



香港學術及職業資歷評審局  
Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of  
Academic & Vocational Qualifications

# Evidence Guide

**For Academic Accreditation**

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# Introduction

1. This Evidence Guide (Guide) should be read in conjunction with the Revised Accreditation Standards under the Four-stage Quality Assurance Process which underpins the Hong Kong Qualifications Framework (HKQF). HKCAAVQ's accreditation standards collectively set out the **competence requirements** that an operator must meet to demonstrate that it can achieve its objectives and deliver the expected programme learning outcomes. This is a Guide for Operators preparing an Accreditation Document for respective stages under the Four-stage Quality Assurance (QA) Process under the Qualifications Framework (the Process) of the Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications (HKCAAVQ). It advises on the possible sources of evidence to demonstrate meeting the competence requirements of the corresponding standards in an accreditation exercise. While the responsibility for providing appropriate evidence lies with the Operator, the Accreditation Panel may request further information in writing and/or during meetings with Operators.
2. The Guide is designed to provide guidance to operators in the selection and presentation of evidence to demonstrate meeting the relevant accreditation standards. The Guide itself is not intended to be exhaustive or exclusive.
3. For Operators of Collaborative Programmes, references should be made to the scope of HKCAAVQ accreditation services for collaborative programmes, including [non-local programmes](#), as well as collaborative programmes leading to single or joint awards.
4. The minimum requirements and matters for consideration listed under each of the accreditation standards in the Revised Accreditation Standards are not meant to be used as checklists. They are included to provide guidance to Operators on how to meet the accreditation standards. They also assist Panels in making a holistic judgement as to whether the accreditation standards have been met or not. As such, when appropriate, they may also provide an indication of where the setting of conditions is necessary.
5. For each standard, the possible sources of evidence are examples of documents or information that may contain evidence of actions or decisions taken. Following a self-evaluation, an operator is expected to present selected evidence (e.g. policies, mechanisms, procedures, actions and outcomes) from its own or planned operation demonstrating how each standard is met. This evidence may be contained in more than one document or sources of information. Therefore, the items listed under possible sources of evidence do not necessarily carry a one-to-one correspondence to an accreditation standard. Evidence should be existing information such as policies, processes, and performance outcomes, and is not supposed to be developed for solely for use in the accreditation process.

6. Operators should submit an Accreditation Document of a self-evaluative nature based on on-going internal review activities or where necessary, a self-evaluation process. The latter is normally required for Operators undertaking their first Learning Programme Accreditation exercise. HKCAAVQ does not prescribe how such a self-evaluation should be conducted. An operator is free to choose its self-evaluation approach such as commentary, case study, gap and trend analysis or any other suitable approach(es). The information presented in a self-assessment and the supporting evidence will be evaluated holistically against the accreditation standards. The selection of evidence may differ according to the size, context and scope of the operator. The possible sources of evidence provided in this document serve to illustrate the nature of the documents / information from which evidence may be obtained. In preparing evidence, the emphasis should be put on its quality and relevance to the standards, not the quantity. The following suggestions are provided as general guidance, and are not meant to be restrictive.
7. 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. It should also be analytical using the supporting materials to support the finding and claims as to how the standards are met and the enhancement initiatives planned as appropriate.
8. The volume of the Main Submission is preferably limited to the following number of pages excluding the attachments and annexes:
  - Initial Evaluation: 60 pages
  - Learning Programme Accreditation: 60 pages
  - Learning Programme Re-accreditation: 30 pages
  - Programme Area Accreditation: 100 – 120 pages
  - Periodic Institutional Review: 100 – 120 pages
9. The **Supporting Materials** should include key institutional documents (e.g. QA manual) and other supporting documents. These documents should be referred to in the Main Submission, with clear titles and labels for cross-referencing.

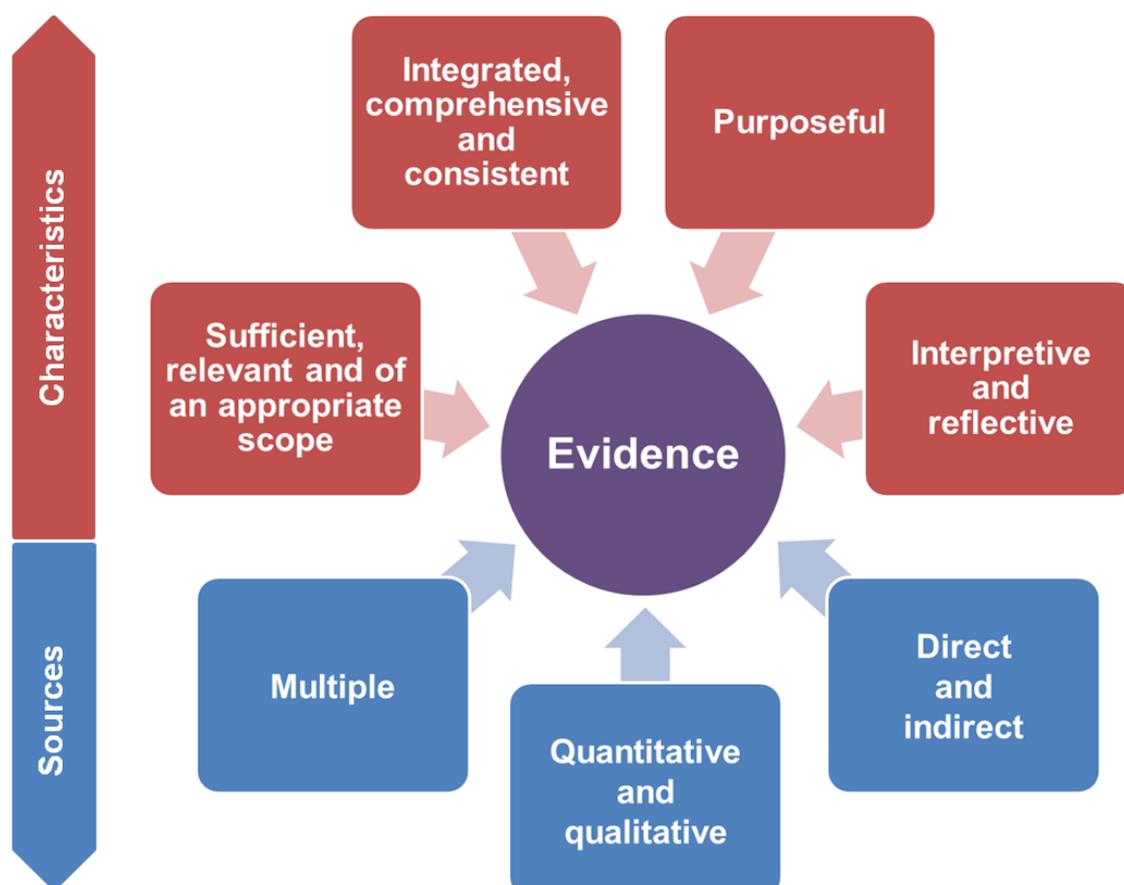
## A Note on Selection of Evidence

1. As a guiding principle, HKCAAVQ adopts an evidence-based approach to accreditation. This is set out in the *Manual for the Four-stage Quality Assurance Process under the Hong Kong Qualifications Framework* (the *Manual*).
2. “Evidence” refers to the material - information, data and/or facts - being put forward to support the Operator’s claim of meeting accreditation standards and is used in the accreditation process to substantiate these claims.
3. Under the evidence-based principle, it is the responsibility of the Operator to provide evidence to demonstrate meeting the accreditation standards as well as any applicable statutory requirements in Hong Kong. The Operator is responsible for the full and frank disclosure of all relevant documents required for assessment by HKCAAVQ throughout the accreditation process. Details on the responsibilities of Operators in the provision of evidence are available in the *Manual* and in this *Evidence Guide*.
4. The scope and nature of evidence required depends on the type of accreditation being undertaken. The minimum requirements listed under each standard provide an important guide for Operators in regard to the evidence they need to present to substantiate that they meet the accreditation standards
5. Within the context of accreditation, good evidence is a meaningful collection of information, data and/or facts with the following characteristics:
  - (a) Evidence should be **sufficient, relevant and of an appropriate scope** to demonstrate meeting of the standards.
  - (b) Evidence should be **integrated, comprehensive and consistent** in the sense that information drawn from diverse sources should point in a similar direction.
  - (c) Evidence should be **purposeful** in addressing the requirements in the accreditation standards based on the underlying principle of fitness of purpose.
  - (d) Evidence should show **interpretation and reflection** that allows for (i) self-evaluation by the Operators for identification of their own strengths and weaknesses, and for continuous enhancement and (ii) critical analysis by HKCAAVQ to ascertain claims that the Operators and/or their programmes meet the accreditation standards.

## Sources of evidence

- (e) Evidence should be based on **multiple** sources to enable verification and triangulation by the Accreditation Panel, and to facilitate HKCAAVQ in making the accreditation determination and decisions. Evidence, whether from written, oral or observational sources, needs to be based on a variety of methodologies such as surveys, expert opinion, interviews and authoritative independent reports. Presentation of evidence may take a range of forms such as facts, data, examples, information, case studies and physical facilities.
- (f) Both **quantitative and qualitative** evidence may be presented to demonstrate organisational and/or programme competence.
- (g) Evidence may be **direct and indirect**. Direct evidence is tangible, measurable and points to organisational/programme competence. Indirect evidence, may allow inferences to be drawn on organisational and/or programme capacity.

The characteristics of good evidence are summarised in the diagram below:



# Chapter 1 – Initial Evaluation (IE)

## Domain: IE-1 Organisational Governance and Management

### Accreditation Standard

**The governing body of the operator has clearly defined and appropriate educational / training objectives, and has implemented a management structure to realise those objectives, for the delivery of learning programmes that fall within the scope of the QF Level(s) sought.**

#### *Possible sources of evidence*

- Business registration certificate
- Certificate of incorporation
- School registration certificate
- Discussion papers, notes of meetings, etc., showing the governing body's deliberation on the name of the Operator
- Regulations, statutes or other instruments that govern the institution
- Information on governance structure, such as interrelationship between governing body and its committees, terms of reference, composition and membership of major committees
- Charts showing organisational and management structure
- A list showing the people with key responsibilities for education and training operations, which include their relevant background, qualifications and experience
- Members of senior management and their duty statements
- Profiles of members of the governing body and senior management staff, including academic and professional qualifications, teaching and other work experience, publications, scholarly activities, etc.
- Strategic plan, academic plan and implementation plan, as well as their key performance indicators (KPIs)
- Minutes of meetings of decision-making bodies; notes on follow-up actions; other evidence to provide a document trail of effective decision making and implementation
- Documents setting out major processes and lines of responsibility (for example, staff handbook)
- Policies that set out arrangements for learners enrolled in a learning programme to complete their qualifications in the event of termination or closure of the organisation / programme / partnership
- Policies and procedures on handling grievances and complaints from staff and learners
- Evidence showing execution of procedures to ensure security, accuracy and currency of its record (e.g. remedial actions taken in response to system irregularities)
- Records of system irregularities or issues of concern
- Sample programme brochures, leaflets, student handbook etc., or similar official publications
- Sample website and digital platforms for the programmes, or similar official publications

#### ***Other Possible Evidence for Operators with Cap 320 Status to offer programmes at postgraduate level***

- Overview of existing arrangements in organisational structure and academic committee structure, and any new arrangements and/or adjustments in existing arrangements for supporting postgraduate programmes at QF Level(s) 6 and/or 7 (e.g. graduate school, board of graduate studies)

- Composition and terms of reference of new / adjusted committees or boards related to research and/or graduate studies
- Key personnel added to the new organisational structure (e.g. Dean of Graduate School) (if applicable)
- Key personnel providing academic leadership of postgraduate programmes at institutional level and at school / department level

***Other Possible Evidence for Operators of Collaborative Programme***

- Source of authority of each partner in establishing the collaboration
- Documentary evidence that approval has been given by the Non-local Courses Registry to operate the non-local programme be it regulated under Cap. 493
- Authority of the non-local Operator to operate in the home country
- Evidence of the non-local Operator's status to operate and to award qualifications within and outside the home country as granted by relevant state / government department(s), such as a copy of the most recently available accreditation report and/or external evaluation of the institution by relevant national QA agency, which shows the validity period of the status granted (where applicable)
- Policies and procedures to demonstrate that the awarding body assumes overall responsibility for the academic standards and quality of the collaborative programme
- The ways in which the non-local Operator is permitted to participate in collaborative provision with a partner outside its own country and to award qualifications
- Policy statements supporting the principle of providing learning programmes through collaborative partnerships, contained in strategic plans, policy papers, operating documents, minutes of meetings, etc.
- Outcomes of due diligence enquiries
- Copy of the accreditation / audit report and any other subsequent follow-up report(s), if any, by partner(s) prior to entering / re-entering into collaborative agreement
- Evidence of approval (be it via accreditation or other means) for the setting up branch office / campus by the appropriate authority, if the non-local Operator uses branch office / campus to run the collaborative programme(s) in Hong Kong; OR evidence of internal management policy and segregation of duties in the case where the local Operator is the branch office / campus of the non-local Operator (mother institution) and there is no collaborative agreement
- Contractual documents concerning the collaboration to offer learning programme(s) in Hong Kong, including, for example, signed collaborative agreement and any other addendum; Memorandum of Understanding (MoU); or Memorandum of Collaboration (MoC) spelling out the rights, obligations, responsibilities, duties, authority, decision-making power, etc. of each partner
- Any other discussion papers, policy papers, notes of meetings on significant issues concerning the collaboration that can demonstrate the effectiveness of the contractual considerations
- Operational arrangements of the collaborative partnership for ensuring delivery of high quality educational services to students in Hong Kong
- Examples of significant policy / operational decisions as evidence of the effectiveness of the policy and operational framework in practice
- Profiles of members of the governing body and senior management staff with designated roles/duties in overseeing the development and delivery of collaborative programmes

### ***Other Possible Evidence for Operators of Online Learning Programme***

- Documents showing the non-local Operator(s) (in collaboration with the local Operator to offer online programmes, where applicable) has/have complied with the statutory requirements, if any, for online learning provision in its/their country(ies) of origin
- Authorisation granted to the non-local Operator(s) (in collaboration with the local Operator to offer online programmes, where applicable) to award qualifications in and outside the home country(ies) and to operate online programmes in and outside the home country(ries), if different from the above
- Policy statements supporting the principle of providing online learning programmes by the Operator or through collaborative partnerships (where applicable) contained in strategic plans, policy papers, operating documents, minutes of meetings, etc.
- Outcomes of due diligence enquiries for offering online programmes, if applicable
- Code of practice / guidelines in managing the risks specific to online programmes
- Operational arrangements for ensuring delivery of high quality educational services to students enrolled in online learning programmes within and outside Hong Kong
- Examples of significant policy / operational decisions as evidence of the effectiveness of the policy and operational framework in practice for the provision of online learning programmes
- Institutional policies for the award of academic credit for online learning modules
- Profiles of members of the governing body and senior management staff with designated roles/duties in overseeing the development and delivery of online learning programmes
- Documents showing the commitment of the institution(s) in developing and maintaining an online learning platform that supports effective online delivery, which include measures to ensure accessibility, reliability and security of the online platform as well as the necessary measures for verifying students' identity and tracking the progress of their learning
- Documents setting out the roles, responsibilities and processes for managing the operation of the I.T. infrastructure necessary for online delivery
- A contingency plan for delivery in the event of the failure of the main delivery system

## Domain: IE-2 Financial Viability and Resources Management

### Accreditation Standard

**The operator must have adequate financial and physical resources to achieve its educational / training objectives, with well-defined systems and processes to manage its finances to support the quality and effectiveness of its operation.**

#### *Possible sources of evidence*

- Audited financial statements for the last three years, and/or evidence of start-up funds
- Financial information such as cost per student at programme level and at institutional level; tuition fee for each programme; breakeven number for each programme; breakeven number at institutional level; direct cost and indirect cost; planned student enrolment, including FTE, for the next three to five years (by programme, by year of study, and by mode of study); planned / projected attrition rate by programme; etc.
- Examples of significant financial decisions made, if any
- Documents showing key considerations and risk assessment, and how the associated risks are managed or mitigated on an on-going basis, e.g. risk register or similar document
- Contingency financial plan for under-enrolment
- Contingency arrangements for closure of the operation, such as:
  - teach-out arrangements
  - a transfer agreement with other operators
  - mechanism for informing stakeholders of the contingency arrangements
- Finance, budget, and resource allocation policies
- Finance and resource plans that underpin the strategic and/or academic plan
- Budgets and estimates for the next three to five years
- Budget plans for upgrading and replenishing facilities, investment in online infrastructure and/or systems with evidence of financial support
- Records of discussion on financial planning and preparation of budgets
- Documented approval for the use of premises or facilities (e.g. proof of ownership or lease agreement, showing details of duration and terms of leases) which fully comply with statutory requirements of the HKSAR Government (e.g. documents showing that premises can be used for teaching purposes)
- Details of facilities and online resources available to students
- An outline of the quantity / capacity of various resources (e.g. classrooms, offices, computers, library holdings, student amenities, other equipment and facilities, student learning portal, etc.), with details such as usable floor area, the number of students per classroom, and opening hours and timetabling slots each day and each week, etc.
- Policy and mechanism on the regular review of the adequacy of the resources for the operation of its learning programmes
- Records of discussion and amendments to the resource plan underpinning the strategic / academic plan
- Justification on the adequacy of financial and physical resources

#### ***Other Possible Evidence for Operators with Cap 320 Status to offer programmes at postgraduate level***

- Overview of financial and physical resources for postgraduate programmes
- Budget for postgraduate programmes at QF Level(s) 6 and/or 7, if any
- Proof of financial support (if applicable) for postgraduate programmes
- Summary of physical resources acquired / to be acquired for operating postgraduate programmes at QF Level(s) 6 and/or 7 (including library resources, equipment, software, laboratory facilities, etc.)

- Internal funding to support research and scholarly activities (including research projects, conference organisation and attendance, etc.)

***Other Possible Evidence for Operators of Collaborative Programme***

- Feasibility report and/or latest review report on the collaboration
- Resources deployment agreement and plans for the collaboration, decision-making, authorisation paper, and critical decision-making pathways as illustrated via the organisational chart of the collaboration, terms of reference of various decision-making and QA bodies governing the collaboration and examples of significant financial decisions made
- Details of duration and terms of leases of accommodation not owned by the local Operator

***Other Possible Evidence for Operators of Online Learning Programme***

- Code of practice / guidelines in managing the risks specific to online programmes

**Accreditation Standard**

**The operator must be able to engage staff who are competent to manage its operations, to lead programme planning and development, and to support the delivery of learning programme(s) up to the claimed QF level(s).**

***Possible sources of evidence***

- Staffing structure and system
- Roles and responsibilities of management, teaching and support staff (e.g. operation management, programme management and administration, teaching, student consultation, project supervision, organisation of internship and IT support)
- Current and planned establishment of teaching, administrative, and other staff, with headcounts at different ranks, ratio of full-time to part-time teaching staff, and other relevant details of staff profile.
- Profiles of programme management staff and all full-time and part-time teaching staff, with academic and professional qualifications, teaching and other work experience, publications, scholarly activities, and other relevant details
- Appointment criteria for the management and teaching staff
- Recruitment policies and practices
- Procedures for staff appointment
- Policy on maximum teaching staff to student ratio at institutional and/or programme level  
Teaching staff-to-student ratio
- Policy on workload of teaching staff, in terms of teaching / project supervision / administration / counselling / mentoring / student service duties, etc.
- Methods used to appraise staff performance
- Template of staff performance appraisal report
- Mechanism of handling staff grievances
- Staff Handbook
- Institutional policy on staff development / induction and staff development and induction plan for the next one to three years
- List of completed and/or planned activities for staff induction and development, e.g. training workshops, etc.
- Summary of individual records of staff training / induction

***Other Possible Evidence for Operators with Cap 320 Status to offer programmes at postgraduate level***

- Staffing policy (e.g. appraisal and promotion)
- Teaching staff profile for delivering postgraduate programmes at QF Level(s) 6 and/or 7, which include their highest academic qualifications, professional qualifications, years of teaching experience at postgraduate level and bachelor level, professional work, research outputs and/or activities, scholarly activities, and areas of expertise
- Five-year staffing plan to support research, professional, and teaching activities for supporting postgraduate programmes at QF Level(s) 6 and/or 7
- Policy for staff development to support research and scholarly activities (including research projects, conference organisation and attendance, etc.)
- Five-year plan for developing academic / professional activities to support postgraduate programmes at QF Level(s) 6 and/or 7 (if applicable)

**Other Possible Evidence for Operators of Collaborative Programme**

- Explanation on any differences in staff appointment criteria among different partner(s) , if any
- Policy in engaging teaching staff of the collaborative partner(s) in teaching in Hong Kong, if any
- Arrangements for staff level liaison between the partner(s), e.g. staff meetings
- Explanation and justification of staff development / induction policy agreed between the partners for those teaching the collaborative programme(s)

**Other Possible Evidence for Operators of Online Learning Programme**

- Explanation on any differences in staff appointment criteria between traditional and online learning programme management / delivery, if any
- Position descriptions for key staff members involved in the design and development of the online components of the programmes and the competences required for carrying out their respective roles
- Policies which recognise excellence in teaching and learning in online settings
- Staff induction, training and professional development opportunities targeted to online learning which are formalised through institutional policies and initiatives
- Other staff development and induction activities specifically related to online learning programme delivery
- Professional development budgets related to online education provision
- Summary of individual staff training / induction records specifically related to online learning programme delivery

## Domain: IE-4 Organisational Quality Assurance

### Accreditation Standard

The operator must have an internal quality assurance system that can support effective management and monitoring of the quality of its learning programme(s) in delivering learning outcomes that align with the GLDs of the QF, to meet its educational / training objectives.

#### *Possible sources of evidence*

- QA Handbook / Manual
- Relevant internal policies and procedures
- QA mechanisms for programme development, management, review, and modification, including tools for designing outcome-based programmes and determining QF levels
- Policy and procedures in monitoring the quality of its learning programmes in delivering the learning outcomes
- Policy / procedures for QF credits, credit accumulation and transfer
- Terms of reference / duty statements of committees / personnel involved in QA mechanisms
- Personnel / committees involved in QA, assessments and award classifications
- Policy and procedures in seeking external inputs in its QA system
- Appointment criteria for external advisors and external examiners
- Terms of reference, membership, and profile of serving members of any relevant external committees or advisory bodies involved in developing, monitoring, and reviewing learning programmes
- Relevant key performance indicators adopted in the strategic plan / academic plan / respective programmes
- Mechanisms for collecting feedback from various stakeholders and tools for their implementation / evidence of their operation (e.g. market surveys related to the demand of learning programmes and future employability of graduates, student feedback questionnaires, samples of analysis reports of feedback obtained, samples of external advisors / external examiners' reports, and records of follow-up actions taken)
- Statistics and summary report on feedback collected from stakeholders regarding the Operator, programmes, students and graduates
- External examiners' report, programme review report, internship / placement partners' report, employers' report, etc.
- Records of meetings of the relevant committees in discussing the achievement of the Operator's educational/training objectives
- Evidence of operation of the mechanisms, such as programme review reports / meeting minutes
- Records of / reports on follow-up action taken and evidence to track effective decision making and implementation of decisions
- Publicity materials and other public information about the Operator and relevant learning programmes. Records of approval of the release of such information by the appropriate authorities

#### ***Other Possible Evidence for Operators with Cap 320 Status to offer programmes at postgraduate level***

- New measures and/or adjustments of existing QA mechanisms for supporting postgraduate programmes at QF Level(s) 6 and/or 7
- Five-year plan for offering postgraduate programmes at QF Level(s) 6 and/or 7 subsumed in the Academic Plan

- Academic policy and regulations for postgraduate programmes at QF Level(s) 6 and/or 7 (including admission criteria, dissertation / project supervision (if applicable), assessment policy, policy on progression, graduation requirements, and award classifications)

#### ***Other Possible Evidence for Operators of Collaborative Programme***

- QA manuals applicable to the collaborative programme(s)
- Documents showing an explanation of the integration of the QA mechanisms of the collaborative partners for ensuring the quality of programmes at various stages:
  - programme development
  - programme management
  - programme review
  - programme modification
- Written agreement on the allocation of responsibilities QA, if not covered in the contractual documents
- Written confirmation of any authority and process to make changes to the learning programme, if not covered in the contractual documents
- Written confirmation (e.g. minutes of a meeting authorised to approve a change) that any change made is properly authorised
- Records of monitoring visits by the collaborative partners
- Minutes of joint meetings dealing with quality issues
- Audit / accreditation report (internal / external) by the partner(s) and/or external QA bodies, and follow-up action(s) planned / taken, if any

#### ***Other Possible Evidence for Operators of Online Learning Programme***

- QA manuals / guidelines applicable to online learning programmes
- Documents showing an explanation of the QA mechanism of online learning programmes for ensuring programme quality at various stages:
  - programme development
  - programme management
  - programme review
  - programme modification
- Documents showing how data / information collected from the learning analytics tools are utilised to monitor and review students' achievement as well as identify measures to enhance the effectiveness of the online delivery

# Chapter 2 – Learning Programme Accreditation / Learning Programme Re-Accreditation (LPA / Re-LPA)

## Domain: LPA-1 Programme Objectives and Learning Outcomes

### Accreditation Standard

The learning programme must have objectives that address community, education and/or industry needs, with learning outcomes that meet the relevant QF standards, for all exit qualifications from the programme.

### Possible sources of evidence

- Programme Objectives (POs)
- Programme Intended Learning Outcomes (PILOs)
- Intended Learning Outcomes of each stream (if applicable)
- Positioning of the Programme (e.g. distinctiveness, niche, target student group, etc.)
- Alignment of POs and the vision / mission of the Operator
- Mapping of PILOs against POs
- Mapping of PILOs against GLD at the claimed QF Level
- Inputs from relevant staff, stakeholders and external advisors in the development of the programme and its POs and PILOs
- Notes or minutes of the meetings of relevant committees to deliberate / approve the POs and PILOs
- Market surveys related to demand for the Programme and employability of graduates of the Programme
- Evidence showing recognition of professional bodies and/or external benchmarking sought (if applicable)
- Education pathways
- Employment pathways (e.g. job position and industry / sector)
- Mapping of modules against PILOs
- Samples of assessments and the corresponding assessment rubrics / marking schemes showing attainment of intended learning outcomes
- Sample of programme outline, brochure, Operator's website, etc. presenting the POs and PILOs

### Other Possible Evidence for Operators with Cap 320 Status

- Graduate profile (Appendix) of programmes at bachelor's level or above

### Other Possible Evidence for Collaborative Programme

- Graduate survey results showing graduate destinations in Hong Kong are commensurate with POs

### Other Possible Evidence for Online Learning Programme

- Benchmarking with similar internal and/or external programmes (campus-based) to ensure comparability of programme learning outcomes\*

\*Note: If the online learning programme has an equivalent campus-based programme leading to the same award, the POs and PILOs and constituent modules should be identical. Any divergence must be explained.

### ***Other Possible Evidence for Re-LPA***

- An account of how the recommendation(s) from the previous (re-)accreditation and input from the stakeholders have been implemented, and other follow-up actions the Operator has taken
- A brief summary of HKCAAVQ approved substantial change(s) during the validity period, if any
- Quantitative indicators demonstrating the market demand of the Programme (e.g. applications to places ratio (ratio of number of applicants to number of students admitted), take-up rate (ratio of number of students enrolled to number of offers))
- Graduate survey demonstrating the actual employment and education pathways of the graduates and showing graduate destinations are commensurate with POs
- Feedback from external parties (e.g. employers, external examiners, etc.) relating to the attainment of Intended Learning Outcomes
- Recognition of student work by external parties (e.g. awards in open competitions) confirming the standard of intended learning outcomes
- Recognition of graduates by professional bodies (e.g. gaining membership status of professional bodies, passing of professional examinations, etc.) showing achievement of programme objectives

**Accreditation Standard**

**The minimum admission requirements of the learning programme must be clearly outlined for staff and prospective learners. These requirements and the learner selection processes must be effective for recruitment of learners with the necessary skills and knowledge to undertake the programme.**

***Possible sources of evidence***

- Admission policy (including special admission, credit accumulation and transfer (CAT)<sup>^</sup>, exemption, and advanced standing)  
<sup>^</sup>Note: Only applicable when Operators opt to have CAT assessed for inclusion in QR
- Minimum admission requirements (including English Language Proficiency requirements) for Year 1 entry and other entry points (if applicable)
- Rationales for proposed admission requirements
- Notes or minutes of the meetings of relevant committees to deliberate / approve the minimum admission requirements
- Proposed maximum yearly student intake at each entry point and in each stream, if applicable
- Justifications for proposed maximum number of new students for each entry point and each stream, if applicable (including market demand for the programme / each entry point / each stream, adequacy of resources and staffing, government initiatives for the industry / programme etc.)
- Mechanism to ensure that the admission standards are adhered to and admission procedures are fully implemented at all times, for different locations / modes of delivery
- Procedures to verify the integrity and creditability of the credentials provided by applicants
- Student selection and enrolment procedures, including any procedures for recognising prior learning
- Documents showing the assessment of prior qualifications for admission to the full / top-up programme if applicable
- Relevant training / support provided to staff responsible for student admission and recruitment
- Brochures or website showing information on admission requirements and procedures

***Other Possible Evidence for Online Learning Programme***

- Justifications for different admission requirements and student selection process, if different from the face-to-face delivery mode

***Other Possible Evidence for Re-LPA***

- Yearly student intake since the last (re-)accreditation mapped against the approved enrolment numbers
- Student profiles showing its alignment with the positioning of the programme and confirming admission requirements are met
- Implementation of admission processes and tools, e.g. interview arrangements and reports, sample admission test papers and corresponding marking scheme, passing rate of the tests showing effective student selection process, and meeting minutes / notes of the discussion of relevant committee(s)
- Records of students granted exemption, advance standing and/or admitted through non-standard entry (including justifications) confirming that the established admission policies have been followed

- Comparable performance as indicated in grade distribution reports, progression rates, retention rates, graduation rates, graduate destinations, and other indicators of students admitted through various routes showing appropriateness of admission policy
- Mechanism for reviewing admission routes and/or feeder programmes
- Proposed changes to minimum admission requirements (if applicable) and the rationale of such changes

## Domain: LPA-3 Programme Structure and Content

### Accreditation Standard

**The structure and content of the learning programme must be up-to-date, coherent, balanced and integrated to facilitate progression in order to enable learners to achieve the stated learning outcomes and to meet the programme objectives.**

#### *Possible sources of evidence*

- Programme structure, such as an overview of all key parameters of each module and of how modules are combined in each semester / year and stream, if applicable
- Principles guiding the design and logical sequence of the programme
- Programme structure of the intermediate, if applicable and terminal exit award(s), and principles guiding the design of the award(s)
- Number of credits, contact hours and notional learning hours of the programme and individual modules
- Pre-requisites and co-requisites of the modules
- Mapping of modules against PILOs and GLD at the specified QF Level
- Samples of teaching and learning materials, including, for example, module syllabi, indicative content and recommended reading lists
- Inputs from external examiners / advisors

#### ***Other Possible Evidence for Collaborative Programme***

- Details of and justifications for local contextualisation of programme content where applicable

#### ***Other Possible Evidence for Online Learning Programme***

- Details of and justifications for local contextualisation of programme content where applicable
- Individualised (self-paced) online content to allow students to progress at their own pace
- Policies for the award of academic credit for online learning modules

#### ***Other Possible Evidence for Re-LPA***

- Number of students graduated with intermediate, if applicable and terminal exit awards
- Rationales of students graduated with intermediate, if applicable and terminal exit awards
- Proposed changes to the programme structure, if applicable and the rationale of such changes
- Programme review report
- Internal review of relevant information (e.g. student progression rate, grade distribution reports) relating to student progression
- Minutes of meetings of relevant committees reflecting discussion of coherence and effectiveness of programme structure
- Results of student evaluation showing the content and structure are coherent and balanced
- Findings of graduate survey
- Feedback from external parties (e.g. external examiners, external advisors and professional bodies) confirming the programme content and structure are up-to-date, aligned with the POs and support the achievement of the PILOs.

## Domain: LPA-4 Learning, Teaching and Assessment

### Accreditation Standard

**The learning, teaching and assessment activities designed for the learning programme must be effective in delivering the programme content and assessing the attainment of the intended learning outcomes.**

#### *Possible sources of evidence*

- Policy on medium of instruction
- A description of and the rationale for the use of teaching and learning methods (e.g. lectures, tutorials, online activities, laboratories, practical demonstration, work placement, etc.) and mode of delivery
- Maximum number of students involved in various modes of delivery and teaching and learning activities
- Samples of teaching and learning materials for two to three selected modules, including capstone module(s) if applicable
- Samples of tools / measures (e.g. feedback on interim / progress report, specific skill training courses, etc.) showing effective teaching and learning in project work
- Guidelines / instructions on project supervision
- Guidelines / manual of workplace attachment / internship (if applicable)
- Guidance materials for employers or other parties involved in student learning, such as internship and placement
- Details of workplace attachment / internship (if applicable), including:
  - Intended Learning Outcomes
  - Structure
  - Work placement agreement
  - Monitoring and evaluation mechanism
  - Assessment methods and criteria
  - List of (potential) employers for placement
  - Guidelines to students, supervisors and employers for placement (e.g. handbooks and/or manuals)
- Assessment policy of the programme
- Assessment scheme of the programme (e.g. forms of assessment methods and their weightings)
- An outline of assessment methods and weightings for each subject / module and rationales of how the assessment methods reflect the learning outcomes at the claimed QF Level
- Samples of assessments and the associated assessment rubrics / marking schemes for two to three selected modules (including capstone module(s) if applicable) demonstrating the assessment standard and the specified QF Level
- Samples of formative and summative assessments of two modules at the intermediate, if applicable and terminal exit award level
- Mechanism for providing feedback to students on assessments and identifying students-at-risk
- System of assessment verification or moderation and external examination, as appropriate, including the appointment of external examiners
- Graduation requirements (including attendance requirement where applicable) for intermediate exit awards (if any) and the terminal exit award
- Grade descriptors for the terminal exit award and any intermediate exit award
- Policies on plagiarism and appeal

### ***Other Possible Evidence for Collaborative Programme***

- Roles of the collaborative partners in setting, marking and moderating assessments
- Measures employed to ensure examination security, in particular if the same examination paper is used in different time zones

### ***Other Possible Evidence for Online Learning Programme***

- Learning management system used in online teaching and learning activities
- Policies on online learning attendance
- Policies on online teaching and learning for interaction between teachers and learners in the online environment
- Mechanisms for providing learning diagnostics and feedback
- Policies and procedures governing online assessments including academic integrity, moderation and progression
- Policies and procedures governing student authentication including submission of assessment work
- Measures employed to ensure examination security, in particular if the same examination paper is used in different time zones on the same digital learning platform
- Policies and mechanisms in place to monitor and evaluate online assessment data for continuous improvement purposes
- Training for teaching staff in using data from online assessments and other data sources to modify content and to guide student learning
- Mechanism for providing feedback to students on assessments through electronic means
- Formal channels for learners to give feedback on their online learning experience

### ***Other Possible Evidence for Re-LPA***

- A description of and the rationale for the teaching and learning methods used since the last (re-)accreditation
- Feedback on teaching methods (e.g. student surveys, external examiners' reports, class observations, etc.) confirming the methods are appropriate and effective
- Evidence of effective student engagement in the learning process
- Samples of learning and teaching materials for modules with proposed changes to content and/or teaching / assessment method
- Information demonstrating attainment of required standards (e.g. grade distribution of core modules, pass rate for each module, graduation rate, etc.)
- Sample graded / marked formative & summative assessments (at high / average / low grades) and feedback provided to students for two to three selected modules demonstrating attainment of the Intended Learning Outcomes at exit award (including capstone module(s) if applicable) / intermediate award level (if applicable)
- Evidence showing execution of mechanisms to ensure validity and fairness of assessments of individual performance in group work (e.g. peer review, comments on validity and sufficiency arising from external / internal moderation processes, double marking to ensure reliability, minutes of Board of Examiners)
- Sample completed evaluation demonstrating fairness of assessments of individual performance in group work (e.g. peer review form)
- Evidence of feedback provided to students on assessments demonstrating its sufficiency for the benefit of progression and improvement
- Remedial actions taken to assist students-at-risk, if any
- Evidence of effectiveness of the remedial measures provided to students-at-risk
- Records of placement showing sufficient and relevant placement opportunities, if applicable

- Sample records of placement supervision and results (e.g. logbook, internship reports) demonstrating attainment of Intended Learning Outcomes
- Evaluation and feedback from stakeholders (e.g. placement supervisors, teaching staff and students) demonstrating the effectiveness of placement
- Evidence of implementation of plagiarism and appeal procedures
- Results of implementation of plagiarism policy, together with appeals and appeal outcomes

## Domain: LPA-5 Programme Leadership and Staffing

### Accreditation Standard

The operator must have adequate programme leader(s), teaching / training and support staff with the qualities, competence, qualifications and experience necessary for effective programme management, i.e. planning, development, delivery and monitoring of the programme. There must be an adequate staff development scheme and activities to ensure that staff are kept updated for the quality delivery of the programme.

#### *Possible sources of evidence*

- Academic leadership (including the name(s) of Faculty Dean / Programme / Stream Leader(s) and their respective roles and responsibilities in regard to the programme)
- Background and experience in programme management and development of the person leading and overseeing the effectiveness of the programme operation
- Criteria of assigning programme management duties
- Appointment criteria for management and teaching staff at different ranks involved in programme management and/or delivery
- Composition of programme team
- Profiles of all potential teaching staff of the programme, including academic and/or professional qualifications, and teaching / work experience
- Profiles of teaching and support staff mapped against modules showing adequacy of staff expertise and technical support for conducting the learning, teaching and assessment activities of the programme
- Meeting minutes / notes of programme team / relevant committee(s) and staff consultation sessions / forums showing staff engagement in the programme development phase
- Number of teaching staff planned for the programme corresponding to the planned number of students in the next five academic years
- Anticipated workload of staff teaching the programme, including individual student consultation and individual / group project supervision, if any
- Anticipated ratio of teaching staff to students for the programme
- Anticipated ratio of full-time to part-time teaching staff for the programme (in terms of the total number of teaching hours)
- Methods used to identify staff development needs
- Staff development plan for the next three academic years reflecting staff development policy
- Staff Manual
- Roles and responsibilities of management staff
- Quality Assurance Manual

#### *Other Possible Evidence for Collaborative Programme*

- An explanation on any differences in criteria among the collaborative partners
- Roles of the collaborative partners in staff recruitment and review of staff performance
- An explanation of the teaching duties to be shared among staff of the collaborative partners
- Allocation of teaching and project / dissertation supervision duties between teaching staff of the collaborative partners and justification for the proposed allocation
- Explanation as to how staff among the collaborative partners are prepared and supported for teaching the programme
- Developmental opportunities to be provided to staff among the collaborative partners

### ***Other Possible Evidence for Online Learning Programme***

- An explanation on any differences in appointment criteria between traditional and online learning programmes, if any
- Profiles of staff (teaching and IT technical support) with relevant qualifications and experience in an online teaching and learning environment
- Developmental opportunities to be provided to staff teaching in online learning programmes

### ***Other Possible Evidence for Re-LPA***

- Effective academic leadership demonstrated through improved performance of the programme (e.g. development of new streams / modules, improvement in research and consultancy through new initiatives, new collaborations with local / overseas parties, etc.)
- Composition of teaching staff including break-down of full-time and part-time staff numbers and tenure of part-time staff
- Profiles of teaching and support staff mapped against modules delivered showing adequacy of staff expertise and technical support to effective programme management, planning and delivery of the subject areas of the programme
- Actual ratio of teaching staff to students for the programme since the last (re-)accreditation
- Actual full-time to part-time teaching staff ratio of the programme (in terms of the total number of teaching hours) since the last (re-)accreditation
- Records of discussion (e.g. minutes of meetings, review reports, etc.) on programme and module management reflecting subject expertise and experience of staff
- Meeting minutes / notes of programme team / relevant committee(s) and staff consultation sessions / forums since the last (re-)accreditation demonstrating effectiveness of programme management/delivery
- Staff composition and number in the next five academic years, and if any changes are planned
- Data on workload of teaching staff demonstrating adequacy of staff
- Overview of staff development activities showing active staff engagement relevant for the programme
- Data on staff development activities since the last (re-)accreditation
- Information / survey showing effectiveness of staff development strategies / activities
- Staff output (e.g. publications, consultancy work, externally funded projects) showing continuous improvement of qualifications / expertise of teaching staff

## Domain: LPA-6 Learning, Teaching and Enabling Resources/Services

### Accreditation Standard

**The operator must be able to provide learning, teaching and enabling resources / services that are appropriate and sufficient for the learning, teaching and assessment activities of the learning programme, regardless of location and mode of delivery.**

#### *Possible sources of evidence*

- Financial information, such as: cost per student at programme level and at institutional level; tuition fee for each programme; breakeven number for each programme; breakeven number at institutional level; direct cost and indirect cost; planned student enrolment, including FTE, for the next three to five years (by programme, by year of study, and by mode of study); projected attrition rate by programme; etc.
- Budget for the programme in the next five years
- Initial and annual income and expenditure for the programme (if the programme is not self-sustainable, please explain how it is, or will be, financed, and provide proof)
- Contingency plan if the programme cannot attain breakeven
- Mechanism to deal with under-enrolment
- A description of the premises and teaching facilities for the programme
- A detailed list of specialised facilities, equipment and library resources available for the programme and specific modules
- Utilisation rate of the existing facilities / services of the Operator, and projected utilisation rate with additional students of the programme in the next five academic years
- Projected utilisation rate of programme-specific facilities in the next five years
- Rights of the students of the programme to use the facilities and services provided by the Operator
- Policy to ensure the resources are up-to-date and adequate
- Resource development plan to support the on-going development of the programme
- Support services provided to students including language support and counselling
- Procedure for monitoring the performance of under-achieving students
- Policy to ensure availability of staff for individual consultation and advice to students
- Communication channels available to students
- Copies of relevant academic, disciplinary and complaints policies and procedures provided to students
- Student Handbook, brochure or website information outlining programme information, support services, and relevant student policies

#### ***Other Possible Evidence for Online Learning Programme***

- Learning resources, materials and delivery mechanisms are fit-for-purpose for online programmes
- Information about the availability and life expectancy of the technology
- Estimated cost related to the maintenance and sustainability of its online programme offerings with respect to facilities and equipment for the next five years
- Policies and procedures reflecting the needs for support services related to online learning programmes
- Policies and guidelines for online support services, including technological support
- Policies determining when educational interventions are needed to support online students at risk of failure or discontinuation of studies

### ***Other Possible Evidence for Re-LPA***

- Yearly student intake since the last (re-)accreditation mapped against the approved enrolment numbers to ascertain planned resources are sufficient to support student learning
- Income and expenditure for the programme since the last (re-) accreditation showing the programme has been financially viable. If the programme has been running in deficit, please explain how it has been financed, and provide proof
- Evidence of sufficiency of financial resources for sustained operation in case of prolonged under-enrolment
- Minutes from Board of Governors / Directors (or records from an authorised party) on financial matters showing adequacy of financial resources for the programme
- Budget for the programme in the next five years. If the programme will incur a deficit, please explain how it will be financed, and provide proof
- Evidence demonstrating sufficiency and quality of physical resources (e.g. utilisation rate, class / student timetable, maintenance / upgrade plan for physical resources)
- Statistics on actual utilisation rate of programme-specific facilities since the last (re)accreditation and projected utilisation rates in the next five years
- Meeting notes / minutes showing the discussion of the relevant committee(s) about the utilisation and adequacy of the facilities for programme operation
- Feedback from students and staff on physical resources showing adequacy and alignment with teaching, learning and assessment activities
- Examples of action(s) taken to address feedback collected from students and staff on the adequacy and currency of physical resources
- Evidence of support to student activities / organisations relevant to the programme to enrich student learning experience
- Lists of major student support activities (e.g. talks, workshops and orientation, counselling and career services) conducted since the last (re-)accreditation and students' participation rate to demonstrate student engagement
- A list of planned student support activities in the next five years
- Student feedback showing their satisfaction with support services, and examples of action(s) taken to address feedback collected from students

## Domain: LPA-7 Programme Approval, Review and Quality Assurance

### Accreditation Standard

**The operator must monitor and review the development and performance of the learning programme on an on-going basis to ensure that the programme remains current and valid and that the learning outcomes, learning and teaching activities and learner assessments are effective to meet the programme objectives.**

#### *Possible sources of evidence*

- The processes / measures for ensuring the quality of the programme at various stages:
  - programme development
  - programme management
  - programme review
  - programme modification / improvement
- Composition, membership and terms of reference of the committees involved in the QA process
- Flow chart showing QA processes and committees / personnel involved (differentiation between internal and external input is required)
- Mechanism on evaluating the efficiency and effectiveness of the Operator's QA policies and procedures
- Records (e.g. meeting minutes) of relevant boards / committees recording discussions on programme development and recommendations and/or deliberations / decisions made in relation to the programme
- Details of relevant bodies and individuals consulted at the programme development stage
- Internal validation report for the programme
- Response of the Operator to the recommendations made by the internal validation panel
- Profiles and appointment criteria of external advisors and external examiners
- Consultation reports from external examiners, external advisors and potential employers, and the Operator's action taken to incorporate external and internal input for programme development, management and monitoring
- Quantitative indicators used to monitor and improve programme quality
- Mechanism for collecting stakeholder feedback
- Templates of stakeholder surveys, such as student / graduate / employer feedback questionnaire
- Procedures for handling student complaints relevant to the programme

#### ***Other Possible Evidence for Collaborative Programme***

- A copy of the latest formal agreement between the collaborative partners
- Documents showing integration of the QA mechanism of collaborative partners
- Input from the collaborative partners in the development of the POs, PILOs, MILOs, module content, and module teaching materials
- A copy of the most recently available independent review of the programme as received by the collaborative partners. This may be:
  - A report from a national, regional or specialist accrediting or QA; or
  - A report by a professional or statutory body that accredits the programme for its own purposes; or
  - (If no external report is available) Documentation from the most recent internal review of the programme by the collaborative partners themselves

#### ***Other Possible Evidence for Online Learning Programme***

- Verification of the chosen pedagogies of the programme on the online learning platform

- Simulation of server performance with respect to the anticipated usage
- Learning analytics for monitoring learners' progress and attainment of learning outcomes

***Other Possible Evidence for Re-LPA***

- Evidence showing execution of quality assurance procedures (programme monitoring, delivery, review, modification) to assure programme quality. Examples include annual programme review reports, internal review / re-validation reports, and meeting minutes of quality assurance committee and programme committee
- Evidence of use of quantitative indicators to monitor programme quality (e.g. remedial actions taken to address issues identified from analysis of pass rate). Examples of commonly used indicators include retention rates, pass rates and graduation rates
- Evidence of the use of feedback to assure programme quality. Feedback sources should normally include reports from external examiners, external advisors, feedback from staff, students and employers
- Profiles of current external advisors and external examiners engaged in the programme
- Sample external examiner reports since the last (re-)accreditation
- Examples of follow-up action(s) taken in response to the feedback collected from stakeholders
- Examples of enhancements made to the programme with incorporation of external and internal input since the last (re-)accreditation
- Evidence showing execution of complaints handling mechanism to ensure programme quality

# Chapter 3 – Programme Area Accreditation (PAA)

## Domain PAA-1: Organisational Governance and Management

### Accreditation Standard

The operator must have a governing body that defines the operator's vision and mission and establishes educational / training objectives aligned with the vision and mission. The governing body has set a clear and explicit direction for development based on the operator's values and characteristics, and has implemented a management system which is fit-for-purpose and effective in meeting the educational / training objectives.

### *Possible sources of evidence*

- Vision and mission statements of the Operator
- Regulations, statutes or other instruments relevant to institutional governance
- The latest Annual Reports or similar official publications
- Meeting minutes / notes of the governing bodies showing their latest discussion on the vision and mission of the Operator
- Strategic plan of the Operator for the next five years
- Plans for implementing the strategic plan including setting targets, strategies, key performance indicators, timeline, etc.
- Meeting minutes / notes of the governing bodies and senior management showing their discussion on the formulation and implementation of the strategic plan
- Institutional governance structure:
  - Interrelationship between governing body and its committees
  - Terms of reference
  - Composition
  - Membership
  - Delegations schedules
  - Examples of decision-making, i.e. minutes and notes
- Organisational and management structures
- Roles and responsibilities of key management personnel
- Meeting minutes / notes showing the decisions made by the senior management
- Student/learner representation in management
- Policies relating to management, financial control and QA
- Reporting mechanism among the various functions within the Operator, including governance, management and QA
- Meeting minutes / notes of the governing bodies showing their discussions on the reports submitted by the senior management, and the directives made
- Governance reviews
- Management reviews
- Enhancement initiatives for governance, management and QA
- Meeting minutes / notes of the governing bodies showing their discussions on various reviews conducted, including the follow-up actions arising from the reviews

## Domain PAA-2: Strategic Planning and Development

### Accreditation Standard

**The operator must have formal processes at organisational level for developing its strategic plan, which are effective in driving achievement of educational / training objectives. The strategic plan should focus on the analyses, decisions and actions needed to sustain and enhance the operation of its learning programmes.**

#### *Possible sources of evidence*

- Methodology (such as SWOT analysis, balanced scorecard or gap analysis) and findings of strategic planning
- Evidence of external feedback collected in assessing the Operator's strategic positioning and alignment of purposes, objectives and actions
- Policy and procedures for addressing new educational developments (e.g. employability of graduates, credit accumulation and transfer, and QF credits)
- Long-term and short-term strategic plans
- Resource plans in support of the strategic plans
- Implementation plan underpinning the strategic plan, including targets, strategies, key performance indicators, timeline, etc.
- Mechanism for monitoring and reviewing implementation of the strategic plans
- Quantitative and/or qualitative performance indicators (KPIs)
- Reports on achievements / outcomes of implementing the strategic plans
- Periodic planning process
- Findings from the needs analysis in support of the periodic planning
- Internal and external feedback incorporated in the periodic planning process
- Risk management system and processes
- Risk register showing the risk factors identified and prioritised
- Mitigation strategies for handling risks
- Resources planned for managing risks
- Meeting minutes / notes of the governing bodies and senior management showing their discussion on managing risks

## Domain PAA-3: Financial Management and Viability

### Accreditation Standard

**The operator must have an established financial management approach which is effective in ensuring the operator's short-term and long-term viability to sustain its operation in alignment with the current strategic plan, and enables it to meet its educational / training objectives.**

### *Possible sources of evidence*

- Finance and budget policy
- Policy on deployment of resources
- Audited financial statements of the Operator for the past three years
- Budget of the current year
- Latest management accounts
- Financial projections for the next five years, together with the assumptions and financial model(s)
- Findings from stress testing and scenario analysis
- Meeting minutes / notes of the governing bodies and senior management showing their discussion on and approval of the budgets / financial plans and resource allocation
- Financial control mechanism
- Meeting minutes / notes of the governing bodies and senior management showing their discussion on and decisions made to the monitoring of the Operator's finances
- Priorities for programme development as set out by the Operator
- Approved budgets for learning programme(s) in relevant programme area(s)
- Meeting minutes / notes of the governing bodies and senior management showing their discussion on and decisions made to the finance / budget of the Operator for programme development / operation
- Review mechanisms for financial planning
- Key performance indicators for financial sustainability
- Records showing the achievement of the key performance indicators for financial sustainability
- Meeting minutes / notes of the governing bodies and senior management showing their discussion on and decisions made to the reviews on financial planning
- Records showing the follow-up actions identified / taken for the improvement of financial planning

## Domain PAA-4: Organisational Quality Assurance and Enhancement

### Accreditation Standard

**The operator must have established an effective internal quality assurance system with well-defined policies and procedures in place to determine and monitor the quality and standards of its learning programmes, and to ensure alignment with its educational / training objectives and the stated QF level(s).**

#### *Possible sources of evidence*

- QA policy
- Terms of references, composition and membership of the committee(s) responsible for planning, operation, monitoring and reviewing of organisational performance
- Process and procedures for monitoring and reviewing of organisational performance, together with the findings
- Meeting minutes / notes of the relevant committee(s) showing their discussion on the organisational performance
- Examples showing that quality is embedded in the planning, operational and review processes
- Needs analysis policies
- Examples showing evidence considered by the relevant committees in decision-making process
- Academic / programme development policies
- Process and procedures for approving, monitoring and reviewing of programmes in the programme area
- Track record of successfully developing and delivering accredited learning programme(s) in the programme area
- Programme development processes showing the procedures of applying GLD in developing programmes in the programme area
- Mechanism / tools for designing outcome-based programmes and determining QF levels
- Sample programmes and their curricula in the programme area demonstrating the attainment of corresponding QF levels
- Meeting minutes / notes of the relevant committee(s) showing their discussion on the QF level of the programmes in the programme area
- Meeting minutes / notes of the relevant committee(s) showing their discussion on the learning outcomes of and enhancements made to the programmes in the programme area
- Review mechanisms for QA system
- Meeting minutes / notes of the governing bodies and senior management showing their discussion on and decisions made to the reviews on QA
- Key performance indicators for QA
- Records showing the achievement of the key performance indicators for QA
- Records showing the follow-up actions identified / taken for the improvement of QA
- Analysis of alignment between student learning outcomes, programme outcomes and organisational outcomes

## Domain PAA-5: Programme Area Development and Management

### Accreditation Standard

**The operator must substantiate the proposed programme area by its track record of operation of QF-recognised learning programmes in relevant discipline or industry areas, in alignment with organisational objectives and planned resources.**

#### *Possible sources of evidence*

- Scope of and rationale for the programme area with reference to the *Classification of Areas of Study and Training in the Qualifications Register (QR), List of Sub-areas and Illustrative Scope Statements* in the HKCAAVQ website
- Track record of successfully developing and delivering accredited programme(s) in the programme area
- Strategic plan of the Operator for the next five year
- Academic plan of the Operator for the next five years
- Five-year plan for developing the programme area, including offering new programmes
- Established connections or collaborations with the relevant industries or sectors
- Examples of the initiatives in the development plan that underpin the strategic and academic plans of the Operator
- Examples of the initiatives in the development plan that create synergy within and across the proposed programme area
- Indicators adopted in the programme development process for identifying the needs of the programmes in the programme area
- Curriculum of the programmes in the programme area
- Statistics of the programmes in the programme area, including number of applications, enrolment numbers, retention and drop- out rates, graduation rate, etc, together with the analysis and interpretation
- Graduate survey results, including education / career pathways, attainment of professional qualifications, and employment for graduates of the programmes in the programme area
- Major improvements made to the quality of student learning
- Appointment criteria for staff performing academic leadership in the programme area
- Profile(s) of the existing and potential academic leader(s)
- Roles and responsibilities of the academic leaders
- Development initiatives specific for the academic leaders
- Succession plan for the academic leaders, if any
- Process and procedures for programme approval, management and review
- Policy for development and termination of a programme
- Indicators adopted for considering termination of a programme

## Domain PAA-6: Learning, Teaching and Assessment

### Accreditation Standard

**The operator must have developed and implemented effective policies for the development of learner-centred strategies for achievement of learning outcomes through alignment of educational / training objectives, learning experiences, assessment, and learning support.**

#### *Possible sources of evidence*

- Development plan for the programme area
- Profiles of students admitted to the programmes in the programme area
- Analysis of student admission profile
- Policies on learning, teaching and assessment, including support for workplace attachment
- Programme development processes and procedures to ensure alignment of learning, teaching and assessment activities
- Mechanism to track students' performance, and the findings
- Learning, teaching and assessment activities provided to students, including workplace learning / placement
- Ratio of teaching staff to students
- Statistics of the programmes in the programme area, including retention rate, drop-out rates, pass rate, graduation rate, award classification and GPA distribution etc.
- Feedback mechanisms to collect data from stakeholders including students and teaching staff
- Student survey results, including satisfaction on learning experience, teaching staff performance, programme content and assessment, etc.
- Graduate survey results, including learning experience, education / career pathways, attainment of professional qualifications, and employment for graduates of the programmes in the programme area
- External Examiner reports
- Major actions taken to improve the quality of student learning in the past three years, together with the outcomes
- Meeting minutes / notes of the programme management showing their discussion and review on student learning experience, and alignment of learning, teaching and assessment activities of the programmes
- Meeting minutes / notes of the programme management team showing their discussion and review on the effectiveness of the learning, teaching and assessment strategies
- Student Handbook
- Information in the programme brochure, Operator's website, e-learning platform, etc.

## Domain PAA-7: Staffing and Staff Development

### Accreditation Standard

**The operator must have a suitably qualified and competent workforce which is capable to develop and deliver learning programmes in the proposed programme area, and can ensure sustainable development of the proposed programme area.**

#### *Possible sources of evidence*

- Policy and procedures for staff recruitment, deployment, appraisal, promotion and dismissal
- Policy on workload and teaching staff-to-student ratio
- Appointment criteria for staff with different capacities and at different ranks
- Overall staff profile and justification for this profile (including academic, teaching / training, administrative and support staff)
- Number of staff across different ranks (including academic, teaching / training, administrative and support staff)
- Roles and responsibilities of staff with different capacities and at different ranks
- Workload of staff with different capacities and at different ranks
- Staffing plan for the next five years underpinning the development plan of the programme area
- Processes and procedures for evaluating and enhancing teaching effectiveness in the programme area
- Findings of teaching performance in student survey
- Feedback mechanism to teaching staff about their teaching performance
- Policy on staff development and support
- Processes and procedures for identifying the development needs of staff in pedagogy and assessment design
- Staff development activities relating to pedagogy and assessment design in the past three years and a plan for the next five years
- Actual spending on staff development in the past three years, the budget for staff development for the next three years, and a comparison between the two
- Policy on staff engagement in research and scholarly activities
- Policy on financial subsidy and workload relief for staff engaging in continuous professional development and industry collaborations
- Institutional requirements for staff to engage in continuous professional development
- List of continuous professional development activities and industry collaborations that staff have been participated in the past three years
- Staff Handbook

## Domain PAA-8: Programme Area Resources and Services

### Accreditation Standard

**The operator must have implemented a well-managed approach to its provision of learning, teaching and enabling resources which aligns with the current and planned development of the proposed programme area.**

#### *Possible sources of evidence*

- Policy and processes for resource planning at programme area level
- Findings from utilisation monitoring and analysis
- Terms of reference, composition and membership of the committee(s) responsible for resource planning
- Meeting minutes / records of the committee(s) responsible for resource planning
- Records showing engagement of key stakeholders in resource planning
- Procedures of identifying needs of resources in the development plan of the programme area
- Financial plan underpinning the development of the programme area
- Policy on deployment of resources for ensuring their effective allocation
- Policies and procedures for procurement and acquisition of resources
- Procurement plan for key facilities and equipment to support the development of the programme area
- Overall student capacity of campus(es)
- Overview of facilities and equipment for the programme in the programme area
- Current and projected utilisation rate of key facilities and equipment of the existing programmes in the programme area
- Policy on student support services
- Overview of student support services at institutional level (e.g. counselling, career guidance, academic support and mentoring, online learning system, student amenities, financial aid and scholarship)
- Overview of student support services at programme area level (e.g. academic support, mentoring scheme and workplace learning)
- Mechanisms for reviewing the adequacy / effectiveness of student support services
- Student Handbook

## Chapter 4 – Periodic Institutional Review (PIR)

### Domain PIR-1: Organisational Effectiveness and Planning

#### 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
- Governance and management structures, and corresponding organisational charts, terms of reference, and memberships
- Meeting minutes / notes showing the oversight of the governing body on organisational effectiveness
- Management records showing oversight of the senior management on operational effectiveness
- Meeting minutes / notes showing the discussion of the governing body on the reports submitted by the senior management
- Evaluation of the alignment of the strategic plan with the organisational missions, aims and objectives
- 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, together with the trend analysis
- Records of review of the action plan in the past five years to show the effectiveness of the strategic planning and adjustments in response to changes
- Mapping of the attainment of educational objectives in the approved programme area against the organisational outcomes and/or performance indicators
- Evaluation of the attainment of educational objectives in the approved programme area
- Meeting minutes / notes of the governing body / senior management / faculty management showing its discussion on the attainment of educational 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
- Meeting minutes / notes of the relevant committee(s) showing its monitoring on the effectiveness of the enhancement initiatives
- Mechanisms for collecting feedback from stakeholders
- Feedback collected from the stakeholders for assessing the effectiveness of the enhancement initiatives
- 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
- Strategic plan of the Operator for the next five years
- Effectiveness of risk mitigation strategies
- Research on trends in the programme area to support the academic/programme development plan

## Domain PIR-2: Organisational Leadership and Staffing

### 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 / notes 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 / notes of the programme management team showing its discussion on and decision made in staff management / deployment and resource allocation
- Meeting minutes / notes 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
- Staff appointment criteria for different capacities and at different ranks
- 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-student ratio to demonstrate the adequacy and stability of staff
- Staff profiles including academic, teaching, administrative, and support staff of the programme area to show the staff have appropriate qualifications and experience
- Policy on teaching load
- Findings of staff workload in staff appraisal
- Staff time spent in teaching, student consultation, project / thesis supervision, researches, consultancy work etc.
- Examples of staff deployment demonstrating its effectiveness
- Professional Awards presented to staff to show the expertise of staff
- Publications of staff (mainly for those who teach degree programmes or above) to show the expertise 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
- Analysis of the impact of change of internal and external environment on staff planning
- Evaluation of the effectiveness of staff appraisal in identifying staff development needs
- Policy on staff engagement in research and scholarly activities (mainly for staff who teach degree programmes or above) and industry collaborations
- List of staff development, professional / scholarly activities and industry collaborations in the past three years
- Annual budget for staff development to show its sustainability
- Staff development activities undertaken by staff to show the implementation of staff development plan
- Evaluation of staff development plan to show the effectiveness of staff development policy
- Staff Handbook

## 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*

- Curriculum of selected new programme(s) developed in the approved programme area
- Module descriptors of the selected new programme(s) in the approved programme area
- Records showing that the level, coherence, balance and progression 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
- Findings of student survey
- External Examiner reports
- Annual programme review reports
- Overview of the learning, teaching and assessment activities of the programme in the approved programme area
- Evaluation of the attainment of intended learning outcomes of the programme in the approval programme area
- Meeting minutes / notes 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
- Initiatives supporting development of the programme area, such as strategic alliance and interdisciplinary collaboration
- Consultation with the industries and/or professions
- Internal validation reports
- Accreditation / validation / recognition of the programmes by the professional bodies
- Findings of graduate survey
- Selected programmes to demonstrate the effectiveness of programme development and management, and the implementation of the relevant processes
- Implementation of learning outcomes management system

## Domain PIR-4: Management of Resources and Services

### 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
- Priorities in resource planning in relation to the strategic plan
- Resource allocation mechanism
- Overview of human, financial, physical and information resources
- Overview of the financial resources to support the development of the programme area
- Overview of the decisions on resource allocation to support learning, teaching and assessment activities of the programmes in the approved programme area
- Meeting minutes / notes of relevant committee(s) showing the discussion on the resource planning
- Meeting minutes / notes of the relevant committee(s) showing the discussion on resource allocation
- Meeting minutes / notes of the relevant committee(s) showing the financial decisions made with considerations of the financial data and information available to the Operator
- Audited financial statements for the past three years
- Budget for the current year and next five years, together with the assumptions made and considerations in budget allocations
- 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
- Key performance indicators used for assessing the adequacy of resources
- 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
- Feedback received from stakeholders that affected the decision on resource allocation in the past three years
- Meeting minutes / notes of the relevant committee(s) showing the discussion on the feedback from stakeholders
- Summary of enhancements made to resources
- Policy on student/learner support services
- Summary of provision of student support services in the past three years, including financial aid and scholarship, academic and/or career and pastoral counselling, career planning, etc.
- Analysis of the characteristics of students who have used the support services
- Mechanisms for reviewing adequacy and effectiveness of student support services
- Improvements made to enhance student support services with reference to the analysis of the characteristics of students
- Student Handbook

## Domain PIR-5: Organisational Quality Assurance and Enhancement

### 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 / model of curriculum design including internship / placement / attachment
- Policy on student admission
- Policy on credit and demonstration of consistent implementation of the policy
- Policy on teaching and learning as well as assessment and progression
- Policy on staffing
- QA policy and manual, including learning outcome management
- Committee structure for and processes of QA, including programme development, management, and review
- Data analysis used to support review of effectiveness of operation of learning programme and organisation
- Measures indicating alignment of organisational, programme and learning outcomes.
- Records showing participation of stakeholders in the governance / management structure to ensure that feedback of stakeholders has been conveyed to the management
- Overview of engaging staff in QA
- Meeting minutes / notes showing the staff engagement in the QA processes
- 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
- Statistics and benchmarks 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
- Selected learning programmes to demonstrate the implementation of the QA mechanism related to programme quality and the quality of the student learning experience
- 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
- Statistics of education and employment pathways of graduates in the programme area throughout the validity period to show the performance of the graduates
- Samples of programme review reports to show the effectiveness of the programme review process
- Internal validation reports
- Accreditation / validation / recognition of the programmes by the professional bodies
- Records of review of programme plan to show its effectiveness and possible adjustments in response to changes
- Weaknesses identified and follow-up actions proposed in the review / monitoring reports at programme / institutional level
- Samples of stakeholder feedback, including reports of external advisors / examiners, student surveys, graduate surveys, and consultation with employers to show the implementation of feedback mechanism
- 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

- Improvements initiated by staff to address weaknesses identified for quality enhancement

# Appendix

## Graduate Profile

<b>Qualification Title</b>	
<b>Qualification Type</b>	
<b>QF Level</b>	
<b>Primary Area of Study and Training</b>	
<b>Sub-area (Primary Area of Study and Training)</b>	
<b>Other Area of Study and Training</b>	
<b>Sub-area (Other Area of Study and Training)</b>	
<b>Programme Objectives</b>	
<b>Programme Intended Learning Outcomes</b>	
<b>Education Pathways</b>	
<b>Employment Pathways</b>	
<b>Minimum Admission Requirements</b>	
<b>Operator</b>	