



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

**ACCREDITATION REPORT**

**UOW COLLEGE HONG KONG**

**PROGRAMME AREA ACCREDITATION**

**COMPUTER SCIENCE**

**AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

**MAY 2024**

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## 1. TERMS OF REFERENCE

1.1 Based on the Service Agreement (No.: AA932), the Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications (HKCAAVQ), in the capacity of the Accreditation Authority as provided for under the Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications Ordinance (Cap. 592) (AAVQO), was commissioned by the UOW College Hong Kong (Operator/the College) to conduct Programme Area Accreditation (PAA) with the following Terms of Reference:

- (a) To conduct an accreditation test as provided for in the AAVQO to determine whether the Operator can be granted the PAA status for the programme areas (as listed under the Specifications of the Programme Areas undergoing PAA in para. 1.2) for a specified validity period;
- (b) To conduct an accreditation test as provided for in the AAVQO to determine whether the programmes of the Operator (as listed under the Specifications of the programmes seeking accreditation status in para 1.3) meet the stated objectives and QF standards and can continue to be offered as accredited programmes; and
- (c) To issue to the Operator an accreditation report setting out the results of the determination in relation to (a) by HKCAAVQ.

### 1.2 Specifications of the Programme Areas undergoing PAA

<b>Area of Study and Training</b>	<b>Sub-area</b>	<b>Programme Area</b>	<b>Claimed QF level</b>
Business and Management	General Business Management	General Business Management	4
Language and Related Studies	Language and Related Studies	Language and Related Studies	4
Computer Science and Information Technology	Computer Science and Information Technology	Computer Science and Information Technology	4
Business and Management	Transports and Logistics	Transports and Logistics	4

### 1.3 Specifications of the programmes seeking accreditation status

Programme title (English and Chinese, if any)	Exit award title (English and Chinese, if any)	Mode of study	Programme length	Majors leading to distinctive awards, if any	Claimed QF level
Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Japanese Studies 日本研究 (榮譽) 文學士	Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Japanese Studies 日本研究 (榮譽) 文學士	Full-time	4 years	N/A	5
Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Chinese Language, Literature and Communication 中國語言文學及傳意 (榮譽) 文學士	Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Chinese Language, Literature and Communication 中國語言文學及傳意 (榮譽) 文學士	Full-time	4 years	N/A	5
Bachelor of Aviation (Honours) in Operations and Management 營運及管理(榮譽) 航空學士	Bachelor of Aviation (Honours) in Operations and Management 營運及管理(榮譽) 航空學士	Full-time	4 years	N/A	5

## 2. HKCAAVQ'S DETERMINATION

2.1 The accreditation report issued in accordance with paragraph 1.1(c) comprises six parts, namely this report and the five reports HKCAAVQ Report No.: 24/29, HKCAAVQ Report No.: 24/65, HKCAAVQ Report No.: 24/66, HKCAAVQ Report No. 24/68 and HKCAAVQ Report No. 24/69. Collectively, these six parts set out the results of the determination in relation to paragraph 1.1(a) and 1.1(b). This report set out the results specific to the following:

Area of Study and Training	Sub-area	Programme Area	Claimed QF level
Computer Science and Information Technology	Computer Science and Information Technology	Computer Science and Information Technology	4

HKCAAVQ has determined that, subject to the fulfilment of the conditions set out below and in para. 2.4 of HKCAAVQ Report No.: 24/29, the Operator can be granted the PAA status for the programme area in Computer Science and Information Technology at QF Level 4 under the Area of Study and Training “Computer Science and Information Technology” with a validity period of five years.

The Operator granted the PAA status is considered as meeting the HKCAAVQ accreditation standards of the institutional and programme area domains of PAA. The Operator has the institutional competencies to develop programmes meeting its strategic objectives. The Operator has robust internal processes to ensure the development and operation of learning programmes under the approved programme areas are aligned and managed in accordance with its institutional development plan, and that its learning programmes meet the stated objectives and QF standards.

## 2.2 Validity Period

- 2.2.1 The validity period will, provided that the Operator fulfils all pre-conditions to the commencement of the validity period as set out in para. 2.4 of HKCAAVQ Report No.: 24/29, commence on the date specified below. Operators may apply to HKCAAVQ to vary the commencement date of the validity period. Applications will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- 2.2.2 The maintenance of the accreditation status within the specified validity period is subject to the fulfilment of all requirements set out in para. 2.4 below and in para. 2.4 of HKCAAVQ Report No.: 24/29 by the specified deadline.

## 2.3 The determinations on the PAA status are specified as follows:

<b>Name of Operator</b>	UOW College Hong Kong
<b>Address of Operator</b>	18 Che Kung Miu Road, Tai Wai, New Territories
<b>Name of Award Granting Body</b>	UOW College Hong Kong
<b>Area of Study and Training</b>	Computer Science and Information Technology
<b>Sub-area</b>	Computer Science and Information Technology
<b>Programme Area and Scope of Programme Area</b>	<u>Computer Science and Information Technology</u> Study and training in computer and information sciences underpinned by computational

	thinking, and how they can be used in various / relevant fields.
<b>QF Level</b>	4
<b>Start Date of Validity Period</b>	1 September 2024
<b>End Date of Validity Period</b>	31 August 2029
<b>Address of Teaching / Training Venue(s)</b>	18 Che Kung Miu Road, Tai Wai, New Territories

## 2.4 Conditions

### **Requirements**

2.4.1 The Operator needs to strengthen its academic planning system to ensure that the approval and related records of the College's academic plans will undergo the processes specified in its QA documents.

For the fulfilment of the above requirement, the Operator needs to submit to HKCAAVQ **by 31 October 2024**: (para. 4.1.12)

- (a) The approved 5-year Academic Plan (2024/25-2028/29) for the PAA of Computer Science and Information Technology, and
- (b) The approved Minutes of the meeting of the highest relevant committee / board when the 5-year Academic Plan of para. (a) was approved.

2.4.2 The Operator should strengthen its system for collection and analysis of admission and other necessary data to track learners' achievement and satisfaction for an understanding of learner characteristics in order to provide learning experiences that are congruent with learner characteristics and the programmes it offers. (para. 4.2.4)

For fulfilment of the requirement above, the Operator needs to submit to HKCAAVQ **on or before 31 October 2025**:

- (a) A plan for the strengthening of its system for (i) data collection and analysis and (ii) follow up measures to be taken as needed, and

- (b) Evidence of the implementation of the plan in para. (a) starting from the 2024/25 Academic Year in general and particularly with emphasis on providing support to the new students who have problems with Mathematics due to their weak background in Mathematics at entry to the programmes of the PAA in Computer Science and Information Technology.

2.4.3 The Operator should enhance its student recruitment process and outcomes. (para. 4.2.6)

- (a) For fulfilment of the above requirement, the Operator should conduct a thorough review of its marketing position, identifying the target recruitment student groups and taking an active approach in marketing planning, and promotions, and
- (b) Should submit to HKCAAVQ **on or before 31 January each year from 2025 to 2027:**
  - (b1) a report on the review of its marketing strategy and related plans including an overview of its revised marketing strategy and related plans, and
  - (b2) a report on the implementation of the revised strategy and plans with reflection on the related outcomes with emphasis on the student recruitment numbers.

2.4.4 The Operator needs to strengthen its staff planning system to ensure that there will be sufficient number of staff for the operation in the Academic Area and in the Student Services Area.

For the fulfilment of the above requirement, the Operator needs to submit to HKCAAVQ **by 31 October 2024:** (para. 4.3.6 for the Academic Area, and para. 4.4.9 for the Student Services Area)

- (a) The approved 5-year Teaching Staff Plan (2024/25-2028/29) for the PAA of Computer Science and Information Technology, and
- (b) The approved Minutes of the meeting of the highest relevant committee / board when the 5-year Teaching Staff Plan of para. (a) was approved;
- (c) The approved 5-year Manpower Plan (2024/25-2028/29) for the Student Services, and

- (d) The approved Minutes of the meeting of the highest relevant committee / board when the 5-year Manpower Plan of para. (c) was approved.

- 2.4.5 The Operator should strengthen the monitoring and assessment of the utilisation and adequacy of all its resources such as IT and laboratory resources. (para. 4.4.8 (a))

For fulfilment of the requirement above, the Operator needs to submit to HKCAAVQ **on or before 31 October 2025** a structured system of regulations for regular monitoring and assessment of the utilisation and adequacy of all its resources to inform projective planning, including offering of new learning programmes.

- 2.4.6 The Operator should strengthen its student induction on IT services and library use to ensure the induction is effective and students' readiness and capability for IT services and library use are appropriate for their study in all programmes of the PA in Computer Science and Information Technology. (para. 4.4.8 (b))

For fulfilment of the requirement above, the Operator needs to submit to HKCAAVQ **on or before 31 October 2025**:

- (a) A plan for delivering a strengthened student induction on IT services and library use, and
- (b) Evidence of the implementation of the plan in para. (a) starting from the 2024/25 Academic Year for delivering an effective induction on IT services and library and strengthened student knowledge and understanding on the IT and library use and services they offer.

## **2.5 Recommendations**

HKCAAVQ also offers the following recommendations for continuous improvement of the Operator and the programme area:

- 2.5.1 The Panel recommended that (para. 4.3.12):
  - (a) The Operator should organise staff development sessions for the academic staff to familiarise themselves with the HKQF, and to gain consistent understanding, interpretation and application of the GLDs for the design of learning programmes within the scope of the PA, and
  - (b) The Operator should provide training to the academic staff to



ensure their understanding of the needed alignment of the SOLO approach used by the College with the requirements of the HKQF.

## **2.6 Advice**

- 2.6.1 The Panel advised the College to include in future mapping between the Programme Objectives and PILOs in the PIRs. (para. 4.2.7)

## **3. INTRODUCTION**

- 3.1 The establishment of the UOW College Hong Kong (UOWCHK / the College), formerly known as Community College of City University (CCCU), can be traced back to 2003 when the HKSAR Government commenced a phased withdrawal of Government funding for most sub-degree programmes. This led to the establishment of the CCCU which was charged with offering self-financed Associate Degrees (ADs) under the auspices of CityU. Since July 2015, the College has been part of the global network of the University of Wollongong Australia (UOW). The College was formally recognised as an approved College in Hong Kong under the Post-Secondary Colleges Ordinance (Cap. 320) in April 2019. The College obtained a government land grant in September 2016 and the new campus in Tai Wai came into full operation in the AY2023/24.

- 3.2 The Operator commissioned HKCAAVQ to conduct Programme Area Accreditation in Computer Science and Information Technology. HKCAAVQ formed an expert Panel for this accreditation exercise (Panel Membership at Appendix). A site visit took place on 31 January – 2 February 2024. The site visit was conducted in face-to-face mode except that representatives who were not in Hong Kong during the meetings joined the discussion via Zoom. The HKCAAVQ's *Manual for the Four-stage Quality Assurance Process under the Hong Kong Qualifications Framework (Version 1.1, November 2020)* was the guiding document for the Operator and the Panel in conducting this exercise.

## **4. PANEL'S DELIBERATIONS**

*The following presents the Panel's deliberations on a range of issues pertinent to its major findings. For aspects of the accreditation standards where no observations are made, they are considered to be appropriately addressed by the Operator.*

#### 4.1 Programme Area Development and Management

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

- 4.1.1 The proposed programme area seeking PAA status at QF Level 4 is 'Computer Science and Information Technology'. Referring to the illustrative scope statement of the related sub-area, the Operator proposed the scope of Computer Science and Information Technology as follows:

Computer Science and Information Technology  
Study and training in computer and information sciences underpinned by computational thinking, and how they can be used in various / relevant fields.

- 4.1.2 The Operator commenced delivering associate degree programmes in this learning area in 2004, initially awarding City University of Hong Kong (CityU) qualifications. These learning programmes were accredited by HKCAAVQ in 2016 and were successfully re-accredited in 2019. Apart from the AD programmes, the Faculty also had two higher diploma (HD) programmes accredited in 2020. Information about the programmes within the proposed Programme Area is included in the table on the following page.

- 4.1.3 The Panel noted the track record of the Operator in offering the existing programmes listed in the table below. Having reviewed the scope statement and compared it with the subject matters covered by these programmes, the Panel considered that the scope of the programme area can be appropriately delineated by the proposed scope statement.

<b>Titles of Qualifications</b>	Associate of Science in Information Systems Development	Higher Diploma in Application Systems Development
	Associate of Science in Network and Systems Administration	Higher Diploma in Computer Network and Systems Administration
	Associate of Engineering	

<b>Validity Period</b>	1 September 2017 - 31 August 2024	1 September 2020 – 31 August 2024
<b>Primary Area of Study and Training</b>	Computer Science and Information Technology	Computer Science and Information Technology
<b>Sub-area (Primary Area of Study and Training)</b>	Computer Science and Information Technology	Computer Science and Information Technology
<b>QF Level</b>	Level 4	Level 4
<b>QF Credits</b>	290	290
<b>Mode(s) of Delivery and Programme Length</b>	Full-time, 2 years	Full-time, 2 years
<b>Number of Enrolment(s)</b>	One enrolment per year	One enrolment per year

- 4.1.4 The student enrolments as well as the attrition rates of the programmes under this PA from 2018/19 to 2022/23 have been reviewed and considered as on par.
- 4.1.5 The overview of the graduate outcomes for the programmes of this PA shows that, the total percentage of graduates articulating to further bachelor's degree study or getting employment is within the range from 73% to 90%. Given the consistently positive graduate outcomes over the reported 5-year period, this data provides strong evidence that the learning programmes have successfully delivered their programme objectives through equipping students with a comprehensive knowledge base and the requisite specialised skills, enabling them to pursue either further studies in their chosen field or secure employment within a relevant field.
- 4.1.6 To establish a solid foundation for the 5-Year Development Plan, the Faculty of Science and Technology conducted a SWOT analysis, analysed historical admission data, and gathered input from key stakeholders. The analysis also took into account available resources, such as teaching and administrative staff, facilities, IT infrastructure, and amenities for student activities.
- 4.1.7 Regarding the Academic Plan, the Operator submitted information for total student numbers including both Year 1 and Year 2 in their Higher Diploma and Associate of Science programmes but without the requested evidence of the approval of this submission.

- 4.1.8 As for the economy of scale in operation for the Higher Diploma programmes, since the projected intakes are limited, no additional resources are required for their operation as their curricula largely overlap in core courses with the Associate of Science programmes, and they also share language and general education courses with other programmes. The total planned student numbers are considered as feasible.
- 4.1.9 Despite the demographic downturn in the number of DSE students and the heightened competitiveness in the local tertiary educational landscape, the Faculty of Science and Technology is confident in its ability to attract a significant number of students in the future. Its confidence stems from its strategic initiative to revise the existing programmes and establish new ones, as detailed in its five-year plan.
- 4.1.10 While it can be recognised that the College plans strategically and drives the organisation to achieve its objectives, the academic planning in the PA in Computer Science and Information Technology needs much more attention, better structured systematic work, and enhanced and documented processes.
- 4.1.11 The Panel considered that the College should review and enhance its procedures and processes in the area of academic planning. The Panel therefore stipulated a requirement as follows:

**Requirement**

- 4.1.12 The Operator needs to strengthen its academic planning system to ensure that the approval and related records of the College's academic plans will undergo the processes specified in its QA documents.

For the fulfilment of the above requirement, the Operator needs to submit to HKCAAVQ by **31 October 2024**:

- (a) The approved 5-year Academic Plan (2024/25-2028/29) for the PAA of Computer Science and Information Technology, and
  - (b) The approved Minutes of the meeting of the highest relevant committee / board when the 5-year Academic Plan of para. (a) was approved.
- 4.1.13 Other than the issue of academic planning which is addressed in para. 4.1.12, the Panel was of the view that the College is, in general, able to substantiate the proposed programme area by its track record of operation of QF-recognised learning programmes in relevant discipline and industry areas, in alignment with organisational objectives and planned resources.

## 4.2 Learning, Teaching and Assessment

*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.*

- 4.2.1 In order to comprehensively understand students' abilities, progress, and needs, the College gathers data from various stages of their academic journey, including post-graduation. This data collection process not only encompasses intake numbers for faculties and programmes but also maintains admission records for further analysis. Faculty administrative staff and programme leaders are tasked with submitting annual admission data, such as the average DSE score of admitted students and the percentage of those who achieved Level 3 or above in the English language DSE. This crucial information helps the College construct a detailed profile of new entrants, which is indispensable when reviewing or creating academic plans. Moreover, to ensure a thorough understanding of each academic programme, additional statistics are compiled throughout the two-year operation of each programme. For a more concrete example, the College submitted information for the admission data, attrition rates, and graduation award distribution for all academic programmes in this PAA during the 2021-2022 academic year.
- 4.2.2 The Operator's analysis of the relatively high attrition rates after Year 1 of study shows that "a significant portion of the attrition could be attributed to the lower mathematical abilities of incoming students. Many students struggled with mathematics courses such as calculus and algebra, resulting in failed or poor results". However, the Panel observed that, even given the technical nature of the programmes in this PA, Mathematics is not included in the admission requirements, and admission data related to Mathematics are not collected and analysed.
- 4.2.3 The Panel considered that the College should review and enhance its procedures and processes in the area of collection and analysis of admission and other data necessary to track learner's achievements. The Panel therefore stipulated a requirement as follows:
- Requirement**
- 4.2.4 The Operator should strengthen its system for collection and analysis of admission and other necessary data to track learners' achievement and satisfaction for an understanding of learner characteristics in order to provide learning experiences that are congruent with learner characteristics and the programmes it offers.

For fulfilment of the requirement above, the Operator needs to submit to HKCAAVQ **on or before 31 October 2025**:

- (a) A plan for the strengthening of its system for (i) data collection and analysis and (ii) follow up measures to be taken as needed, and
- (b) Evidence of the implementation of the plan in para. (a) starting from the 2024/25 Academic Year in general and particularly with emphasis on providing support to the new students who have problems with Mathematics due to their weak background in Mathematics at entry to the programmes of the PA in Computer Science and Information Technology.

4.2.5 The Panel also observed that the Operator was not able to clearly articulate its student recruitment process and to demonstrate it as an integral component with a successful outcome of the Operator's marketing position. The Panel therefore stipulated a requirement as follows:

#### **Requirement**

4.2.6 The Operator should enhance its student recruitment process and outcomes.

- (a) For fulfilment of the requirement above, the Operator should conduct a thorough review of its marketing position, identifying the target recruitment student groups and taking an active approach in marketing planning, and promotions, and
- (b) Should submit to HKCAAVQ **on or before 31 January each year from 2025 to 2027**:
  - (b1) a report on the review of its marketing strategy and related plans including an overview of its revised marketing strategy and related plans, and
  - (b2) a report on the implementation of the revised strategy and plans with reflection on the related outcomes with emphasis on the student recruitment numbers.

4.2.7 UOWCHK employs an outcome-based teaching and learning (OBTL) approach, which prioritises student-centered learning over traditional teaching methods. Central to this approach is the use of learning outcomes as the primary measure of learning articulation. To implement OBTL effectively, the College primarily relies on the Structure of Observed Learning Outcomes (SOLO) framework

(Biggs & Tang, 2007) for designing teaching and learning activities as well as assessment tasks. This ensures that students are guided to develop and achieve intended learning outcomes for all courses within the listed academic programmes, ultimately leading to the accomplishment of the programme learning outcomes (PILOs). The SOLO taxonomy offers a methodical way to describe the progressive complexity of a learner's performance as they master various learning tasks within an academic programme. This taxonomy classifies the verbs used to describe course intended learning outcomes (CILOs) competencies into five hierarchical levels, ranging from the 'pre-structural level' to the highest 'extended abstract level'. The relations between the PILOs and various categories relevant for programme design (such as graduate attributes, EDB's Common Descriptors for Associate Degrees or Higher Diploma programmes, and the GLDs at QFL4) are described in the Programme Information Record (PIR). The College submitted the PIRs for all programmes of the PA in Computer Science and Information Technology for implementation from 2024/25. It could be noted that the PIRs do not present mapping between the Programme Objectives and the PILOs which is regarded as a useful tool for ensuring attainment of the Programme Objectives and through them attainment of the College educational goals. **The Panel advised the College to include mapping between the Programme Objectives and PILOs in the PIRs in future.**

- 4.2.8 At a course level, building on the SOLO taxonomy, as described above, the College has developed a scheme to determine the level (A1 or A2) of the courses in its AD and HD programmes. This ensures conceptual consistency and also the alignment of 'level' with other components such as course intended learning outcomes (CILOs), teaching and learning activities (TLAs) and assessment tasks (ATs) designed to help students develop and achieve the respective CILOs. However, it was observed that in the discussion with the teaching staff on the issues of programme design and evaluation of attainment of CILOs and PILOs at the claimed QFL, some staff may not be well versed with the premises of the HKQF **(Note)**.

**Note:** This issue has been revisited in the domain "Staffing and Staff Development" where a recommendation is defined in order to ensure appropriate teaching staff's familiarisation with, and preparedness for implementation of the features and requirements of, the HKQF.

- 4.2.9 For teaching and learning, the College employs a wide range of strategies including interactive lectures, project work, problem-solving exercises, case studies, questioning, discussion/scenario questioning, and role play/simulation activities.
- 4.2.10 A wide range of assessments are also employed in the courses of this PA including group and individual assignments (for example: presentations, projects and reports), tutorial and in-class exercises,

take-home assignments, and tests and examinations. The pedagogical and assessment methods employed in individual courses are outlined in their respective Course Information Records (CIRs). The College submitted the CIRs for all courses of the programme in the PA in General Business Management for implementation in 2024/25. The CIRs provide rich information including the mapping of the CILOs with the teaching and learning activities, assessment tasks and activities, and the course syllabus enabling the students and lecturers to be fully aware of, and focused on, delivery and assessment which support students' attainment of the CILOs and, through them, the PILOs. In addition, the College provided the course outlines from 2022/23 – the course outlines enrich further the information on all practical details (as teaching, tutorial and assessment schedules). Also, the College provided samples of sets of assessment documents to demonstrate the utilisation of a range of valid and reliable assessment methods used in the courses of this PA. Each set of those documents contains the Course Information Record, the Course Outline, the assignment information, test papers and corresponding marking schemes or rubrics, a record of moderation (if applicable), and the examination paper and examination control form.

- 4.2.11 The College implemented some novel teaching and learning ideas in recent years and they revolve mostly around the utilisation of electronic educational tools, the iBlended elements. A number of courses in this PA have adopted iBlended elements. Regarding the promotion of iBlended Learning at the College, substantial progress has been made in the areas of curriculum redesign, digital innovation, support and learning, and evaluation. In summary, the incorporation of iBlended learning elements has made it possible to create learning and teaching activities, and assessments that enhance student learning engagement (synchronous mode) and self-directed learning (asynchronous mode).
- 4.2.12 The Panel reviewed all materials mentioned above and formed the view that effective approaches / methodologies / mechanisms are in place for teaching, learning and assessment in the courses of this PA.
- 4.2.13 Based on the above information, and other than the issues stated in the requirements, and notwithstanding the recommendations and the advice given, the Panel considered that the Operator has, in general, established 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.

### **4.3 Staffing and Staff Development**

*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.*

### Staffing

4.3.1 The projected staffing plan has been prepared based on the projected student population, the staff-student ratio (SSR) of the programmes to be offered in this PA, and involvement in administrative, research and scholarly development work of the academic staff.

4.3.2 The projected total student enrolments were shown in Table 3.5 / Volume 1 of the Programme Area Accreditation Document and are copied below for reference.

<b>Programme Area: Computer Science and Information Technology</b>					
<b>Projected Enrolments: 2024/25 – 2028/29</b>					
2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29
125	135	145	145	145	140

4.3.3 The projected number of staff in this PA were shown in Table 3.6 / Volume 1 of the Programme Area Accreditation Document and are copied below for reference.

<b>Programme Area: Computer Science and Information Technology</b>					
<b>Projected Number of FTE Academic Staff: 2024/25 – 2028/29</b>					
2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29
4.5	4.7	5.0	5.1	5.1	4.9

4.3.4 It could be observed from the information provided in the Programme Area Accreditation Document (Table 3.3 / Volume 1) that there is a drastic decrease in the number of teaching staff in the Programme Area from 15 (for 123 students and a Staff Student Ratio of 8.2) in AY2022/23 to 4.5 (for 125 students and a Staff Student Ratio of 27.7) in AY2023/24.

4.3.5 It could further be observed from the Staff Profile for this Programme Area (Table 3.4 / Volume 1 of the Programme Area Accreditation Document) that there are in total 6 Full-time (FT) and 4 Part-time (PT) teaching staff so it is not clear how this number aligns with the information of 4.5 teaching staff in para. 4.3.3. above.

4.3.6 Furthermore, the staffing plan does not provide information on the planned staff number per rank in the coming 5-year period and how the staff planning will contribute to the enhancement of the capabilities of the academic team in terms of programme development, teaching, and research. The Panel asked how the academic team is coping with the heavy workload, whether the projected staff numbers would be sufficient for delivery of the

programmes, and whether any analysis was conducted on the sufficiency of academic staff in terms of covering the total number of teaching hours and the specialism areas included in the programmes. Some College representatives replied that, given the decrease in student numbers in the past period, their workload is now manageable while other representatives felt that they were overloaded with work. Also, the Panel did not get answers on whether and how the projected number of academic staff will cover the teaching hours in the coming period. The Panel is of the view that the information on staff sufficiency could not have been analysed meaningfully due to the format of presentation of the information provided. The Panel stipulated a requirement as follows:

### **Requirement**

The Operator needs to strengthen its staff planning system to ensure that there will be sufficient number of staff for the operation in the Academic Area.

For the fulfilment of the above requirement , the Operator needs to submit to HKCAAVQ **by 31 October 2024**:

- (a) The approved 5-year Teaching Staff Plan (2024/25 – 2028/29) for the Programme Area of Computer Science and Information Technology, and
- (b) The approved Minutes of the meeting of the highest relevant committee / board when the 5-year Teaching Staff Plan of para. (a) was approved.

4.3.7 The maximum weekly workload for teaching staff, including teaching, associated administrative responsibilities, research and professional services is 44 hours. As shown in the table below, except for Programme Leaders who are given a one-hour reduction in the teaching load, the teaching load across-the-board is 18 hours per week for staff teaching non-degree courses. Academic staff on the professorial scale are awarded a two to four-hour teaching reduction in order to enable them to engage in research work and publication, and the teaching load of professors who are required to prioritise their research activities is typically six to eight hours per week. More details on teaching load distribution are included in the Policy on Staff Teaching Workload. However, details about the time allocation for teaching preparation, administrative work, and involvement in research of academic staff who are not on the professorial scale are not provided.

<b>Workload of Teaching Staff for Sub-degree Programmes (Hours per Week)</b>			
<b>Rank/Post</b>	<b>Maximum Teaching Load</b>	<b>Maximum Administrative &amp; Research Load</b>	<b>Maximum of Overall Load (Teaching Load and Administrative Load)</b>
<b>Senior Management</b>	/	/	44
<b>Dean/Associate Dean</b>	6	38	44
<b>Programme Leader</b>	17	27	44
<b>Academic Staff including course coordinator, and teacher</b>	18	26	44
<b>Administrative and Supporting Staff</b>	/	/	44

4.3.8 The number of full-time academic staff in the Faculty of Science and Technology in 2023/24 is 9 and 33.3% of them possess a relevant doctoral degree while 70% have degree teaching experience. 6 of those full-time academic staff teach courses under the Programme Area of Computer Science and Information Technology. 50% of them have a relevant doctoral degree and 66.6% have over 15 years of teaching experience in higher education. The distribution of the full-time academic staff per rank in the Faculty of Science and Technology is given in the table below.

<b>Numbers and Qualifications of the Full-time Academic Staff in the Faculty of Science and Technology</b>		
<b>Rank</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Number (%) with Doctorate degree</b>
Professor	1	1 (100%)
Associate Professor	0	-
Assistant Professor	2	2 (100%)
Teaching Associate	0	-
Principal Lecturer	0	-
Senior Lecturer	1	-
Lecturer	4	-
Assistant Lecturer	1	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>3 (33.3%)</b>

#### Staff Development

4.3.9 Staff development at the College is understood as any activity for enhancing the knowledge, skills and organisational development, and which assists the College in achieving its Vision, Mission and Strategic Plan. Based upon this definition, the College developed the “Staff Development Principles and Policies” (included in the appendices) which are implemented by the Staff Development Committee.

4.3.10 Given that teaching and learning is core to the attainment of the institutional Vision and Mission, the College has an ongoing series of training workshops/seminars to upskill academic staff in these areas. Over the past three years, the focus has understandably been upon developing staff capabilities in blended delivery. A summary on numbers of activities and staff attending them is presented in the table below while the details are submitted in the appendices. During the period from 2019 to 2021, a total of 44 training sessions (33 in pedagogy and 11 in assessments) were conducted for the teaching staff in the Programme Area in Computer Science and Information Technology.

<b>Programme Area in Computer Science and Information Technology</b>						
<b>Training in</b>	<b>No. of Activities</b>			<b>No. of Participants</b>		
	2019	2020	2021	2019	2020	2021
<b>Pedagogy</b>	8	14	11	37	15	11
<b>Total</b>	33			63		
<b>Assessment</b>	6	1	4	30	2	5
<b>Total</b>	11			37		

4.3.11 The College has included in the appendices a 5-year Staff Development Plan 2023/24-2027/28 with a pilot project in 2022/23. The Plan includes a series of 15 workshops/seminars mostly covering blended learning pedagogy and assessment design, but the College will also invest in equipment and software to make the class more interactive and virtual, such as the use of Augmented Reality (AR)/Virtual Reality (VR) devices for more immersive teaching, and gamification to make collaboration more interactive. The Plan will also include the topic of Work-based Learning in preparation for the teaching staff for the introduction of Higher Diploma programmes.

4.3.12 Also, it can be noted that the 5-year Staff Development Plan does not include activities related to teaching staff familiarisation with, and strengthening of understanding and readiness for implementation of, the requirements of the HKQF. As the programme design is fully based on the fulfilment of such requirements, and as the discussion with the staff representatives on issues of programme design and evaluation of the attainment of CILOs and PILOs at the claimed QFL highlighted approaches of which the staff could not demonstrate full understanding, **the Panel therefore recommended that**

- (a) The Operator should organise staff development sessions for the academic staff to familiarise themselves with the HKQF, and to gain consistent understanding, interpretation and application of the GLDs for the design of learning programmes within the scope of the PA, and

- (b) The Operator should provide training to staff to ensure their understanding of the needed alignment of the SOLO approach used by the College with the requirements of the HKQF.
- 4.3.13 The College allocates annually a budget to support staff development both in terms of professional enhancement and qualification attainment. Subject to the availability of resources, the College sets aside HKD\$1 million per financial year to promote and support staff development. Staff are made aware of the efficacy and importance of staff development, advised on relevant policies and practices, and advised on how to apply for funding support in the 'Guidelines and Procedures for Approving Staff Development' included in the appendices. The staff development activities are linked to staff members' attendance at conferences, workshops, seminars, academic paper publications, and further education in relevant programmes on a part-time basis. It is worth noting that, commencing in 2019, UOW offered the College's full-time academic and administrative staff the opportunity to pursue doctoral degree with the waiver of tuition fees.
- 4.3.14 On being formally recognised as a Cap. 320 institution in April 2019, the College became immediately eligible for external research funding from the Research Grants Council, thus triggering its entry into an institutional research culture. In anticipation of this development, the College had earlier introduced a professorial grade scale and teachers on the Lecturer scale interested in the possibility of undertaking research in addition to their teaching duties were invited to apply for transfer to the new scale. The Panel noted the efforts taken by the College to build research culture and observed that the College is still in the early stages of developing an appropriate ecosystem, structure and staffing for supporting its research work.
- 4.3.15 Other than the issue stated in the requirement and notwithstanding the recommendation given, the Operator has, in general, a suitably qualified and competent workforce for delivering the programmes in the proposed programme and ensuring its sustainability.

#### **4.4 Programme Area Resources and Services**

*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.*

- 4.4.1 In accordance with its Mission, the College commits resources to provide a dynamic, well-appointed educational environment wherein students can realise their full academic potential. It should be noted

that, given the scale of the College, facilities and resource management is conducted at the institutional level. As a modest-sized private self-funding institution, this ensures both operational efficiency and resource sufficiency. The College has set up a policy and system for resource planning with a goal to ensure the smooth delivery of teaching, research, and other activities related to its mission including student support services both at the institutional and programme level.

- 4.4.2 The system of resource planning comprises
- a policy in resource deployment and allocation
  - resource planning committee framework (including Resource Planning Committee and two supplementary committees: Facilities Planning and Development Committee (FPD) and Information Technology Service Committee (ITS))
  - reference to findings from utilisation monitoring and analysis (input is provided by students through regular student surveys; by Programme and Facilities committees; and academic and support staff)
  - financial plan underpinning facilities development (the operating cost can be categorised under (a) staffing costs, (b) non-staffing costs, (c) indirect costs/on-costs, (d) accommodation costs, and (e) staff development and research), and
  - policies and procedures for procurement and acquisition of resources.
- 4.4.3 In the Programme Area in Computer Science and Technology, the financial plan focuses on allocating sufficient resources for staffing costs (staffing and staff development), library resources and dedicated software to support both existing programmes and planned new programmes (i.e. Higher Diploma in Applied Artificial Intelligence, Higher Diploma in Creative Media and Game Design, Higher Diploma in Cybersecurity, Higher Diploma in Cloud Computing, etc.). The procurement plan for the programme area from 2023 to 2028 was presented and was considered to be able to serve the programme delivery needs.
- 4.4.4 Following the successful bid for the Tai Wai site in the Government's Land Grant Scheme (LGS) on 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2016, the new Tai Wai campus came into operation in September 2023. The Campus is a fit-for-purpose and high-quality study environment able to accommodate a seating capacity of 3,300, consisting of 2,184 for teaching and 819 for self-learning purposes. The College organised a tour of the Campus and noted that it is furnished with seven large classrooms that have a seating capacity of 809; 32 classrooms with a seating capacity of 15-30; five computer laboratories, and seven specialised laboratories including Engineering Laboratory, Language Laboratory, Design Studio, Social Work Skills Laboratory, Aviation Laboratory, Artificial Intelligence Laboratory and Maritime Simulation Laboratory. There is also a library, and student amenities including fitness, dancing and music rooms.

- 4.4.5 The Tai Wai Campus library has state-of-the-art resources, including a comprehensive book and periodical collection, extensive multi-media and online services, and generous study spaces. Within its design and operational planning the College sought assistance from the UOW's Library team to ensure that this new library is of high quality. The library collection for the Programme Area in Computer Science and Technology is presented in the table below - it demonstrates that there are sufficient physical and digital books available to accommodate the ongoing enrolment of students within the programme area. The College also regularly updates the collection based on feedback from stakeholders to ensure that it meets the evolving needs of the College scholarly community.

<b>Library Collection for the Programme Area in Computer Science and Information Technology</b>			
<b>Programme</b>	<b>Book</b>	<b>E-Book</b>	<b>E-Journal</b>
<b>HD in Application Systems Development</b>	14	18,520	211
<b>HD in Computer Network and Systems Administration</b>	32	16,423	369
<b>Associate of Engineering</b>	5	13,044	125
<b>ASc in Information Systems Development</b>	44	57,240	1,014
<b>ASc in Network and Systems Administration</b>	1	2,435	17
<b>Total</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>107,662</b>	<b>1,736</b>

- 4.4.6 In terms of the provision of information technology services, the College recognises the importance of information technologies in teaching, research and administration and adopts UOW's policy which provides an extensive range of IT services and facilities to support the Mission of the College. The use of all IT services is governed by UOW policies and the laws of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. The IT policy applies to all students, staff and other persons given access to the IT services to ensure that the facilities are securely and properly used. Every full-time member of the teaching staff at the College is provided with a computer pre-installed with the latest software and Internet access is provided on all campus premises. Students also have easy access to computers and a variety of software packages on campus. The IT facilities are specifically designed to facilitate collaborative work, screen mirroring for presentations via Wi-Fi, and class interaction using interactive flat panels and students' mobile phones. This setup is ideal for training collaboration skills and implementing outcome-based learning and blended learning, which is particularly suitable for young learners because it is a mix of face-to-face and e-learning.
- 4.4.7 The College's IT infra-structure provides wide range of services and systems such as
- IT Support and Learning Portals

- Student Record Management System
- Student and Staff e-Portals
- Timetabling System
- College Programme Management System
- Marketing Tool SugarCRM
- Staff Intranet and Ancillary Systems

4.4.8 As stated earlier (para. 4.4.2), the College has set up a system for resource planning and, within this system, reference is made to findings from utilisation monitoring and analysis (with input provided by students through regular student surveys; by Programme and Facilities committees; and academic and support staff). The related appendices provided by the College are for 2019, 2020 and 2021 when the College operated on the old campuses thus observations could not be made about the present services and student satisfaction on the resources and related services. On the other hand, it was noted from the discussion with staff and student representatives that, with the fast pace of IT development, there is a need of more regular updating

- (a) of IT and laboratory resources, and
- (b) of information distribution for their use.

The Panel stipulated related requirements as follows:

#### **Requirement**

- (a) The Operator should strengthen the monitoring and assessment of the utilisation and adequacy of all its resources such as IT and laboratory resources.

For fulfilment of the requirement above, the Operator needs to submit to HKCAAVQ **on or before 31 October 2025** a structured system of regulations for regular monitoring and assessment of the utilisation and adequacy of all its resources to inform projective planning, including offering of new learning programmes.

- (b) The Operator should strengthen its student induction on IT services and library use to ensure the induction is effective and students' readiness and capability for IT services and library use are appropriate for their study in all programmes of the PA in Computer Science and Information Technology.

For fulfilment of the requirement above, the Operator needs to submit to HKCAAVQ **on or before 31 October 2025**:

- (b1) A plan for delivering a strengthened student induction on IT services and library use, and



- (b2) Evidence of the implementation of the plan in para. (b1) starting from the 2024/25 Academic Year for delivering an effective induction on IT services and library and strengthened student knowledge and understanding on the IT and library use and services they offer.

4.4.9 The student services at the College aim to support the development of a dynamic and purposeful campus culture. The student services are coordinated by the Student Development Services. During the Campus Tour, and in the discussions with staff and student representatives, the Panel noted that the College needs to strengthen their provision of resources and support for Student Services. The Panel set up a requirement as follows:

#### **Requirement**

The Operator needs to strengthen its staff planning system to ensure that there will be a sufficient number of staff for the operation in the Student Services Area.

For the fulfilment of the above requirement, the Operator is to submit to HKCAAVQ **by 31 October 2024**:

- (a) The approved 5-year Manpower Plan (2024/25-2028/29) for the Student Services, and
- (b) The approved Minutes of the meeting of the highest relevant committee / board when the 5-year Manpower Plan of para. (a) was approved.

## **5. IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING THIS ACCREDITATION REPORT**

### **5.1 Variation and withdrawal of this Accreditation Report**

- (a) This Accreditation Report is issued pursuant to section 5 of the AAVQO, and contains HKCAAVQ's substantive determination regarding the accreditation, including the validity period as well as any conditions and restrictions subject to which the determination is to have effect.
- (b) HKCAAVQ may subsequently decide to vary or withdraw this Accreditation Report if it is satisfied that any of the grounds set out in section 5(2) of the AAVQO apply. This includes where HKCAAVQ is satisfied that the Operator is no longer competent to achieve the relevant objectives and/or the Programme no longer meets the

standard to achieve the relevant objectives as claimed by the Operator (whether by reference to the Operator's failure to fulfil any conditions and/or comply with any restrictions stipulated in this Accreditation Report or otherwise) or where at any time during the validity period there has/have been substantial change(s) introduced by the Operator after HKCAAVQ has issued the accreditation report(s) to the Operator and which has/have not been approved by HKCAAVQ. Please refer to the '*Guidance Notes on Substantial Change to Accreditation Status*' in seeking approval for proposed changes. These Guidance Notes can be downloaded from the HKCAAVQ website.

- (c) If HKCAAVQ decides to vary or withdraw this Accreditation Report, it will give the Operator notice of such variation or withdrawal pursuant to section 5(4) of the AAVQO.
- (d) The accreditation status of the programme area will lapse immediately upon the expiry of the validity period or upon the issuance of a notice of withdrawal of this Accreditation Report.

## **5.2 Appeals**

- (a) If the Operator is aggrieved by the determination made in this Accreditation Report, then pursuant to Part 3 of the AAVQO the Operator has a right of appeal to the Appeal Board. Any appeal must be lodged within 30 days of the receipt of this Accreditation Report.
- (b) If the Operator is aggrieved by a decision to vary or withdraw this Accreditation Report, then pursuant to Part 3 of the AAVQO the Operator has a right of appeal to the Appeal Board. Any appeal must be lodged within 30 days of the receipt of the Notice of Withdrawal.
- (c) The Operator should be aware that a notice of variation or withdrawal of this Accreditation Report is not itself an accreditation report and the right to appeal against HKCAAVQ's substantive determination regarding accreditation arises only from this Accreditation Report.
- (d) Please refer to Cap. 592A (<http://www.legislation.gov.hk>) for the appeal rules. Details of the appeal procedure are contained in section 13 of the AAVQO and can be accessed from the QF website at <http://www.hkqf.gov.hk>.

### **5.3 Qualifications Register**

- (a) The PAA status as defined by the approved programme area(s) will enable the Operator to offer programmes up to the QF level specified for the approved programme area(s) without prior learning programme accreditation. The programmes offered by the Operator up to the QF level specified for the approved programme area(s) are eligible for entry into the Qualifications Register (QR). All other programmes offered by the named Operator falling outside the approved programme area(s) and which have not obtained accreditation status will not be considered as accredited programmes.
- (b) Upon completion of relevant procedures by Operators as determined by the QR Authority, Operators may enter the qualifications covered within the scope of the PAA status into the QR at <http://www.hkqr.gov.hk> for recognition under the Hong Kong Qualifications Framework.
- (c) Only learners who commence the study of a qualification covered within the scope of the PAA status during the validity period and who have graduated with the qualification listed in the QR will be considered to have acquired a qualification recognised under the QF.

Ref: 107/16/01b

27 May 2024

JoH/AnC/SuP/SaC

**UOW College Hong Kong:  
Programme Area Accreditation in Computer Science and Information Technology  
and  
UOW College Hong Kong and University of Wollongong:  
Learning Programme Re-Accreditation for Bachelor in Computer Science**

**31 January – 2 February 2024**

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