

5. Periodic Institutional Review

- 5.1 The purpose of Periodic Institutional Review (PIR) is to determine whether Operators with valid Programme Area Accreditation (PAA) status continue to maintain robust internal quality assurance systems to self-monitor and ensure that their operations meet stated objectives, and whether they have internal processes in place that ensure that their learning programmes meet the QF standards. The focus of a PIR is the functions and activities that relate directly to improving the quality of learning experience for learners.
- 5.2 Operators are requested to complete a critical and comprehensive self-evaluation before undertaking PIR. The self-evaluation should be conducted based on qualitative data, quantitative data on learner outcomes and stakeholders' feedback collected during the validity period. Its purpose is for the Operator to assess its effectiveness of operation in relation to the PIR accreditation standards, and to identify strengths and areas of improvement/ enhancement. The self-evaluation provides the basis of an Accreditation Document for the HKCAAVQ's accreditation exercise.

Accreditation Document

- 5.3 When applying for PIR, Operators are expected to provide a self-contained and evaluative document that addresses the accreditation standard in each domain. The Accreditation Document should provide background information relevant to the accreditation standard (including the review procedures and mechanisms employed for continuous improvement), present the findings of the self-evaluation, incorporate documentary evidence to support the findings, and explain how the recommendations made in the previous accreditation exercise have been addressed.
- 5.4 The focus should be placed on providing explanations/ analysis of evidence arising from the operation of the learning programme(s) within the approved programme area throughout the validity period to show how the accreditation standards are met. Where necessary, existing programme area information shall be presented as supporting materials to facilitate the Accreditation Panel to understand the explanations/ analysis of evidence. The Operator is expected to enclose what it has been using for management purposes on a daily operational basis as evidence to support the analysis in the Accreditation Document.

- 5.5 Operators are advised to structure the Accreditation Document so as to address the accreditation standard of each domain. The Accreditation Document should be presented in 2 parts: a Main Submission and Supporting Materials. As a rule of thumb, the document should be self-contained, include key facts and make cross references to data in supporting documents, with clear indication of the relevant parts in the supporting documents from which reference is drawn.
- 5.6 The onus of providing sufficient and appropriate documentary evidence lies with the Operator. In preparing evidence, the emphasis should be put on the quality and relevance of the evidence and not on the quantity. The following suggestions are for reference only, and are not meant to be exhaustive. As Operators are diverse in nature and adopt different operational modes, it is likely that their documentation also differs. It is important that Operators provide evidence to demonstrate the implementation of the policies and processes and their effectiveness.

Accreditation Standard

The operator must demonstrate that it is meeting its educational/training objectives, aligned with its vision and mission, and informed by comprehensive review of organisational effectiveness and implementation of strategically planned initiatives.

Possible Sources of Evidence

- Vision and mission of the Operator
- Strategic plan of the Operator for the next five years
- Overview of the implementation of the strategic plan in the past five years
- Quantitative and/or qualitative indicators used to measure the effectiveness in implementing the strategic plan
- Records of review of the strategic plan in the past five years to show the effectiveness of the strategic planning and adjustments in response to changes
- Evaluation of the alignment of the strategic plan with the organisational missions, aims and objectives
- Governance and management structures, and corresponding organisational charts, terms of reference, and memberships
- Meeting minutes showing the oversight of the governing body on organisational effectiveness
- Management records showing oversight of the senior management on operational effectiveness
- Meeting minutes showing the discussion of the governing body on the reports submitted by the senior management
- Evaluation of the attainment of education and training objectives in the approved programme area
- Mapping of the attainment of education and training objectives in the approved programme area against the organisational outcomes and/or performance indicators
- Meeting minutes of the governing body /senior management showing its discussion on the attainment of education and training objectives in the approved programme area
- Areas of improvement identified in the quality assurance processes
- Enhancement initiatives planned and/or implemented to the approved programme area
- Feedback collected from the stakeholders for assessing the effectiveness of the enhancement initiatives
- Meeting minutes of the relevant committee(s) showing its monitoring on the effectiveness of the enhancement initiatives
- Research on trends in the programme area to support the programme development plan
- Mechanisms for collecting feedback from stakeholders
- Records showing the feedback from stakeholders are discussed and incorporated in the enhancement initiatives
- Examples of enhancement initiatives that are driven by the feedback collected from the stakeholders

Accreditation Standard

The operator must demonstrate that it continues to have a sufficient number of qualified and competent programme leaders, teaching and support staff, as a result of effective staff planning and development, and that these arrangements align with the development of the programme area(s).

Possible Sources of Evidence

- Meeting minutes of the programme management team showing its discussion on and decision made in programme planning, development and review in the approved programme area
- Meeting minutes of the programme management team showing its discussion on and decision made in staff management/ deployment and resource allocation
- Meeting minutes of the programme management team showing its discussion on and decision made in quality assurance
- Staff policy including appointment, appraisal, promotion, dismissal, and staff development
- Evaluation of staff development plan to show the effectiveness of staff development policy
- Evaluation of the effectiveness of staff appraisal in identifying staff development needs
- Staff development activities undertaken by staff to show the implementation of staff development plan
- Annual budget for staff development to show its sustainability
- Staff Handbook
- Policy on teaching load
- Policy on staff engagement in research activities (mainly for staff who teach programmes at QF Level 5 or above)
- Staff time spent in teaching, learner consultation, project supervision, researches, consultancy work etc.
- List of staff development and/or professional activities in the past three years
- Staff appointment criteria for different capacities and at different ranks
- Staff profiles including programme development, quality assurance, teaching, administrative, and support staff of the programme area to show the staff have appropriate qualifications and experience
- Staff statistics, including number of staff at different ranks in the programme area/ organisation, and indicators such as full-time to part-time staff ratio, staff turnover/ retention rate, and teaching staff-to-learner ratio to demonstrate the adequacy and stability of staff
- Identification of the expertise required for the development of the programme area with reference to the analysis of the expertise of the existing staff
- Staffing plan for the next five years to show the adequacy of staff for supporting the development of the approved programme area
- Examples of staff deployment demonstrating its effectiveness

Domain PIR-3: Programme Area Development and Management

Accreditation Standard

The operator must demonstrate that the processes for programme approval, development, review, as well as the formulation of strategic plans at both the organisational and programme area levels, are linked and continue to remain effective to meet its educational/training objectives within the approved programme area(s).

Possible Sources of Evidence

- New programme(s) developed in the approved programme area (*Selected programme(s) for detailed review)
- Records showing that the level and coherence of the new programme(s) are affirmed in the internal approval processes
- Samples of teaching and learning materials as well as assessments of *selected programmes
- Overview of the development of the programme area
- Consultation with the industries and/or professions
- Accreditation/ validation/ recognition of the programmes by the professional bodies
- Overview of the learning, teaching and assessment activities of the programme in the approved programme area
- Meeting minutes of the programme management teams showing its discussion on the effectiveness of the learning, teaching and assessment activities of the programmes in the approved programme area
- *Selected programmes to demonstrate the effectiveness of programme development and management, and the implementation of the relevant processes

* Selected programme(s) – The appropriate number of selected programme(s) will vary depending on the size and nature of Operators and approved Programme Area(s). Operators may discuss the number of selected programme(s) with Case Officers.

Accreditation Standard

The operator must demonstrate that, within the approved programme area(s), the mechanisms for management and deployment of resources and services continue to be effective to meet the educational/training objectives, as a result of implementing organisational resource allocation policies and financial budgets.

Possible Sources of Evidence

- Policy and processes on resource planning
- Overview of human, financial, physical and information resources
- Key performance indicators used for assessing the adequacy of resources
- Meeting minutes of relevant committee(s) showing the discussion on the resource planning
- Summary of enhancements made to resources
- Resource plans including finance and the procurement plan of key facilities and equipment for the next five years to support the implementation of the strategic plan, academic plan, and development of the approved programme area
- Audited financial statements for the past three years
- Budget for the current year and next five years
- Overview of the financial resources to support the development of the programme area
- Meeting minutes of the relevant committee(s) showing the financial decisions made with considerations of the financial data and information available to the Operator
- Resource allocation mechanism
- Overview of the decisions on resource allocation to support learning, teaching and assessment activities of the programmes in the approved programme area
- Feedback received from stakeholders that affected the decision on resource allocation in the past three years
- Meeting minutes of the relevant committee(s) showing the discussion on resource allocation
- Overview of the mechanisms for collecting feedback from stakeholders
- Processes of considering the feedback collected for planning
- Examples of using feedback from stakeholders for planning
- Meeting minutes of the relevant committee(s) showing the discussion on the feedback from stakeholders
- Policy on learner support services
- Summary of provision of learner support services in the past three years, including financial aid and scholarship, educational and/or career and pastoral counselling, career planning, etc.
- Mechanisms for reviewing adequacy and effectiveness of learner support services
- Improvements made to enhance learner support services with reference to the analysis of the characteristics of learners who have used the support services
- Learner Handbook

Accreditation Standard

The operator must demonstrate its on-going maintenance of an effective quality assurance system for ensuring the quality and standards of its learning programmes at the stated QF level(s) in the approved programme area(s), aligning with its educational/training objectives.

Possible Sources of Evidence

- Policy on learner admission
- Policy on/ model of curriculum design including internship / placement / attachment
- Policy on learning and teaching
- Policy on assessment and progression
- Policy on staffing
- Committee structure for and processes of QA, including programme development, management, and review
- *Selected learning programmes to demonstrate the implementation of the QA mechanism related to programme quality and the quality of the learner learning experience
- Samples of programme review reports to show the effectiveness of the programme review process
- Statistics of the learning programmes in the programme area, including number of applications, enrolment rate, retention rate, pass rate, and graduation rate to show the demand for and quality of the learning programmes
- Statistics of education and employment pathways of graduates in the programme area throughout the validity period to show the performance of the graduates
- QA policy and manual
- Samples of assessment papers, marking schemes and marked scripts of *selected learning programmes to demonstrate the effectiveness of the assessment policies in ensuring the learning programmes meet the QF standard
- Findings of learner survey
- Findings of graduate survey
- External Examiner reports
- Annual programme review reports
- Accreditation/ validation /recognition of the programmes by the professional bodies
- Processes for approving new policies and procedures
- Approval record of new policies and procedures implemented in the past three years
- Records showing the implementation of new policies and procedures
- Samples of stakeholder feedback, including reports of external advisors/ examiners, learner surveys, graduate surveys, and consultation with employers to show the implementation of feedback mechanism
- Records showing participation of stakeholders in the governance/ management structure to ensure that feedback of stakeholders has been conveyed to the management
- Summary of improvements made to the learning programmes in the programme area in the past three years to demonstrate feedback from all sources/ channels has resulted in improvement actions
- Records of review of programme plan to show its effectiveness and possible adjustments in response to changes
- Overview of engaging staff in QA
- Meeting minutes showing the staff engagement in the QA processes

- Improvements initiated by staff to address weaknesses identified for quality enhancement
 - Weaknesses identified and follow-up actions proposed in the review/ monitoring reports at programme/ institutional level
- * Selected programme(s) – The appropriate number of selected programme(s) will vary depending on the size and nature of Operators and approved Programme Area(s). Operators may discuss the number of selected programme(s) with Case Officers.