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

ACCREDITATION REPORT

HKCT INSTITUTE OF HIGHER EDUCATION

**INITIAL EVALUATION AND
LEARNING PROGRAMME ACCREDITATION**

MASTER OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

AUGUST 2024

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1.   TERMS OF REFERENCE

1.1   Based on the Service Agreement (No.: AA995), 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 HKCT Institute of Higher Education (CTIHE/ the Institute/ the Operator) to conduct a combined exercise of Initial Evaluation and Learning Programme Accreditation with the following Terms of Reference:

(a)   To conduct an accreditation test as provided for in the AAVQO to determine whether the Operator meets the stated objectives and is competent to operate learning programmes that meet the QF Level 6 standards, and can be granted Initial Evaluation Status at QF Level 6;

(b)   To conduct an accreditation test as provided for in the AAVQO to determine whether the Master of Social Sciences programme (MSS/ the Programme) of the Operator (with specifications below) meets the stated objectives and QF standards and can be offered as an accredited programme; and

(c)   To issue to the Operator an accreditation report setting out the results of the determination in relation to (a) and (b) by HKCAAVQ.

Specifications of the programme seeking accreditation status

Programme title (English and Chinese)	Award title on exit (English and Chinese)	Mode of study	Programme length	Stream(s) leading to distinctive awards, if any	Claimed QF level
Master of Social Sciences 社會科學碩士	1. Master of Social Sciences (Career Counselling) 社會科學碩士(職涯輔導) 2. Master of Social Sciences (Social	Full-time	1 year	1. Career Counselling 2. Social Service Management 3. Teaching Practice*@	6

Programme title (English and Chinese)	Award title on exit (English and Chinese)	Mode of study	Programme length	Stream(s) leading to distinctive awards, if any	Claimed QF level
	Service Management) 社會科學碩士(社會服務管理) 3. Master of Social Sciences (Teaching Practice)*@ 社會科學碩士 (教學實踐)*@	Part-time	2 years		
	Postgraduate Certificate in Social Sciences^ 社會科學深造證書^	Full-time	1 year	N/A	6
		Part-time	2 years		
	Postgraduate Diploma in Social Sciences^ 社會科學深造文憑^	Full-time	1 year	N/A	6
		Part-time	2 years		

^ Intermediate exit award

* *The Institute is to review and revise the award title and stream title for the Teaching Practice stream as stipulated in Para. 4.5.5 and 4.5.6.*

@*The teaching practice stream and the corresponding award title, "Master of Social Sciences (Teaching Practice)", were removed from the Programme upon fulfillment of the Pre-condition for offering it as an accredited programme. This remark is added to this published version of the accreditation report to clarify the streams and qualification titles available from the accredited programme.*

2. HKCAAVQ'S DETERMINATION

Initial Evaluation

2.1 HKCAAVQ has determined that, subject to the fulfilment of the conditions set out below, the Operator meets the stated objectives and is competent to operate learning programmes that meet the QF Level 6 standard, and can be granted an Initial Evaluation (IE) status at QF Level 6.

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 set out in Section 2.4, 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 Section 2.4 by the specified deadline.

2.3   The determinations of the IE status are specified as follows:

Name of Local Operator	HKCT Institute of Higher Education 港專學院
Address of Local Operator	(1) HKCT Jockey Club Undergraduate Campus 2 On Shing Street, Ma On Shan, Sha Tin, New Territories (2) HKCT Jockey Club Ma On Shan Campus Yiu On Estate, 2 Hang Hong Street, Ma On Shan, Sha Tin, New Territories (3) Shek Mun Learning Centre 15/F, Corporation Park, 11 On Lai Street, Sha Tin, New Territories
Highest QF Level of programme(s) which the Operator can operate upon successful learning programme accreditation	Level 6
Start date of 2-year validity period of Initial Evaluation (IE) accreditation status	1 September 2025
Scope of IE Accreditation Status	For local programmes operating in Hong Kong

2.4   **Conditions**

2.4.1   Pre-condition

2.4.1.1 The Operator is to (i) conduct an up-to-date gap analysis and institutional benchmarking study on its competency in operating learning programmes at QF Level 6, (ii) review and revise as appropriate the coming 5-year planning and strategies relating to the development and introduction of QF Level 6 education and the management and delivery of postgraduate programmes, including but not limited to the governance structure, Terms of Reference and composition of each committee, strategic hiring plan of academic and administrative staff at all levels, plan for cultivation of research culture and capacity as well as staff professional development plan, and to (iii) establish and adopt a systematic approach to develop associated operational plans and resource plans for the implementation of the 5-year strategic plan in (ii) above. (Para. 4.1.7)

For the fulfilment of the above pre-condition, the Operator is to submit the following to HKCAAVQ:

(i)   a progress report on the preparation of the gap analysis, institutional benchmarking study and the review of the 5-year strategic plan with relevant deliberation and approval records **on or before 30 September 2024**; and

(ii)   the completed gap analysis and institutional benchmarking study, the latest 5-year strategic plan, and documentary evidence demonstrating the implementation of any action items arising from the above as appropriate, with relevant deliberation and approval records **on or before 20 June 2025**.

2.4.2   Requirement

2.4.2.1 The Operator is to provide annual documentary evidence to demonstrate the implementation and subsequent review of the 5-year strategic plan to ensure it continues to be competent to operate learning programmes at QF Level 6. (Para. 4.1.7)

For the fulfilment of the above requirement, the Operator is to submit an annual report with relevant deliberation and approval records to HKCAAVQ **on or before 1 August each year from 2026 to 2028**.

Learning Programme Accreditation

2.5   HKCAAVQ has determined that, subject to the fulfilment of the conditions set out below, the Programme meets the stated objectives and QF standard at Level 6. Subject to the approval by the Chief Executive in Council, the Programme can be offered as an accredited programme with a validity period of three years.

2.6   **Validity Period**

2.6.1 The validity period will, provided the Operator fulfils all pre-conditions to the commencement of validity period as set out in Section 2.8, 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.

2.7   The determinations on the Programme are specified as follows:

Name of Operator	HKCT Institute of Higher Education 港專學院
Name of Award Granting Body	HKCT Institute of Higher Education 港專學院
Title of Learning Programme	Master of Social Sciences 社會科學碩士
Title of Qualifications [Exit Awards]	Master of Social Sciences (Career Counselling) 社會科學碩士(職涯輔導)
	Master of Social Sciences (Social Service Management) 社會科學碩士(社會服務管理)
	Master of Social Sciences (Teaching Practice)*@ 社會科學碩士(教學實踐)*@
	Postgraduate Diploma in Social Sciences^ 社會科學深造文憑^
	Postgraduate Certificate in Social Sciences^ 社會科學深造證書^

Primary Area of Study and Training	Social Sciences	
Sub-area (Primary Area of Study and Training)	Social Services	
Other Area of Study and Training	Not applicable	
Sub-area (Other Area of Study and Training)	Not applicable	
Industry	Not applicable	
Branch	Not applicable	
QF Level	Level 6	
QF Credits	Master of Social Sciences (Career Counselling) 社會科學碩士(職涯輔導)	135
	Master of Social Sciences (Social Service Management) 社會科學碩士(社會服務管理)	135
	Master of Social Sciences (Teaching Practice)*@ 社會科學碩士(教學實踐)*@	135
	Postgraduate Diploma in Social Sciences^ 社會科學深造文憑^	95
	Postgraduate Certificate in Social Sciences^ 社會科學深造證書^	54
Mode of Delivery and Programme Length	Full-time, 1 year Part-time, 2 years	
Start Date of Validity Period	1 September 2025	

End Date of Validity Period	31 August 2028
Number of Enrolment	One enrolment per year
Maximum Number of New Students	Full-Time, 40 per year Part-Time, 40 per year
Specification of Competency Standards-based Programme	☐ Yes X No
Specification of Generic (Foundation) Competencies-based Programme	☐ Yes X No
Vocational Qualifications Pathway Programme	☐ Yes X No
Address of Teaching Venue	(1) HKCT Jockey Club Undergraduate Campus, 2 On Shing Street, Ma On Shan, Sha Tin, New Territories (2) HKCT Jockey Club Ma On Shan Campus, Yiu On Estate, 2 Hang Hong Street, Ma On Shan, Sha Tin, New Territories (3) Shek Mun Learning Centre, 15/F, Corporation Park, 11 On Lai Street, Sha Tin, New Territories

^ Intermediate Exit Award

* *The Institute is to review and revise the award title and stream title for the Teaching Practice stream as stipulated in Para. 4.5.5 and 4.5.6.*

@ *See remark on Page 2.*

2.8 **Conditions**

2.8.1 Pre-conditions

2.8.1.1 The Operator is to (i) provide the stream intended learning outcomes, and (ii) review and refine the Teaching Practice stream title and its corresponding award title to strengthen the structural coherence and balance of the Programme, and demonstrate a more logical alignment with the stated orientation of the stream and stream selection within the Programme. (Para. 4.5.6)

For the fulfilment of the above pre-condition, the Operator is to submit to HKCAAVQ, with relevant deliberation and approval records, (i) the stream intended learning outcomes, (ii) the revised stream and award title, and (iii) the relevant mapping tables **on or before 30 September 2024**.

2.8.1.2 The Operator is to provide evidence of programme leadership and teaching staff provision by appointing additional staff to demonstrate that it has adequate staff with the qualities, competence, qualifications and experience necessary for effective programme planning, development, delivery and monitoring of the Programme at QF Level 6. (Para. 4.9.3)

For the fulfilment of the above pre-condition, the Operator is to submit to HKCAAVQ formal documentary evidence that includes (i) the profile and supporting documents for the appointments of the Programme Leader/Programme Management Team and the teaching staff for the modules to be offered in the first semester of the Academic Year 2025/26; and, (ii) the recruitment and/or appointment schedule of teaching staff for the modules to be offered in other semesters of AY2025/26, **on or before 20 June 2025**.

2.9 **Recommendations**

HKCAAVQ also offers the following recommendations for continuous improvement of the Programme.

2.9.1 The Operator should continuously review and follow through with the latest quality assurance mechanism to ensure the quality of potential students and monitor students' performance throughout the Programme to adapt the admission requirements as appropriate. (Para. 4.6.2)

2.9.2   The Operator should review the teaching, learning and assessment activities of the Programme regularly and adapt work-related activities as appropriate. (Para. 4.8.3)

2.9.3   The Operator should provide further professional training to the teaching staff of the Programme in preparation for teaching, learning and assessment materials in connection with the incorporation of activities for work-related learning for the attainment of ILOs at QF Level 6. (Para. 4.9.4)

2.9.4   The Operator should continuously review and follow through the latest quality assurance mechanism to ensure the consistency and alignment in the presentation of information across each documentation of the Programme, including but not limited to the programme handbook. (Para. 4.11.3)

2.10   HKCAAVQ will subsequently satisfy itself on whether the Operator remains competent to achieve the relevant objectives and the Programme continues to meet the standard to achieve the relevant objectives as claimed by the Operator by reference to, amongst other things, the Operator's fulfilment of any conditions and compliance with any restrictions stipulated in this Accreditation Report. For the avoidance of doubt, maintenance of accreditation status is subject to the fulfilment of any condition and compliance with any restriction stipulated in this Accreditation Report.

3.   INTRODUCTION

3.1   HKCT Institute of Higher Education (CTIHE/ the Institute/ the Operator) was officially established in August 2014 upon registration under the Post Secondary Colleges Ordinance (Cap 320) to operate learning programmes that meet the standards at QF Level 1-5. CTIHE together with its sister college, Hong Kong College of Technology (HKCT) are sponsored by HKCT Group Limited which has been incorporated as a registered company under the Companies Ordinance. As of June 2024, CTIHE offers five HKCAAVQ-accredited programmes, including two Bachelor's degree programmes, two Higher Diploma and one Diploma programmes; as well as commissioned HKCAAVQ to conduct two LPA exercises for five new programmes, including one Master's degree programme which is part of this combined accreditation exercise as well as a separate accreditation exercise for two

Bachelor's degree programmes and two Higher Diploma programmes.

3.2 For this combined exercise of Initial Evaluation (IE) and Learning Programme Accreditation (LPA) for the Master of Social Sciences programme (MSS/the Programme), HKCAAVQ formed an expert Panel (Panel Membership at **Appendix 1**) and visited the Institute on 12, 13 and 14 June 2024. HKCAAVQ's *Manual for the Four-stage Quality Assurance Process under the Hong Kong Qualifications Framework* 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.

Initial Evaluation

4.1 **Organisational Governance and Management**

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 programme(s) that fall within the scope of the HKQF level(s) sought.

4.1.1 The Board of Governors (BoG) is the supreme governing body of the Institute, supported by the Council, Academic Board (AB), Executive Board (EB), Faculty Boards (FB) and a number of other committees. BoG is responsible for setting the overall broad direction and objectives for the Institute, and approving the strategic/development plan, academic plan and allocation of resources of the Institute. In addition to ex-officio members such as the President of the Institute, the membership of BoG includes academics from the higher education sector, industry leaders from the professional sector and leaders from the community. All members including the Chairperson of BoG are appointed by HKCT Group Limited.

4.1.2 The Council is the executive body of the Institute to manage and perform the functions of the Institute subject to the direction of BoG.

The Council is supported by the Committee on Strategic Development (CSD), AB and EB. CSD, which a Council member chairs, reviews and refines the strategic position of the Institute and is responsible for fostering an innovative approach and monitoring the implementation of the strategic development plan. AB and EB, which are chaired by the President, oversee the management of academic and administrative matters of the Institute respectively.

4.1.3   AB regulates and approves all academic affairs including but not limited to academic development, management, implementation, review and improvement of learning programmes of the Institute. The Quality Assurance Committee (QAC), which is supported by the Internal Audit Panel (IAP), reports to AB. Under AB, there are also a number of committees/boards, such as FB and Teaching and Learning Committee (TLC). The Panel was also informed in the Institute's Responses to the Panel's Initial Comments that the Overseeing Panel of Graduate Studies (OPGS), which is chaired by the Vice President with two Deans and two Honorary Professors as members and reports to AB, was newly established in June 2024 to oversee the standards and quality of learning programmes at QF Level 6.

4.1.4   EB executes the management and administration of students, finance, human resources, and business of the Institute. Under EB, there are the Academic Planning and Development Committee (APDC) and the Research Committee (RC). APDC oversees the planning of business and resources with regard to the academic planning of the Institute. RC advises on policies for the management, administration and development of research activities; and, monitors the progresses of the Institute's research projects.

4.1.5   The terms of reference, composition, and samples of meeting minutes of BoG, the Council, CSD, AB, EB and other standing committees under AB and EB were provided to the Panel for review. During the site visit meetings, the representatives of the Institute shared with the Panel in further detail the scope of responsibilities of each Board/Committee and discussed the updated governance structure in relation to the development and introduction of QF Level 6 education, the management and delivery of the proposed postgraduate programme as well as the recent establishment of the Institute of Cyberspace Technology as the second faculty under CTIHE. The Panel explored further with the Management of the Institute the strategic goals of CTIHE as well as the roles, responsibilities and reporting lines of APDC, OPGS and RC, clarified the understanding of the governance structure in respect of the

different presentations in numerous documents submitted throughout the accreditation exercise, and discussed the varied expertise needed for an Institute offering learning programmes up to QF Level 6.

4.1.6 Having reviewed the accreditation documents, the Panel formed the view that the key documentation did not have records indicating sufficient nor substantial deliberation regarding the strategic development of the Institute for the proposed development and introduction of QF Level 6 education being informed by the latest gap analysis and institutional benchmarking study. In addition, during the site visit meetings with different groups of stakeholders of the Institute, including the representatives from the governance and management staff, AB, EB, OPGS, RC, teaching staff and external stakeholders, the Panel was not provided with much comprehensive and convincing information on the planning and strategies in relation to the development and introduction of QF Level 6 education as well as the delivery of postgraduate programmes, for example, the 5-year strategic plan and associated implementation plans. The Institute shared with the Panel at the site visit meetings the difficulties the Institute encountered in identifying appropriate benchmarking targets and expressed that more time might be required to complete the latest gap analysis and institutional benchmarking study which will inform the formulation of a thorough strategic plan relating to the Institute's proposed development and introduction of QF Level 6 education and delivery of postgraduate programmes.

4.1.7 Taking the discussions and observations stated in Para. 4.1.5, 4.1.6, 4.2.4, 4.3.4 and 4.4.4 into consideration, the Panel stipulated the conditions below:

Pre-condition

The Operator is to (i) conduct an up-to-date gap analysis and institutional benchmarking study on its competency in operating learning programmes at QF Level 6, (ii) review and revise as appropriate the coming 5-year planning and strategies relating to the development and introduction of QF Level 6 education and the management and delivery of postgraduate programmes, including but not limited to the governance structure, Terms of Reference and composition of each committee, strategic hiring plan of academic and administrative staff at all levels, plan for cultivation of research culture and capacity as well as staff professional development plan, and to (iii) establish and adopt a systematic approach to develop

associated operational plans and resource plans for the implementation of the 5-year strategic plan in (ii) above.

For the fulfilment of the above pre-condition, the Operator is to submit the following to HKCAAVQ:

(i) a progress report on the preparation of the gap analysis, institutional benchmarking study and the review of the 5-year strategic plan with relevant deliberation and approval records **on or before 30 September 2024**; and

(ii) the completed gap analysis and institutional benchmarking study, the latest 5-year strategic plan, and documentary evidence demonstrating the implementation of any action items arising from the above as appropriate, with relevant deliberation and approval records **on or before 20 June 2025**.

Requirement

The Operator is to provide annual documentary evidence to demonstrate the implementation and subsequent review of the 5-year strategic plan to ensure it continues to be competent to operate learning programmes at QF Level 6.

For the fulfilment of the above requirement, the Operator is to submit an annual report with relevant deliberation and approval records to HKCAAVQ **on or before 1 August each year from 2026 to 2028**.

4.2 **Financial Viability and Resources Management**

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.

4.2.1 In terms of the financial and resources management of the Institute, the Panel was informed of the following arrangements:

(a) BoG approves the Institute's development plan and allocation of resources including the annual budget as recommended by the Council.

(b) The Council performs financial and fiduciary responsibilities, including the preparation of annual plans and budgets, and executes management of financial and control systems.

(c) EB, as supported by the Department of Finance and Department of Efficacy and Process, oversees the financial operations of the Institute and acts as a platform for discussion and review of financial policies, planning, budgeting, capital management, financial strategy and operation performance.

(d) As a self-financing institution, the Institute is also financially supported by its sponsoring body, HKCT Group Limited and government matching grants.

4.2.2 For this accreditation exercise, HKCAAVQ engaged a Financial Expert to review the information in relation to the financial viability of the Institute, including but not limited to audited financial statements of the Institute for the year ended 31 August 2022 and 2023, financial projections for the programmes offered and proposed to be offered by the two faculties from 2024/25 to 2026/27, Capital Investment Budget for the development and introduction of QF Level 6 education and the Institute's Responses to the Panel's Initial Comments. Having reviewed the information provided during the accreditation exercise, the Panel is of the view that the Institute has adequate financial resources to introduce postgraduate education.

4.2.3 The Institute also provided information on its learning resources in supporting its educational objectives. During the site visit, the Institute arranged tours of its facilities and other physical resources in HKCT Ma On Shan Twin Campus Cluster which will support the provision of learning programmes at QF Level 6. The Panel was given to understand that the Institute had obtained additional campus space in Shek Mun which is in close vicinity with the Twin Campus Cluster. The Institute also informed the Panel that renovation work will be carried out in the Social Work Skills Laboratory to prepare for the upcoming learning and teaching activities of the postgraduate programme in the discipline. The Panel noted from the accreditation documents that the Institute has been sharing the learning resources, including the campus space, with its sister college. The Management of the Institute assured the Panel at the site visit that adequate resources have been and will continue to be ensured to cater for students' needs at all QF levels.

4.2.4 The Panel met with the representatives of internal and external stakeholders of the Institute at the site visit meetings and explored

the sufficiency of resources and facilities in delivering a learning environment for postgraduate students, the continuous improvement in the accessibility to the campus' facilities and the development plans in relation to campus facilities, information technology and library resources. The Management of the Institute assured the Panel that students' learning would be supported by appropriate learning resources and that the needs of full-time and part-time postgraduate learners would be taken into consideration. Having reviewed relevant information and evidence provided by the Institute, the Panel is of the view that the Institute shall put forward a concrete resource plan for the delivery of QF Level 6 education as informed by the Institute's latest gap analysis and benchmarking study. The Panel therefore stipulated a part of the pre-condition as delineated in Para. 4.1.7 that covers the above issue.

4.3 **Organisational Staffing**

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 HKQF level(s).

4.3.1 The Institute provided the following information on its institutional staffing and staff development to support the delivery of learning programmes at QF Level 6:

(a) profiles and appointment criteria of staff overseeing and teaching postgraduate programmes;

(b) duty statements for management, teaching and administrative staff of the Institute;

(c) policies and processes for recruitment, appointment and promotion of staff and appraisal;

(d) records of staff training and development;

(e) Workload Model of Academic Staff; and

(f) Staff Handbook.

4.3.2 The Panel observed the following arrangements regarding the staffing arrangements of the Institute:

(a) Under the overall direction-setting of BoG, the Council, supported by EB, is responsible for overseeing staffing policy.

(b) Supporting EB, APDC oversees the planning of resources of the faculties, divisions and departments of the Institute. APDC considers the proposals on levels of manpower and remuneration, and makes recommendations to EB for approval.

(c) The ranks and numbers of academic staff members for the Institute, based on student numbers and programmes, are determined through the annual budgeting process. Such proposals are put forward by the faculties to the Department of Human Resources for endorsement and approval by EB, the Council and BoG accordingly.

(d) The Staff-Student Ratio (SSR) for Master's Degree programmes is set at 1:25. The SSR is a general indicator for the staff establishment of the Institute.

4.3.3 On the appointment criteria for staff teaching postgraduate programmes, the Panel noted that the Institute preferred to recruit academic staff who possess a doctoral degree or a terminal qualification in the discipline, with relevant experience and a track record of industrial training or teaching experience at the tertiary level. The Institute added that academic staff holding master's degrees with substantial teaching or industrial experience will also be considered to teach learning programmes at QF Level 6.

4.3.4 At the site visit meetings, the policy direction on staff professional development and details of previous and planned staff development activities were elaborated by the representatives of the Institute. The Panel also discussed with the Management and teaching staff of the Institute the research culture and capacity among the academic staff with regard to the launch of postgraduate education. The Panel opined that the Institute had not established sufficient policy details or plans on staff professional development as well as cultivation of research culture and capacity relating to the introduction and development of postgraduate education in the relevant documentation. The Panel also explored with the Management of the Institute the systematic approach to specify associated operational plans and resources plans in order to implement the corresponding staff development plan. The Panel hence stipulated a part of the pre-condition as delineated in Para. 4.1.7 that covers the concern in this domain.

4.4   **Organisational Quality Assurance**

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 HKQF, to meet its educational/training objectives.

4.4.1   The Institute provided the following information on its institutional quality assurance (QA) system which supports the management and monitoring of the quality of learning programmes at QF Level 6:

(a)   Quality Assurance Manual;

(b)   processes in the design, development and approval of learning programmes;

(c)   committee system for QA and quality enhancement;

(d)   framework and templates of programme development and management;

(e)   arrangements and templates for collecting stakeholders' feedback including students, graduates and external examiners; and

(f)   Staff Handbook and Student Handbook.

4.4.2   From the accreditation documents and the Institute's Responses to Initial Comments and follow-up questions, the Panel observed the following regarding the QA arrangements of the Institute:

(a)   Under AB, QAC oversees and monitors the implementation of QA policies, mechanisms and procedures for learning programmes.

(b)   QAC is responsible for advising and promoting the Institute's QA processes and issues and appoints IAP to ensure that academic programmes are in compliance with the QA practices and self-evaluation process through Annual Programme Review.

(c)   TLC supports the continuous enhancement of learning and teaching at the institute level while the Programme

Development Team (PDT) and Programme Validation Panel (PVP) advise AB on learning programme proposals.

(d) The Programme Committee (PC) of each programme chaired by the corresponding Programme Leader monitors and maintains the academic quality and currency of the learning programme and is responsible to AB through FB for programme operation.

(e) The Institute seeks advice from external stakeholders, in addition to External Examiners for programmes, through external members in each committee and Board.

(f) In the midst and towards the end of each module, and upon students' completion of the programmes, the Institute collects student feedback and evaluation through staff-student consultative meetings, anonymous questionnaires and a graduate survey. Student representatives also attend PC meetings at least once a term to convey student feedback at the programme level to the Institute.

4.4.3 The Panel noted some substantial changes in the committee system for QA of postgraduate education being made by the Institute in the course of this accreditation exercise. For example, the responsibilities of RC, which is responsible to EB for matters pertaining to research, have been reviewed and updated. OPGS was newly established and is accountable to AB to provide oversight of the Institute's strategic development and academic quality of postgraduate programmes as well as to facilitate and coordinate processes and issues pertinent to postgraduate studies across faculties. Two Honorary Professors with experience in managing and teaching postgraduate programmes at local and overseas universities had been appointed as members of OPGS to give advice on all academic-related matters in the development and delivery of the Master's Degree programmes of the Institute.

4.4.4 The Panel was given to understand that FB and the Dean of each faculty will oversee the operation of all learning programmes within the faculty at all QF levels, including postgraduate programmes. In this regard, the Panel is of the view that the QA mechanism in managing and enhancing learning programmes at QF Level 6 is to be strengthened. Noting the substantial changes made during this accreditation exercise, the Panel also discussed with the representatives of the Institute during the site visit meetings the inconsistent presentation of information among the overall

governance structure as well as the terms of reference and composition of each committee in the documentation provided. The Panel thereby stipulated a part of the pre-condition delineated in Para. 4.1.7 that covers the above concerns.

Learning Programme Accreditation

4.5   **Programme Objectives and Learning Outcomes**

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

4.5.1   The Master of Social Sciences programme (MSS/the Programme) consists of three streams of study, namely *Career Counselling* (CC), *Social Service Management* (SSM) and *Teaching Practice* (TP)***@**. The Programme could lead to a Master's degree award in three discipline-specific streams***@** and two intermediate exit awards of Postgraduate Diploma in Social Sciences (PDSS) and Postgraduate Certificate in Social Sciences (PCSS).

> **** The Institute is to review and revise the award title and stream title for the TP stream as stipulated in Para. 4.5.5 and 4.5.6.***
>
> **@ *See remark on Page 2.***

4.5.2   The Programme Objectives (POs) and Programme Intended Learning Outcomes (PILOs) of MSS as well as the Award Intended Learning Outcomes (AILOs) of PDSS and PCSS are as follows:

Programme Objectives (POs)

The programme endeavours to:

  PO1:   Equip human service professionals with a robust foundation in legal and ethical perspectives. This is complemented by essential social sciences knowledge for effective human service practice;

  PO2:   Integrate micro and macro perspectives for understanding and responding to human needs as its content covers reflective practice, comprehensive intervention theories, human behaviour, social environment, and continuous professional knowledge development during practice; &

PO3: Empower students to competently engage a diverse array of preventive, remedial and developmental practices in their chosen professional field through a distinctive educational approach. Throughout the programme, students will cultivate fresh insights that improve current and future practices.

Programme Intended Learning Outcomes (PILOs)

Upon completion of the Programme, students should be able to:

PILO1: Effectively utilize social sciences and professional knowledge learned from the programme to enhance their professional practice in human services;

PILO2: Identify the routines, skills, and procedures that define effective practices in human services, and how these elements are organized, coordinated, and implemented to achieve positive outcomes for clients;

PILO3: Ethically, competently and creatively perform their roles and responsibilities as a human service professional in serving people from diverse backgrounds;

PILO4: Critically reflect on their practice using insights from this programme to drive continuous improvement in their professional development.

Award Intended Learning Outcomes (AILOs)

Graduates of the Postgraduate Diploma award will be able to:

AILO1: Apply social sciences and professional knowledge learned from the programme to inform and improve professional practice in the field of human service;

AILO2: Evaluate how knowledge and competence in human services is built, acquired, and continuously improved to enhance professional practices;

AILO3: Ethically and competently perform the roles and responsibilities as a human service professional in serving people in the human services sector;

AILO4: Engage in critical reflection on professional practice, drawing insights from the programme to drive continuous improvement and foster professional development.

Graduates of the Postgraduate Certificate award will be able to:

AILO1: Analyze human behavior using a socio-ecological perspective to develop effective interventions for clients in the human services field;

AILO2: Evaluate how knowledge and competence in human services is built, acquired, and continuously improved to enhance professional practices;

AILO3: Apply ethical principles and legal frameworks to professional practices in the human services sector;

AILO4: Demonstrate the know-how to self-evaluate, monitor, and learn from their human service practice experiences for continuous professional improvement.

4.5.3 To demonstrate the alignment of learning outcomes that meet the relevant QF standard at Level 6, the Institute provided the following information:

(a) mapping of POs and the PILOs;

(b) mapping of the modules and the PILOs;

(c) mapping of the modules and the Generic Level Descriptors (GLDs) at QF Level 6;

(d) Module Descriptions of all modules, with information on module objectives (MOs), module intended learning outcomes (MILOs), module contents, teaching, learning and assessment methods, and references;

(e) samples of learning and teaching materials and assessments of a common core module and four stream-specific core modules;

(f) report of the internal PVP and relevant internal approval records of the Programme by QAC and APDC; and

(g) feedback and comments from external stakeholders, including but not limited to the Education Bureau, on the overall design of the Programme.

4.5.4 To demonstrate the potential demand for the Programme, the Institute shared with the Panel its analyses on the distinguishing features of the Programme and the three discipline-specific streams as well as the comparison between the Programme and similar programmes offered by other local institutions. At the site visit meetings, the Panel explored the distinctiveness of the three streams with the representatives of the Programme who shared that while students are to choose one discipline-specific stream in accordance with their career needs, cross-disciplinary learning will be provided. Nevertheless, given the peculiarity of the three streams of the Programme which students are to take different sets of stream-specific core modules, the Panel is of the view that each stream would lead to varied learning outcomes. The representatives of the Programme concurred at the meetings with the Panel that Stream Intended Learning Outcomes (SILOs) are to be devised to foster understanding of the essence of each stream and facilitate student's decision-making in the stream selection.

4.5.5 In the Responses to Initial Comments and during the site visit meetings, the representatives of the Programme informed the Panel that, following the Education Bureau's comments, the stream title together with the Exit Award Title for the TP stream is under review and will be updated to better reflect the nature of this stream. The Panel noted that the TP stream is to enhance students reflective teaching practice from social sciences perspectives rather than leading to professional qualifications of the graduates. Having reviewed the accreditation documents and discussed with the external stakeholders of the Programme, the Panel formed the view that the term "Teaching Practice" may lead to misunderstanding and agreed that refining the TP stream title and its corresponding award title would be necessary to foster the understanding of the Programme through better alignment with the stated orientation of the stream.

4.5.6 Based on the observations and discussions in Para. 4.5.4 and 4.5.5, the Panel thereby stipulated the following pre-condition:

Pre-condition

The Operator is to (i) provide the stream intended learning outcomes, and (ii) review and refine the Teaching Practice stream title and its

corresponding award title to strengthen the structural coherence and balance of the Programme, and demonstrate a more logical alignment with the stated orientation of the stream and stream selection within the Programme.

For the fulfilment of the above pre-condition, the Operator is to submit to HKCAAVQ, with relevant deliberation and approval records, (i) the stream intended learning outcomes, (ii) the revised stream and award title, and (iii) the relevant mapping tables **on or before 30 September 2024**.

4.6   **Learner Admission and Selection**

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.

4.6.1   The minimum admission requirements of the Programme are outlined below.

(a) Holder of a Bachelor's degree in any discipline from a recognised university, normally with an honour not lower than Second Class; AND

(b) Pass the admission interview.

In addition to the above requirement, an applicant who is seeking admission on the basis of a qualification of which the medium of instruction is not English is required to attain the following English language requirement:

- International English Language Testing System (IELTS) – a band score of 6.5 or above OR
- Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) – 550 or above (paper-based test) / 79 or above (internet-based test) OR
- An equivalent score in a recognised test, OR
- An equivalent qualification to prove his/her English language proficiency which will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

4.6.2   The Institute provided the Panel with the Institute's policies and processes for assurance of the quality of potential students and verification of the authenticity of the qualifications of the applicants in

the Responses to Initial Comments and follow-up questions. At the site visit meetings, the representatives of the Programme also noted other means for assurance of the quality of applicants, including information from national qualifications regulators, and the qualifications assessment service provided by HKCAAVQ which offers professional opinion on whether the totality of educational qualifications of an individual meets the standard of a particular qualification in Hong Kong. The Panel explored further with the representatives of the Institute the importance of ensuring students with the necessary knowledge and skills are recruited to undertake and progress through the Programme. Further to the discussions with the representatives of the Programme, the Panel **recommended** that the Operator should continuously review and follow through with the latest QA mechanism to ensure the quality of potential students and monitor students' performance throughout the Programme to adapt the admission requirements as appropriate.

4.6.3   In line with the Government's policy on the yearly quota of non-standard admission for programmes accredited under the Qualifications Framework, for degree programmes operating in the 2023/24 academic year and onwards, the maximum number of non-standard admission (including mature students) should be capped at a maximum of 15% on a programme basis and 10% on an institutional basis of the actual number of new students of the year. The cap is applied in line with the general expectation on self-financed degree-awarding institutions in safeguarding learning and teaching quality and thereby upholding the credibility and recognition of the qualifications. The percentages are based on the sum of new student numbers across all years of study.

4.6.4   The proposed maximum number of new students for the Programme, despite the three streams, is a total of 80 students per year (40 for full-time and 40 for part-time). In the Responses to Initial Comments and follow-up questions, the Institute proposed the number of quotas for each stream as a maximum of 40 students and a minimum of 8 students while no specific quota is set for full-time or part-time mode of study under each stream. At the site visit meetings, the representatives of the Programme shared with the Panel that students are to indicate their stream preferences on the application. The Panel explored with the Programme's representatives different scenarios in connection with over-enrollment and under enrollment of a stream. The representatives of the Programme reaffirmed for the Panel during the site visit meetings that students will be informed of the stream quota during the admission interviews and be offered a chance to change their stream preferences depending on the

number of students opting for a stream before the commencement of the Programme.

4.6.5   In consideration of the above information, the Panel formed the view that the minimum admission requirements would in general be effective for recruiting students with the necessary skills and knowledge to undertake the Programme.

4.7   **Programme Structure and Content**

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.

4.7.1   The Programme is a one-year full-time and two-year part-time programme. Part-time students may opt for a fast-track learning path by doubling their study load as full-time students and hence completing their study in one academic year. An academic year of the Programme consists of two terms with 14 weeks each.

4.7.2   The Programme comprises modules in three categories: Common Core Modules, Stream-specific Core Modules and Electives. It has a total of 135 QF credits with 60% common content and 40% discipline content. Each module in the Programme, except for the CC stream-specific core module *Career Counselling Practicum*, consists of 45 contact hours and 90 self-study hours as a one-term module. Fieldwork practicum in the CC stream is a specially arranged module with 80 contact hours in total and spans from the middle of Term One and ends in Term Two of an academic year. The structure of the Programme is summarised below:

Category	No. of Modules	No. of QF Credits (%)	Contact Hours	Self-study Hours	Notional Learning Hours
Common Core	4	54 (40%)	180	360	540
Stream-specific Core	4	54 (40%)	CC: 215 SSM: 180 TP*@: 180	CC: 325 SSM: 360 TP*@: 360	540

Category	No. of Modules	No. of QF Credits (%)	Contact Hours	Self-study Hours	Notional Learning Hours
Electives	2	27 (20%)	90	180	270
Total	10	135 (100%)	CC: 485 SSM: 450 TP*@: 450	CC: 865 SSM: 900 TP*@: 900	1,350

*** The Institute is to review and revise the stream title for the TP stream as stipulated in Para. 4.5.5 and 4.5.6.**

@ See remark on Page 2.

4.7.3 The representatives of the Programme shared with the Panel in the accreditation documents and at the site visit meetings that the Programme emphasises consistently putting theories into practice and using relevant skills acquired appropriately. Meanwhile, the Panel noted that only the CC stream includes fieldwork practicum and that students in the CC stream may opt for taking the TP stream-specific core module *Schön and the Reflective Practitioner* to replace the CC stream-specific core module *Career Counselling Practicum*. The Panel discussed with the representatives of the Institute the necessities and possibilities for the Programme to incorporate more work-related learning based on the distinct needs of full-time and part-time students. The Programme's representatives affirmed that the proposed programme structure and content are balanced and integrated to facilitate students' progression to achieve the PILOs and meet the POs and agreed that further consideration shall be taken in the learning and teaching activities to provide students with more exposure of workplace settings in each module. The Panel therefore stipulated a recommendation as delineated in Para. 4.8.3.

4.7.4 Having reviewed the above information and discussed with the representatives of the Institute, the Panel considered that the Programme has an appropriate structure with relevant content enabling students to achieve the stated PILOs and meet the POs.

4.8 **Learning, Teaching and Assessment**

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.

4.8.1   The Programme employs a range of learning, teaching and assessment activities, including lectures, seminars, workshops, field visits and observations, case studies, role plays, individual reflective papers, group projects, presentations, tests/quizzes and skills laboratory performance. The medium of instruction of the Programme is English supplemented with Chinese. The Module Descriptions provide summary information of each module such as MOs, MILOs, teaching, learning and assessment methods, contact and self-study hours, and a reading list. The minimum and maximum number of students for each class is 8 and 80 respectively for each module.

4.8.2   The Panel reviewed the following in relation to learning, teaching and assessment:

(a) Module Descriptions of all modules;

(b) Programme Handbook and Student Handbook;

(c) Samples of learning and teaching materials, formative and summative assessment tasks, and associated assessment criteria/rubrics of the following modules:

- *Career Counselling and Practice Skills*
- *Human Behaviour and Social Environment*
- *Social Science Perspectives on Practice*
- *Social Work as a Profession*
- *Teaching Strategies for Enhancing Student Learning*

4.8.3   Having reviewed the accreditation documents and discussed with the representatives of the Programme at the site visit meetings as delineated in Para. 4.7.3, the Panel formed the view that students from all three streams, especially for full-time students who might have less exposure to workplace settings, shall be provided with the opportunities to observe the practical use of knowledge and apply their learning in the Programme through fieldwork practicum or similar activities. The Panel therefore **recommended** that the Operator should review the learning, teaching and assessment activities of the Programme regularly and adapt work-related activities as appropriate.

4.8.4 Through communications with the stakeholders, the Panel noted the diverse industry connections the Institute established and the generous support from the practitioners the Institute received over the years of their operation. The Institute reaffirmed the Panel its continuous effort to ensure that the learning and teaching of the Programme would benefit from the close connection of the Institute with the industry and the support from the community.

4.8.5 To be eligible for graduation and an award from the Programme, students are required to obtain a minimum overall Grade Point Average (GPA) of 1.70 and pass all modules required for each award as set out below:

Award	No. of Required Modules				Total QF Credits
	Common Core	Stream-specific Core	Electives	Total	
MSS(CC)	4	4	2	10	135
MSS(SSM)					
MSS(TP)*@					
PDSS		3		7	95
PCSS		-	-	4	54

The Institute is to review and revise the award title for the TP stream as stipulated in Para. 4.5.5 and 4.5.6.

@ See remark on Page 2.

4.8.6 In terms of the award classification for the Programme, the Panel noted the ranges of the overall GPA as follows:

Classification of Award	Overall GPA
Distinction	3.50 - 4.00
Credit	2.70 - <3.50
Pass	1.70 - <2.70

4.8.7 Notwithstanding the recommendation above, the Panel considered that the learning, teaching and assessment activities of the Programme are in general appropriate in delivering the programme content and assessing students' attainment of the intended learning outcomes.

4.9   **Programme Leadership and Staffing**

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.

4.9.1   The Institute provided the Panel with the following information to demonstrate the academic leadership and staffing for the Programme:

     (a) profiles of the current and potential teaching staff of the Programme;

     (b) information on the academic leadership and responsibilities of the academic staff;

     (c) minimum appointment criteria and the Institute's expectations on the academic staff;

     (d) CVs and research activities of teaching staff; and

     (e) Staff Handbook.

4.9.2   In the accreditation documents and Responses to Initial Comments, it was stated that the projected SSR for the Programme, following the institutional policy, is set at 1:25. The Institute also proposed that it would be preferable for the academic staff responsible for teaching the Master's Degree programmes to possess a doctoral degree in the discipline with relevant experience and a track record of industrial training or teaching experience at the tertiary level. The Panel noted that the Institute will conduct an up-to-date gap analysis and institutional benchmarking study on its competency in operating learning programmes at QF Level 6 as delineated in Para. 4.1.7 and given to understand that the staffing policies or recruitment plan might be revamped accordingly.

4.9.3   Notwithstanding the possible changes in the staffing for the Programme derived from the institutional review, the Panel noted that a Programme Leader and adequate teaching staff, with the qualities, competence, qualifications and experience necessary for effective programme management and delivery of the Programme at

QF Level 6, are yet to be secured. Taking the timeline the Institute provided at the site visit meetings for recruiting appropriate management and teaching staff into consideration, the Panel stipulated the condition below:

Pre-condition

The Operator is to provide evidence of programme leadership and teaching staff provision by appointing additional staff to demonstrate that it has adequate staff with the qualities, competence, qualifications and experience necessary for effective programme planning, development, delivery and monitoring of the Programme at QF Level 6.

For the fulfilment of the above pre-condition, the Operator is to submit to HKCAAVQ formal documentary evidence that includes (i) the profile and supporting documents for the appointments of the Programme Leader/Programme Management Team and the teaching staff for the modules to be offered in the first semester of the Academic Year 2025/26; and, (ii) the recruitment and/or appointment schedule of teaching staff for the modules to be offered in other semesters of AY2025/26, **on or before 20 June 2025**.

4.9.4   In terms of staff development, the Panel is provided with information on the Institute's Education Sponsorship Scheme, 2023 Staff Induction Programme and staff development activities from October 2021 to August 2023. The Institute shared further in detail during the site visit that teaching staff at professorial grade are required and financially supported to engage in research activities. In addition to the discussion on work-related activities as stated in Para. 4.7.3 and 4.8.3, the Panel also elaborated on the importance of offering professional development to teaching staff with regard to teaching the Programme at QF Level 6 with the representatives of the Institute. While the Panel noted that the staff professional development plan will be reviewed and revised in accordance with the condition as stipulated in Para. 4.1.7, the Operator is also **recommended** to provide further professional training to the teaching staff of the Programme in preparation for teaching, learning and assessment materials in connection with the incorporation of activities for work-related learning for the attainment of ILOs at QF Level 6.

4.10   **Learning, Teaching and Enabling Resources/Services**

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.

4.10.1 As stated in Section 4.2, for this accreditation exercise, HKCAAVQ engaged a Financial Expert to review financial information and documents submitted by the Institute on its financial viability. Relevant information on the financial resources for the Programme is also delineated in Para. 4.2.2.

4.10.2 In addition, the Institute provided to the Panel information on its learning, teaching and enabling resources relevant to the delivery of the Programme and teaching facilities. During the site visit, the Institute also provided the Panel with tours of the facilities for the Programme. Relevant information on the learning resources is delineated in Para. 4.2.3 and 4.2.4.

4.10.3 The Panel was also provided with summary information on library holdings, subscriptions, e-resources and planned acquisitions relevant to the delivery of the Programme, including journal subscriptions and electronic databases.

4.10.4 Having reviewed the information above and the discussion with various stakeholders, the Panel formed the view that the provision of learning, teaching and enabling resources is appropriate and will be sufficient for the Programme.

4.11   **Programme Approval, Review and Quality Assurance**

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.

4.11.1 The Institute provided to the Panel the following information on the on-going monitoring and review arrangements for the Programme:

   (a)   meeting minutes, extracts and approval records of APDC, QAC, FB;

(b) Quality Assurance Manual;

(c) processes in the approval, design and development of programmes, and the programme enhancement and management framework;

(d) arrangements for collecting stakeholders' feedback including students, graduates and external examiners;

(e) internal accreditation report by PVP (March 2024) and the corresponding responses by the Institute;

(f) Staff Handbook and Student Handbook; and

(g) templates of Class Visit Form, Module Review Report, Annual Programme Review Report, electronic Student Feedback Questionnaire, Graduate Survey and External Examiner's Report.

4.11.2 At the site visit meetings with the external stakeholders of the Programme, the Panel learnt about their previous and upcoming engagement in the Programme through their respective roles, such as external advisor, potential External Examiner and potential employer of the graduates of the Programme.

4.11.3 The Panel discussed with the representatives of the Programme during the site visit the discrepancies and inconsistencies in the materials and documentation of the Programme the Panel received for this accreditation exercise. The Panel also noted that new measures and adjustments to the existing QA mechanism for supporting postgraduate programmes at QF Level 6 will be devised as delineated in Para. 4.1.7. The Panel therefore **recommended** the Operator should continuously review and follow through the latest QA mechanism to ensure consistency and alignment in the presentation of information across each documentation of the Programme, including but not limited to the programme handbook.

4.11.4 Notwithstanding the aforementioned observation and recommendation, the Panel is of the view that the Institute has a QA system in place for monitoring and reviewing the development and performance of the Programme on an on-going basis.

5. IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING THIS ACCREDITATION REPORT

5.1 Variation and withdrawal of this Accreditation Report

5.1.1 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.

5.1.2 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.

5.1.3 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.

5.1.4 The accreditation status of Operator and/or Programme 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

5.2.1 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.

5.2.2   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.

5.2.3   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.

5.2.4   Please refer to Cap. 592A (https://www.elegislation.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 https://www.hkqf.gov.hk.

5.3   **Qualifications Register**

5.3.1   Qualifications accredited by HKCAAVQ are eligible for entry into the Qualifications Register ("QR") at https://www.hkqr.gov.hk for recognition under the QF. The Operator should apply separately to have their quality-assured qualifications entered into the QR.

5.3.2   Only learners who commence the study of the named accredited learning programme during the validity period and who have graduated with the named qualification listed in the QR will be considered to have acquired a qualification recognised under the QF.

Ref: 51/34/01
29 August 2024
JoH/CQ/PsL/rol

HKCT Institute of Higher Education

Initial Evaluation and
Learning Programme Accreditation for Master of Social Sciences

12 - 14 June 2024

Panel Membership

Initial Evaluation

Panel Chair   * **Panel Secretary**

Professor Joyce KIRK   **Ms Psyche LIU**
Independent Consultant and Emeritus   Registrar
  Professor   Academic Accreditation and Assessment
AUSTRALIA   Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of
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Panel Members

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  Acting Dean of Lee Shau Kee School of   (Undergraduate Education)
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Professor CHUNG Kevin Kien Hoa   **Professor YU Kar Ming**
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Mr MA Wai Pong Spencer
Chief Consulting Officer
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HONG KONG

* The Panel Secretary is also a member of the Accreditation Panel.

HKCT Institute of Higher Education

**Initial Evaluation and
Learning Programme Accreditation for Master of Social Sciences**

12 - 14 June 2024

Panel Membership

Learning Programme Accreditation

Panel Chair	*** Panel Secretary**

Professor Joyce KIRK
Independent Consultant and Emeritus
  Professor
AUSTRALIA
	Ms Psyche LIU
	Registrar
	Academic Accreditation and Assessment
	Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of
	  Academic and Vocational Qualifications
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* The Panel Secretary is also a member of the Accreditation Panel.

Graduate Profile of
Master of Social Sciences (Career Counselling)

Qualification Title	Master of Social Sciences (Career Counselling) 社會科學碩士(職涯輔導)
Qualification Type	Master's Degree
QF Level	Level 6
Primary Area of Study and Training	Social Sciences
Sub-area (Primary Area of Study and Training)	Social Services
Other Area of Study and Training	Not applicable
Sub-area (Other Area of Study and Training)	Not applicable
Programme Objectives	The programme endeavours to: 1. Equip human service professionals with a robust foundation in legal and ethical perspectives. This is complemented by essential social sciences knowledge for effective human service practice; 2. Integrate micro and macro perspectives for understanding and responding to human needs as its content covers reflective practice, comprehensive intervention theories, human behaviour, social environment, and continuous professional knowledge development during practice; & 3. Empower students to competently engage a diverse array of preventive, remedial and developmental practices in their chosen professional field through a distinctive educational approach. Throughout the programme, students will cultivate fresh insights that improve current and future practices.

Programme and Stream Intended Learning Outcomes# **# The Institute is to provide the SILOs as stipulated in Para. 4.5.4 and 4.5.6.**	Upon completion of the Programme, students should be able to: 1. Effectively utilize social sciences and professional knowledge learned from the programme to enhance their professional practice in human services; 2. Identify the routines, skills, and procedures that define effective practices in human services, and how these elements are organized, coordinated, and implemented to achieve positive outcomes for clients; 3. Ethically, competently and creatively perform their roles and responsibilities as a human service professional in serving people from diverse backgrounds; 4. Critically reflect on their practice using insights from this programme to drive continuous improvement in their professional development.
Education Pathways	Graduates of Career Counselling Stream could pursue further study, for example: ▪ Doctor of Education ▪ Master of Education ▪ Master of Philosophy or Doctor of Philosophy programmes, including but not limited to counselling, education, social welfare.
Employment Pathways	Graduates of Career Counselling Stream could apply for posts such as assistant teacher or teacher assistant, in local primary and secondary schools as well as lecturer or lecturer assistant in tertiary institutes.
Minimum Admission Requirements	a) Holder of a Bachelor's degree in any discipline from a recognised university, normally with an honour not lower than Second Class; AND b) Pass the admission interview. In addition to the above requirement, an applicant who is seeking admission on the basis of a qualification of which the medium of instruction is not English is

	required to attain the following English language requirement. - International English Language Testing System (IELTS) – a band score of 6.5 or above OR - Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) – 550 or above (paper-based test) / 79 or above (internet-based test) OR - An equivalent score in a recognised test, OR - An equivalent qualification to prove his/her English language proficiency which will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
Graduation Requirements	To be eligible for the award of Master of Social Sciences (Career Counselling) qualification, students are required to pass all the modules as required by the programme, unless otherwise exempted, and have achieved an overall GPA of 1.70 or above.
Operator	HKCT Institute of Higher Education 港專學院

Graduate Profile of
Master of Social Sciences (Social Service Management)

Qualification Title	Master of Social Sciences (Social Service Management) 社會科學碩士(社會服務管理)
Qualification Type	Master's Degree
QF Level	Level 6
Primary Area of Study and Training	Social Sciences
Sub-area (Primary Area of Study and Training)	Social Services
Other Area of Study and Training	Not applicable
Sub-area (Other Area of Study and Training)	Not applicable
Programme Objectives	The programme endeavours to: 1. Equip human service professionals with a robust foundation in legal and ethical perspectives. This is complemented by essential social sciences knowledge for effective human service practice; 2. Integrate micro and macro perspectives for understanding and responding to human needs as its content covers reflective practice, comprehensive intervention theories, human behaviour, social environment, and continuous professional knowledge development during practice; & 3. Empower students to competently engage a diverse array of preventive, remedial and developmental practices in their chosen professional field through a distinctive educational approach. Throughout the programme, students will cultivate fresh insights that improve current and future practices.

Programme and Stream Intended Learning Outcomes# # *The Institute is to provide the SILOs as stipulated in Para. 4.5.4 and 4.5.6.*	Upon completion of the Programme, students should be able to: 1. Effectively utilize social sciences and professional knowledge learned from the programme to enhance their professional practice in human services; 2. Identify the routines, skills, and procedures that define effective practices in human services, and how these elements are organized, coordinated, and implemented to achieve positive outcomes for clients; 3. Ethically, competently and creatively perform their roles and responsibilities as a human service professional in serving people from diverse backgrounds; 4. Critically reflect on their practice using insights from this programme to drive continuous improvement in their professional development.
Education Pathways	Graduates of Social Service Management Stream could pursue further study, for example: ▪ Master of Social Work ▪ Doctor of Social Work ▪ Master of Philosophy or Doctor of Philosophy programmes, including but not limited to social welfare, social innovation, sociology, social Policy.
Employment Pathways	Graduates of Social Service Management Stream could apply for non-social work managerial posts in NGOs, such as the newly set up District Services & Community Care Teams, or social work managerial posts (if the graduate has already obtained a social work degree) in NGOs or managerial posts in the organizations providing human services in the private sectors.
Minimum Admission Requirements	a) Holder of a Bachelor's degree in any discipline from a recognised university, normally with an honour not lower than Second Class; AND b) Pass the admission interview.

	In addition to the above requirement, an applicant who is seeking admission on the basis of a qualification of which the medium of instruction is not English is required to attain the following English language requirement. - International English Language Testing System (IELTS) – a band score of 6.5 or above OR - Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) – 550 or above (paper-based test) / 79 or above (internet-based test) OR - An equivalent score in a recognised test, OR - An equivalent qualification to prove his/her English language proficiency which will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
Graduation Requirements	To be eligible for the award of Master of Social Sciences (Social Service Management) qualification, students are required to pass all the modules as required by the programme, unless otherwise exempted, and have achieved an overall GPA of 1.70 or above.
Operator	HKCT Institute of Higher Education 港專學院

Graduate Profile of
Master of Social Sciences (Teaching Practice)

Qualification Title	Master of Social Sciences (Teaching Practice)*@ 社會科學碩士(教學實踐)*@
Qualification Type	Master's Degree
QF Level	Level 6
Primary Area of Study and Training	Social Sciences
Sub-area (Primary Area of Study and Training)	Social Services
Other Area of Study and Training	Not applicable
Sub-area (Other Area of Study and Training)	Not applicable
Programme Objectives	The programme endeavours to: 1. Equip human service professionals with a robust foundation in legal and ethical perspectives. This is complemented by essential social sciences knowledge for effective human service practice; 2. Integrate micro and macro perspectives for understanding and responding to human needs as its content covers reflective practice, comprehensive intervention theories, human behaviour, social environment, and continuous professional knowledge development during practice; & 3. Empower students to competently engage a diverse array of preventive, remedial and developmental practices in their chosen professional field through a distinctive educational approach. Throughout the programme, students will cultivate fresh insights that improve current and future practices.

Programme and Stream Intended Learning Outcomes# **# *The Institute is to provide the SILOs as stipulated in Para. 4.5.4 and 4.5.6.***	Upon completion of the Programme, students should be able to: 1. Effectively utilize social sciences and professional knowledge learned from the programme to enhance their professional practice in human services; 2. Identify the routines, skills, and procedures that define effective practices in human services, and how these elements are organized, coordinated, and implemented to achieve positive outcomes for clients; 3. Ethically, competently and creatively perform their roles and responsibilities as a human service professional in serving people from diverse backgrounds; 4. Critically reflect on their practice using insights from this programme to drive continuous improvement in their professional development.
Education Pathways	Graduates of Teaching Practice Stream*@ could pursue further study, for example: ▪ Doctor of Education ▪ Postgraduate Diploma in Education ▪ Master of Education ▪ Master of Philosophy or Doctor of Philosophy programmes, including but not limited to counselling, education, social welfare
Employment Pathways	Graduates of Teaching Practice Stream*@ could apply for posts such as assistant teacher or teacher assistant, in local primary and secondary schools as well as lecturer or lecturer assistant in tertiary institutes.
Minimum Admission Requirements	a) Holder of a Bachelor's degree in any discipline from a recognised university, normally with an honour not lower than Second Class; AND b) Pass the admission interview. In addition to the above requirement, an applicant who is seeking admission on the basis of a qualification of

	which the medium of instruction is not English is required to attain the following English language requirement. - International English Language Testing System (IELTS) – a band score of 6.5 or above OR - Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) – 550 or above (paper-based test) / 79 or above (internet-based test) OR - An equivalent score in a recognised test, OR - An equivalent qualification to prove his/her English language proficiency which will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
Graduation Requirements	To be eligible for the award of Master of Social Sciences (Teaching Practice)*@ qualification, students are required to pass all the modules as required by the programme, unless otherwise exempted, and have achieved an overall GPA of 1.70 or above.
Operator	HKCT Institute of Higher Education 港專學院

The Institute is to review and revise the award title and stream title for the TP stream as stipulated in Para. 4.5.5 and 4.5.6.

@ See remark on Page 2.