubt be sadly missed by all.

Irene Edgar, a registrar who has been with the Council for the last three years, has opted not to renew her contract which will be expiring at the end of 1993 in order to pursue career development elsewhere. Irene has always demonstrated through her work a keen interest and involvement in quality assurance in education and she plans to continue with similar work in her future career, initially in Malaysia and then in the UK.

COURSE REVIEWS

Some of the course review and monitoring activities that have been conducted are listed below:

LINGNAN COLLEGE

VALIDATION

Bachelor of Business Administration (Hons) Conversion Programme

The programme was approved for three years (to coincide with the revalidation of the full-time BBA(Hons) programme). The approval was subject to conditions relating to the: programme aims and objectives; entry criteria and admissions procedure to be adopted; teaching and learning strategies to capitalise on the students' working experience; provision of information about the programme for students; and the need for additional staff members to support this and the full-time programme.

COURSE MONITORING

BA(Hons) Chinese

The validation of this course in February 1993 stipulated a condition requiring the appointment of additional staff in specific areas. The condition has subsequently been met.

BSocial Science(Hons)

This degree, validated in 1991, has an attached condition requiring the appointment of an external examiner for the research project. This condition has been met by the due date.

CITY POLYTECHNIC OF HONG KONG

COURSE MONITORING

Master of Arts in Language and Law

As reported in the last issue of the HKCAA Accredited Note, the course was conditionally approved for three years subject to conditions. These conditions have now been met.

MA Arbitration and Dispute Resolution

When this course was revalidated in April 1993 a condition was attached requiring the appointment of a senior person to give academic leadership to the course. The appointment had subsequently been made.

Another condition required the submission of an annual progress report on the development of the course. The HKCAA is monitoring this.

HONG KONG BAPTIST COLLEGE

COURSE MONITORING

MA in Music

This course was validated and approved in 1993 with a requirement for the course team to align composition students to a particular composer from the beginning of the second semester. The College provided a statement confirming its compliance.

OPEN LEARNING INSTITUTE

COURSE MONITORING

School of Business and Administration

The Bachelor of Business and Administration general degree, BBA(Hons) Accounting and BBA(Hons) Business Information Systems degrees were approved in December 1992, subject to several conditions. One of the conditions involved submission of courses not yet developed, but have been planned. Four blueprints from the Institute were submitted to HKCAA for comments and the Institute

has agreed to implement changes suggested. Further submission of blueprint for courses to be introduced are expected in the near future.

HONG KONG TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS

We continue with our description of the local tertiary institutions by introducing an institution which is very different from a conventional tertiary institution, the Open Learning Institute of Hong Kong (OLI).

THE OPEN LEARNING INSTITUTE OF HONG KONG

The Institute was established by government in 1989 and it has two characteristics which set it apart from the other tertiary institutions in Hong Kong. It has open entry, which means that no minimum academic entry qualifications are set for applicants. And it is the first institution in Hong Kong to provide higher education solely through distance learning.

The OLI has four Schools: the School of Arts & Social Sciences, the School of Business and Administration, the School of Education, and the School of Science and Technology. Students are free to take courses offered by any School subject to the rules for each degree and any prerequisites laid down for courses. To qualify for a degree, students have to accumulate 120 credits from courses taken at the appropriate levels. For a degree with honours, 160 credits are required. There are regulations on the number of credits which can be obtained at the foundation or higher level.

The School of Arts and Social Sciences offers degrees in arts, and social sciences. Its Chinese Arts and Humanities degree is presented through the medium of Chinese. The School of Business and Administration offers specialisms in Accounting and in Business Information Systems. The School of Science and Technology offers six different specialisms leading to a Bachelor of Science degree. The School of Education was established in August 1992 with the aim of contributing to the in-service and advanced professional education of serving teachers in Hong Kong. An in-service Bachelor of Education (Hons) programme for primary teachers is expected to be launched in 1993/94.

Students who prefer not to specialize in any of the named degrees, may study for a Bachelor of General Studies, by accumulating sufficient credits from a combination of courses selected from one, two or all the Schools.

A Centre for Continuing and Community Education was set up in 1992 to provide programmes in six areas: short courses, sub-degrees, community education, workplace education and training, conference and study tours, and agency programmes.

The OLI operates a system of credit transfer and students may seek recognition of their previous higher education

qualifications, by applying for either block credit transfer, specific, or general credit transfer.

The OLI has been subject to academic accreditation by the HKCAA. In December 1990 an institutional review was conducted by the HKCAA, which endorsed the suitability of the academic environment at the OLI to conduct degree-level study. In 1992 separate validations were conducted for its degree programmes in the different Schools.

When the OLI was first set up, it was financed by a block grant from government, but is expected to become self-financing by 1993/94. The Institute is now housed in rented premises but the government has agreed to grant a site in Homantin to the Institute for the erection of a permanent campus which is scheduled to be completed by the end of 1995.