



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

ACCREDITATION REPORT

HONG KONG SHUE YAN UNIVERSITY

LEARNING PROGRAMME ACCREDITATION FOR

**MASTER OF SOCIAL SCIENCES IN
SMART CULTURAL TOURISM**

November 2025

Table of Contents

	<u>Page</u>
1. TERMS OF REFERENCE.....	1
2. HKCAAVQ'S DETERMINATION	1
3. INTRODUCTION.....	5
4. PANEL'S DELIBERATIONS	5
4.1 <i>Programme Objectives and Learning Outcomes</i>	5
4.2 <i>Learner Admission and Selection</i>	8
4.3 <i>Programme Structure and Content</i>	11
4.4 <i>Learning, Teaching and Assessment</i>	14
4.5 <i>Programme Leadership and Staffing</i>	16
4.6 <i>Learning, Teaching and Enabling Resources/Services</i>	18
4.7 <i>Programme Approval, Review and Quality Assurance</i>	19
5. IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING THIS ACCREDITATION REPORT	20
Appendix 1	HKCAAVQ Panel Membership
Appendix 2	Graduate Profiles of Master of Social Sciences in Smart Cultural Tourism

1. TERMS OF REFERENCE

1.1 Based on the Service Agreement (No.: AA1085), 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 (AAVQO) (Cap. 592), was commissioned by Hong Kong Shue Yan University to conduct a learning programme accreditation for Master of Social Sciences in Smart Cultural Tourism with the following Terms of Reference:

- (a) To conduct an accreditation test as provided for in the AAVQO to determine whether the programme of Hong Kong Shue Yan University (HKSYU/the Operator) meets the stated objectives and QF standards and can be offered as an accredited programme; and
- (b) To issue to the Operator an accreditation report setting out the results of the determination in relation to (a) by HKCAAVQ.

2. HKCAAVQ'S DETERMINATION

2.1 HKCAAVQ has determined that the Master of Social Sciences in Smart Cultural Tourism programme (MSSc-SCT/the Programme) meets the stated objectives and QF standard at Level 6. Subject to the approval by the Secretary of Education, the Programme can be offered as an accredited programme with a validity period of 3 years.

2.2 In order for the validity period to take effect, the Operator must be registered as a Post Secondary College under the Post Secondary Colleges Ordinance (Cap. 320) and it must comply with any restrictions stipulated in the Institutional Review (IR) Report. The authority for registration under Cap. 320 rests with the Permanent Secretary for Education who may take into account of the outcome of the IR Report and other considerations as deemed necessary.

2.3 Validity Period

2.3.1 The validity period will 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.

2.4 The determinations on the Programme are specified as follows:

Name of Local Operator	Hong Kong Shue Yan University 香港樹仁大學
Name of Award Granting Body	Hong Kong Shue Yan University 香港樹仁大學
Title of Learning Programme	Master of Social Sciences in Smart Cultural Tourism 智慧文化旅遊社會科學碩士
Title of Qualifications [Exit Awards]	Master of Social Sciences in Smart Cultural Tourism 智慧文化旅遊社會科學碩士
Primary Area of Study and Training	Social Sciences
Sub-area (Primary Area of Study and Training)	Social and Behavioural Sciences
Other Area of Study and Training	Arts, Design and Performing Arts
Sub-area (Other Area of Study and Training)	Design and Other Creative Industries
HKQF Level	Level 6
HKQF Credits	108
Mode(s) of Delivery and Programme Length	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Full-time, 1 year (2 semesters)▪ Part-time, 2 years (4 semesters)
Start Date of Validity Period	1 September 2026

End Date of Validity Period	31 August 2029
Number of Enrolment(s)	One enrolment per year
Maximum Number of New Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Full-time - Chinese stream: 60 per year English stream: 25 per year▪ Part-time - English stream: 15 per year
Address of Teaching / Training Venue(s)	10 Wai Tsui Crescent, Braemar Hill, North Point, Hong Kong

2.5 Conditions

2.5.1 Requirements

2.5.1.1 The Operator is to review the programme curriculum, potentially by reviewing and re-designing the elective course SCT521 Cultural Tourist Studies and Management into a tourism management course and making it a core elective course that is compulsory for students without an academic or professional background in tourism, to ensure that the Programme provides sufficient foundational knowledge in tourism management appropriate for master's level students who lack prior academic background or professional experience in tourism, and to ensure that any courses to be re-designed will not be offered until this requirement has been fulfilled.

The Operator is to submit documentary evidence, including course outlines, sample teaching and learning materials of the revised course(s), the respective lists of courses to be offered in the first and second semesters upon programme commencement, and other relevant documentation for the fulfilment of this requirement to HKCAAVQ **on or before 14 September 2026**. (Paragraph 4.3.4)

2.5.1.2 The Operator is to recruit teaching staff who, in addition to meeting the minimum academic qualifications required for appointment to taught master's programmes, hold at least one degree in tourism management and possess relevant teaching and/or industry experience to ensure the effective delivery of foundational knowledge in tourism management, potentially through the re-designed course SCT521 or an equivalent course to be designated, for both English and Chinese streams.

The Operator is to submit the curriculum vitae, publication and teaching and/or industrial experience records of the appointed teaching staff, the appointment documents and any other documents that the Operator may consider relevant to HKCAAVQ for the fulfilment of this requirement **on or before 14 September 2026**. (Paragraph 4.5.4)

2.6 **Recommendations**

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

- 2.6.1 The Operator should explore ways to leverage the course SCT530 Special Topic in Cultural Tourism Innovation, along with other relevant courses, to further support students' attainment of PILO4 and PILO5. (Paragraph 4.3.5)
- 2.6.2 The Operator should consider structuring the delivery of immersive technologies and interactive design strategies in two levels: foundational and advanced, each designed to address both immersive and interactive experiences, and the advanced course targeting students who possess relevant prior knowledge or background in the field. (Paragraph 4.3.6)
- 2.6.3 The Operator should establish a relevant mechanism to evaluate the Putonghua proficiency of teaching staff and provide necessary support to ensure that those assigned to teach the Programme are adequately prepared to deliver the Programme effectively in Putonghua (Paragraph 4.5.5)
- 2.7 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 HKSYU was granted the university status in December 2006, becoming the first private university in Hong Kong. Founded in 1971 as Hong Kong Shue Yan College, it has been registered under the Post Secondary Colleges Ordinance (Cap. 320) since 1976, and became a recognised private degree-awarding institution in 2001. HKSYU currently offers 21 bachelor's degree programmes at QF Level 5, 13 master's degree programmes at QF Level 6, and seven doctor's degree programmes at QF Level 7.
- 3.2 The Operator commissioned HKCAAVQ to conduct a Learning Programme Accreditation (LPA) exercise for the Master of Social Sciences in Smart Cultural Tourism (MSSc-SCT/the Programme). HKCAAVQ formed an expert Panel for this LPA exercise (Panel Membership at Appendix 1). HKCAAVQ's Manual for the Four-stage Quality Assurance Process under HKQF (Version 1.3, April 2025) was the guiding document for the HKSYU and the Panel in conducting this exercise. A site visit took place at Hong Kong Shue Yan University from 3 to 4 September 2025.

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 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.

- 4.1.1 The Master of Social Sciences in Smart Cultural Tourism programme is hosted by the Department of Sociology (the Department). The Programme Aims (PAs) and the Programme Intended Learning Outcomes (PILOs) are as follows:

Programme Aims

The Programme aims to:	
PA1	Provide students with an understanding of the relevance of culture, history, policy and global development to inform the synergistic integration of culture and tourism; 讓學生了解文化、歷史、政策及全球發展的相關性，以促進文化與旅遊的協同融合；
PA2	Develop students' literacy in smart technologies, enabling them to understand, evaluate and strategically incorporate immersive, interactive and intelligent solutions in cultural tourism contexts; 培養學生對智慧科技的認知，使他們能夠理解、評估並於文化旅遊情境中策略性地應用沉浸式、互動式及智能化的解決方案；
PA3	Cultivate professionals who can develop research-informed narratives that effectively transform cultural content into in-depth and engaging tourism experiences; and 培育能夠基於研究創作敘事內容的專業人才，有效地將文化內容轉化為深度且具吸引力的旅遊體驗；及
PA4	Equip students with the skills to manage innovative cultural tourism experiences that leverage smart technologies while ensuring sustainable development in the tourism and related business and cultural sectors. 培養學生管理創新文化旅遊體驗的技能，善用智慧科技，同時確保旅遊業及相關商業和文化產業的可持續發展。

Programme Intended Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the Programme, students should be able to:	
PILO1	Demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of the cultural dimensions of tourism, analysing their significance and impact on the industry and local communities; 展現對旅遊業文化維度的全面認知，並能分析其對行業發展及本地社群的重要性和影響；
PILO2	Synthesise cultural and historical knowledge to craft engaging interpretive narratives and authentic tourism experiences; 融匯文化與歷史知識，策劃富有感染力的詮釋性內容，打造真實的旅遊體驗；
PILO3	Elucidate the fundamental principles underlying immersive, interactive and intelligent technologies, and

	critically evaluate their applications in deepening cultural experiences globally; 闡釋沉浸式、交互式及智慧科技的核心原理，並對其在全球層面上深化文化體驗的應用作出批判性評估；
PILO4	Apply appropriate software and equipment related to smart technologies to develop cultural tourism products; and 選用合適的智慧科技相關軟件及設備，以開發文化旅遊產品；及
PILO5	Use project management skills to orchestrate technologically-enriched and sustainable cultural tourism initiatives with community stakeholders for business and cultural sectors within the smart city ecosystem. 運用項目管理及創業技能，於智慧城市生態系統中與社區持份者籌劃及執行結合創新科技的且具備可持續性的文化旅遊項目，服務商業及文化產業。

4.1.2 To demonstrate that the intended learning outcomes meet the relevant QF standard, the Operator provided the relevant information:

- (a) Mapping of PAs and PILOs;
- (b) Mapping of PILOs with HKSYU Graduate Attributes;
- (c) Mapping of PILOs with Generic Level Descriptors (GLDs) at QF Level 6; and
- (d) Mapping of core and elective courses with PILOs.

4.1.3 The Programme adopts an interdisciplinary approach by integrating smart technology into cultural tourism studies, aiming to address workforce needs by cultivating professionals with both domain-specific knowledge and technological competence. While the title Smart Cultural Tourism reflects its disciplinary scope, the Panel observed that it may present challenges in conveying the programme's focus and the capabilities of its graduates to prospective students and potential employers. The Panel therefore **advised** the Operator to clearly articulate the programme aims, learning outcomes, and vocational relevance in all programme marketing and promotion materials to enhance stakeholders' understanding.

4.1.4 The Operator indicated in the accreditation documents the Programme is developed in response to both national and local policy initiatives and aligns with key government policy frameworks for tourism. The Panel noted that the Operator has conducted

market analysis to look into the demand for the proposed Programme and the needs of the industry and the community. During site visit meetings, the Panel further discussed with senior management and external stakeholders regarding the Programme's positioning in relation to industry needs. External stakeholders expressed strong support for the launch of the Programme to help address the growing demand for manpower equipped with both cultural tourism knowledge and smart technology competencies.

- 4.1.5 The Operator proposed to offer the Programme in two language streams, English and Chinese (Putonghua), with identical PAs and PILOs, as well as Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs), teaching and learning activities, and assessment tasks across both streams. Leveraging Hong Kong as both a context and a gateway to international smart cultural tourism practices, the dual language streams of the Programme are designed to prepare graduates to serve a diverse range of target markets.
- 4.1.6 Overall, the Panel considered that the PAs could address the community, education and industry needs, and the PILOs of the Programme meet the relevant QF standards.

4.2 **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.

- 4.2.1 The admission requirements for the Programme are:
- Hold a recognised bachelor's degree (Preference will be given to those who hold a bachelor's degree in arts and social sciences, heritage studies, tourism, management, media and communication or other related areas from an institution recognised by the University); and

- Fulfil language requirements:

Chinese Proficiency Requirement (exclusively for the Chinese stream)

All applicants for the Chinese stream must demonstrate proficiency in Chinese (Putonghua). The applicant needs to satisfy one of the following requirements:

- Obtained a bachelor's degree or above in which the medium of instruction was Putonghua; or
- Achieved Level 4 or above in the Chinese Language subject in the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education Examination (HKDSE); or
- Achieved Level 6 or above in the Hanyu Shuiping Kaoshi (HSK); or
- Other equivalent qualifications.

English Proficiency Requirement (exclusively for the English stream)

All applicants for the English stream are required to be proficient in both spoken and written English. This requirement is generally met by applicants who have obtained a bachelor's degree or above from an institution where the medium of instruction is English.

Applicants whose entrance qualification is obtained from an institution where the medium of instruction is not English should fulfil the following minimum English proficiency requirement:

- Overall score 6.0 in the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) (Academic), with no subtest score lower than 5.5; or
- Score 550 (Paper-based test) or 80 (Internet-based test) in TOEFL; or
- CET6 450; or
- Other equivalent qualifications.

- Relevant internship or work experience would be an advantage.

The Operator informed the Panel that admission interviews may be conducted with selected applicants with reference to the established Guidance Document for Interviewers to select suitable applicants for the Programme. The Panel was provided with the Guidance Document with the Admission Interview Evaluation Form template for review.

4.2.2 The Panel noted that, while preference is given to applicants holding a Bachelor’s degree in areas specified in Para. 4.2.1, some admitted students may lack a background or basic knowledge in tourism. The Panel considered it essential to equip these students with foundational knowledge in tourism management to support their learning in cultural tourism and its technological applications. A requirement is put forth in Para. 4.3.4 below.

4.2.3 In response to the Panel’s enquiry about the absence of an English proficiency requirement for the Chinese stream, the Operator explained that the students in this stream can complete their entire programme in Chinese, with all essential learning resources available in the language; and this stream is intended for students aiming to work the Chinese Mainland’s cultural tourism sector or engage with its visitors in Hong Kong tourism industry. While acknowledging these reasons, the Panel opined that a basic level of English is important in an international city like Hong Kong. The Panel therefore **advised** the Operator to evaluate the need to specify an English proficiency requirement for the Chinese stream.

4.2.4 Regarding the maximum number of new students for the next five years starting from AY2026/27, the Operator proposed to set the yearly maximum numbers for Programme as follows:

Academic Year Year of Study	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	2029/30	2030/31
Full-time (C)	60	60	60	60	60
Full-time (E)	25	25	25	25	25
Part-time (E)	15	15	15	15	15

C: Chinese stream

E: English stream

4.2.5 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 of self-financed degree-awarding institutions in safeguarding teaching and learning quality and thereby upholding the credibility and recognition

of the qualifications. The percentage is calculated based on the sum of new student numbers across all years of study of the programme. The Operator confirmed that the Programme will adhere to this policy.

4.2.6 In response to the call of EDB in August 2024 concerning fraudulent qualifications, the Operator informed the Panel that they had reviewed the institute's application procedures and established the Procedures for Credentials Verification in the Student Admission Process, which were endorsed by the Academic Board in October 2024.

4.2.7 Notwithstanding the advice above, the Panel formed the view that the minimum admission requirements are clearly outlined for staff and prospective learners. The requirements and the learner selection processes are appropriate for recruiting learners with the necessary skills and knowledge to undertake the Programme.

4.3 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.

4.3.1 The MSSc-SCT is a one-year full-time or two-year part-time master's degree programme, delivered in two or four semesters respectively. The Programme comprises five core courses and seven elective courses, totalling 108 QF credits.

4.3.2 The Programme structure is depicted in the table below:

<i>Proposed Core and Elective Course(s)</i>		<i>No. of Credits</i>	<i>No. of QF Credits</i>
Core Course(s)		15	60
SCT501	Smart Cultural Tourism and Creative Industries 智慧文化旅遊與創意產業	3	12
SCT502	Smart Technologies in Cultural Tourism 文化旅遊中的智慧科技	3	12
SCT503	History, Culture and In-depth Tourism 歷史、文化與深度旅遊	3	12
SCT504	Human-Centred Research Methodology 以人為本的研究方法	3	12

SCT505	Master project: Cultural Tourism and Technology Studio 碩士專題項目：文化旅遊與科技研習	3	12
Elective Course(s)		12	48
1 Elective Course in Smart Technology (ST) Cluster + 1 Elective Course in Cultural Tourism (CT) Cluster + 2 Elective Courses either from ST or CT Cluster			
Smart Technology (ST) Electives			
SCT511	AI Innovations for Smart Cultural Tourism 智慧文化旅遊中的人工智能創新	3	12
SCT512	Immersive Technologies for Cultural Tourism Experience 沈浸式技術與文化旅遊體驗	3	12
SCT513	Interactive Design Strategies for Smart Cultural Tourism 智慧文化旅遊中的交互設計策略	3	12
Cultural Tourism (CT) Electives			
SCT521	Cultural Tourist Studies and Management 文化遊客研究與管理	3	12
SCT522	Cultural Policy, Sustainability and Global Development 文化政策、可持續發展與全球發展	3	12
SCT523	Interpretation and Storytelling: The Practice of Creating Narratives 詮釋與敘事：創作實踐	3	12
Smart Technology (ST) / Cultural Tourism (CT) Electives			
SCT530	Special Topic in Cultural Tourism Innovation 專題：文化旅遊創新	3	12
Total No. of Credit:		27	108

4.3.3 In response to the Panel's comment that the topics covered in the course *SCT511 AI Innovations for Smart Cultural Tourism* were too brief to demonstrate clear alignment with the stated Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs), the Operator submitted alongside its response the expanded topics and their alignment with respective CILOs. The Panel reviewed the updated topics and their alignment with the CILOs and considered them appropriate.

4.3.4 The Panel discussed with the Operator's representatives the importance of equipping students with a solid foundation in tourism management, specifically by covering key areas including destination management, marketing, and tourism planning. The Panel opined that, without this grounding, students may struggle to design relevant, market-responsive, and operationally feasible cultural tourism products, experiences and solutions, and suggested that this content could be strengthened through the inclusion of a dedicated course. The Operator agreed on the need to enhance this aspect of the curriculum and proposed re-designing the course *SCT521 Cultural Tourist Studies and Management* into a comprehensive tourism management course including a focus on the

behaviours and motivations of cultural tourists. The Panel agreed that re-designing the module is a viable solution, and therefore put forth the following requirement:

Requirement

The Operator is to review the programme curriculum, potentially by reviewing and re-designing the elective course *SCT521 Cultural Tourist Studies and Management* into a tourism management course and making it a core elective course that is compulsory for students without an academic or professional background in tourism, to ensure that the Programme provides sufficient foundational knowledge in tourism management appropriate for master's level students who lack prior academic background or professional experience in tourism, and to ensure that any courses to be re-designed will not be offered until this requirement has been fulfilled.

The Operator is to submit documentary evidence, including course outlines, sample teaching and learning materials of the revised course(s), the respective lists of courses to be offered in the first and second semesters upon programme commencement, and other relevant documentation for the fulfilment of this requirement to HKCAAVQ **on or before 14 September 2026**.

- 4.3.5 In response to the Panel's initial comments on the mapping between course *SCT530 Special Topic in Cultural Tourism Innovation* and PILOs, the Operator explained that the module is specifically designed to address PILO1, PILO2, and PILO3, while PILO4 and PILO5 are more closely aligned with other specific modules. The Panel noted the Operator's response but considered that the course is crucial for addressing emerging areas and developments in smart cultural tourism, which can support students in achieving PILO4 and PILO5. The Panel therefore **recommended** that the Operator should explore ways to better leverage the course *SCT530 Special Topic in Cultural Tourism Innovation*, along with other relevant courses, to further support students' attainment of PILO4 and PILO5.
- 4.3.6 The Panel acknowledged the Operator's response to the initial comment, which explained that *SCT512 Immersive Technologies for Cultural Tourism Experience* and *SCT513 Interactive Design Strategies for Smart Cultural Tourism* each provide distinct theoretical and practical contributions that together ensure a comprehensive yet non-overlapping educational experience. During the site visit, the Panel further discussed with the Operator the rationale for offering these as two separate courses. Recognising

that cultural tourism experiences can be both immersive and interactive, the Panel **recommended** that the Operator should consider structuring the delivery of immersive technologies and interactive design strategies at two levels, foundational and advanced, with each level addressing both immersive and interactive experiences, and the advanced course targeted at students with relevant prior knowledge or background.

4.4 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.

4.4.1 The Panel was provided with the following documents and information regarding the learning, teaching and assessment of the Programme:

- (a) The mapping as stated in Para. 4.1.2;
- (b) Programme curriculum and course outlines;
- (c) Samples of teaching and learning materials, assessment tasks and associated assessment criteria/rubrics for selected courses; and
- (d) The Guidelines on the Use of Generative AI in Teaching, Learning, and Assessment.

4.4.2 The Programme employs a range of learning and teaching activities such as lectures, tutorials, skill-based laboratory work, workshops, group projects, individual researches and field trips. The medium of instruction is English for the English stream and Putonghua for the Chinese stream.

4.4.3 The relevant maximum class sizes for different course types are set as follows:

<u>Course type</u>	<u>Class size</u>
Classroom Lecture	40-60
Laboratory Session	30
Tutorial	30
Workshop	30

4.4.4 The graduation requirements for the Programme are:

A student must have:

- obtained at least Grade of C+ in all courses in the programme;
- passed a non-credit bearing course for National and Values Education (NAVE);
- completed all coursework requirements;
- presented a written project/technical research report as required by the programme;
- satisfied the examiners in the written examinations, if any; and
- obtained a cumulative GPA of at least 2.5.

4.4.5 The Panel noted from the accreditation documents that the courses *SCT501 Smart Cultural Tourism and Creative Industries*, *SCT502 Smart Technologies in Cultural Tourism* and *SCT511 AI Innovations for Smart Cultural Tourism* cover similar learning topics, which raises concerns regarding both repeated content and overlapping assessments. While discussions with the programme management and teaching team suggested that these themes emphasise different areas, the Panel highlighted the importance of minimising content redundancy and upholding assessment validity. The Panel therefore **advised** that the programme team should actively oversee and coordinate the curriculum to avoid duplication in both content and assessment.

4.4.6 The Panel noted from the accreditation documents that the Operator plans to offer an optional, non-credit-bearing field trip and internship placement during the winter or summer breaks, providing students with additional exposure to the industry. The Operator also provided the Panel with letters from industry partners indicating their support to providing internship placements. While acknowledging the Operator's planning of field trip and internship placement, the Panel provided further advice to enhance students' connection to the industry in Para. 4.6.6.

4.4.7 Notwithstanding the advice above, the Panel formed the view that the learning, teaching and assessment activities designed for the Programme are appropriate for delivering the programme content and assessing the attainment of the intended learning outcomes.

4.5 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.

- 4.5.1 Regarding the personnel of the Programme, the Panel reviewed the following documents:
- (i) The appointment criteria for academic staff; and
 - (ii) The profiles of the potential teaching staff for the Programme;
 - (iii) The staffing plan for the Programme from AY2026/27 to AY2030/31.
- 4.5.2 The Operator informed the Panel in the accreditation document that the student-teacher ratio (STR) of the Programme will be maintained at 20:1.
- 4.5.3 The Programme is managed by two Programme Directors, one for each language stream, holding the responsibility for managing the programme implementation, continuous review, and development and ensuring the effective execution and improvement of the Programme. A programme team consists of full-time and part-time teaching staff, and administrative personnel will be in posts assisting in the delivery of the Programme.
- 4.5.4 The Panel reviewed the profiles of the teaching staff responsible for delivering the Programme, which included their academic qualifications, work experience, research and publications, and noted that the teaching team possesses expertise in areas such as sociology, anthropology, cultural heritage conservation and digital applications. Given the Programme's interdisciplinary nature spanning culture, technology, and tourism, the Panel discussed with the Operator the importance of having academic staff with formal training in tourism management to directly support the Programme's core area. In particular, the Panel stressed the need for expertise in delivering foundational knowledge in tourism management, ensuring that students without relevant prior knowledge receive adequate support to successfully pursue this Programme. The Panel therefore put forth the following requirement:

Requirement

The Operator is to recruit teaching staff who, in addition to meeting the minimum academic qualifications required for appointment to taught master's programmes, hold at least one degree in tourism management and possess relevant teaching and/or industry experience to ensure the effective delivery of foundational knowledge in tourism management, potentially through the re-designed course SCT521 or an equivalent course to be designated, for both English and Chinese streams.

The Operator is to submit the curriculum vitae, publication and teaching and/or industrial experience records of the appointed teaching staff, the appointment documents and any other documents that the Operator may consider relevant to HKCAAVQ for the fulfilment of this requirement on or before **14 September 2026**.

- 4.5.5 During the site visit meetings with teaching staff, the Panel observed that the Putonghua proficiency of a few staff members could be further enhanced to support effective programme delivery. In light of this, the Panel **recommended** that the Operator should establish a relevant mechanism to evaluate the Putonghua proficiency of teaching staff and provide necessary support to ensure that those assigned to teach the Programme are adequately prepared to deliver the Programme effectively in Putonghua.
- 4.5.6 The Panel was provided with information regarding the teaching load for the current academic year and observed that some potential staff members for the Programme are reaching a full or nearly full workload. The Panel raised concerns regarding the possibility of staff overload when they assume additional teaching duties in the proposed new programme. In response, the Operator explained that new staff would be recruited for the Bachelor of Social Sciences (Hons) in Arts, Culture and Technology, allowing the staff to take on teaching duties and maintain a teaching load of 6 to 9 credits per semester specifically for the proposed new Programme.
- 4.5.7 The Panel reviewed staff development activities for AY2023/24 and AY2024/25, and the staff development plan for AY2025/26. The Panel noted in the accreditation document that the Department would support staff professional development by providing financial sponsorship for attending external short courses, workshops, and seminars held at international, regional, and local levels. The Operator requires all teaching staff to attend workshops organised by the Advancement of Teaching and Learning Committee (ATLC)

at least once per semester. These workshops cover a wide range of topics aimed at enhancing teaching practices and professional development.

4.6 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.

- 4.6.1 To support the learning, teaching and assessment activities of the Programme, the Operator provided the Panel with information on the e-Learning Platform, the library holdings and e-resources, and the estimated annual library budget to be allocated for the Programme from AY2026/27 to AY2030/31.
- 4.6.2 Regarding financial resources for the Programme, the Panel was provided with the Estimated Income and Expenditure Budget from AY2026/27 to AY2030/31, based on the proposed annual maximum student intake and for scenarios where enrolment falls short by 30%, 50% and the minimum viable number of the target yearly intake.
- 4.6.3 In response to the Panel's enquiry during initial comments, the Operator provided the current utilisation rates of laboratory facilities for the Programme, indicating that sufficient capacity is available to support the Programme's requirements. During the on-site meeting, the Operator toured the programme-specific learning and teaching facilities and equipment at the teaching venue, including the Virtual Reality Lab and the Digital Imaging Lab.
- 4.6.4 The Panel noted from the accreditation document that the Programme will appoint a Graduate Programme Advisor (GPA) to provide comprehensive student support, ranging from guidance on course selection to personal development, which will be coordinated with university counselling services and relevant support units.
- 4.6.5 The Panel also reviewed the Postgraduate Student Handbook 2024/25, which inform students of all the supporting resources and services available to them.
- 4.6.6 In addition to the Operator's established plan of optional field trip and internship placement (Para. 4.4.6), the Panel **advised** the Programme to invite external mentors from the industry to help

bridge academic learning with business practice and to further enrich students' exposure to the industry.

- 4.6.7 From the review of information provided and the discussions with the Operator's representatives, the Panel considered that the Operator was able to provide learning, teaching and enabling resources that were appropriate and sufficient for the delivery of the Programme.

4.7 **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.

- 4.7.1 The Panel noted that the Operator has put in place internal and external quality assurance (QA) processes for programme planning, development and review. The programme quality is being upheld internally by the Operator's Quality Assurance (QA) mechanism, including input from the Academic Board (AB), Quality Assurance Committee (QAC), Graduate Studies Committee (GSC), Taught Postgraduate Programme Subcommittee (TPPS), Departmental Postgraduate Committee (DPC), Programme Committee (PC) as well as students. The external QA mechanism includes input from the Academic Advisory Board (AAB), External Programme Assessor (EPA) and External Examiner (EE).
- 4.7.2 Based on the relevant documentary evidence provided in the initially accreditation documents and supplementary documents tabled during the visit, the Panel considered that the Programme had undergone the requisite quality assurance process for programme development and approval.
- 4.7.3 The Operator also provided the following documents and templates to demonstrate that programme quality will be monitored upon the launching of the Programme:
- (a) Guidelines and Procedures for Annual Postgraduate Programme Review Report;
 - (b) Policy on External Examiner;
 - (c) Policy on External Programme Assessor; and
 - (d) Templates for
 - (i) Annual Postgraduate Programme Review Report;
 - (ii) External Examiner's Final Report and Summary Report;

- (iii) Annual Report of External Programme Assessor for Undergraduate/Postgraduate Programmes
- (iv) Student Learning Experience Questionnaire;
- (v) Graduate Survey;
- (vi) Graduate Employment Survey (Full-time/Part-time Postgraduate);

4.7.4 Based on the above information, the Panel concluded that the development of the Programme has been properly monitored, and that by following the above-mentioned programme approval, review and quality assurance mechanisms, the Programme will be monitored and reviewed 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.

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.hkgf.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: 40/37/01

13 November 2025

JoH/CQ/sac/cj

Hong Kong Shue Yan University

**Learning Programme Accreditation for
Master of Social Sciences in Smart Cultural Tourism**

3-4 September 2025

Panel Membership

Panel Chair

Professor Bernhard FUEHRER
Emeritus Professor of Sinology
School of Oriental and African Studies
University of London
THE UNITED KINGDOM

Panel Secretary

Mr Sam CHENG
Registrar
Academic Accreditation and Assessment
Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of
Academic and Vocational Qualifications
HONG KONG

Panel Members

Professor Mimi LI
Professor, School of Hotel and
Tourism Management
Associate Director, Research Centre for
Digital Transformation of Tourism
The Hong Kong Polytechnic University
HONG KONG

Professor LIM Kok Wai Benny
Associate Professor of Practice in
Cultural Management
Department of Cultural and Religious
Studies
The Chinese University of Hong Kong
HONG KONG

Mr Richard WILLIS
Commercial Director
DTH Travel Hong Kong
HONG KONG

Appendix 2

Graduate Profile of Master of Social Sciences in Smart Cultural Tourism

Qualification Title	Master of Social Sciences in Smart Cultural Tourism 智慧文化旅遊社會科學碩士						
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 and Behavioural Sciences						
Other Area of Study and Training	Arts, Design and Performing Arts						
Sub-area (Other Area of Study and Training)	Design and Other Creative Industries						
Programme Objectives	<p>The Programme aims to:</p> <table border="1"><tr><td>PA1</td><td>Provide students with an understanding of the relevance of culture, history, policy and global development to inform the synergistic integration of culture and tourism; 讓學生了解文化、歷史、政策及全球發展的相關性，以促進文化與旅遊的協同融合；</td></tr><tr><td>PA2</td><td>Develop students' literacy in smart technologies, enabling them to understand, evaluate and strategically incorporate immersive, interactive and intelligent solutions in cultural tourism contexts; 培養學生對智慧科技的認知，使他們能夠理解、評估並於文化旅遊情境中策略性地應用沉浸式、互動式及智能化的解決方案；</td></tr><tr><td>PA3</td><td>Cultivate professionals who can develop research-informed narratives that effectively transform cultural content into in-depth and engaging tourism experiences; and 培育能夠基於研究創作敘事內容的專業人才，有效地將文化內容轉化為深度且具吸引力的旅遊體驗；及</td></tr></table>	PA1	Provide students with an understanding of the relevance of culture, history, policy and global development to inform the synergistic integration of culture and tourism; 讓學生了解文化、歷史、政策及全球發展的相關性，以促進文化與旅遊的協同融合；	PA2	Develop students' literacy in smart technologies, enabling them to understand, evaluate and strategically incorporate immersive, interactive and intelligent solutions in cultural tourism contexts; 培養學生對智慧科技的認知，使他們能夠理解、評估並於文化旅遊情境中策略性地應用沉浸式、互動式及智能化的解決方案；	PA3	Cultivate professionals who can develop research-informed narratives that effectively transform cultural content into in-depth and engaging tourism experiences; and 培育能夠基於研究創作敘事內容的專業人才，有效地將文化內容轉化為深度且具吸引力的旅遊體驗；及
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	<table border="1"> <tr> <td data-bbox="590 199 730 535">PA4</td> <td data-bbox="730 199 1441 535"> <p>Equip students with the skills to manage innovative cultural tourism experiences that leverage smart technologies while ensuring sustainable development in the tourism and related business and cultural sectors.</p> <p>培養學生管理創新文化旅遊體驗的技能，善用智慧科技，同時確保旅遊業及相關商業和文化產業的可持續發展。</p> </td> </tr> </table>	PA4	<p>Equip students with the skills to manage innovative cultural tourism experiences that leverage smart technologies while ensuring sustainable development in the tourism and related business and cultural sectors.</p> <p>培養學生管理創新文化旅遊體驗的技能，善用智慧科技，同時確保旅遊業及相關商業和文化產業的可持續發展。</p>								
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<p>Programme Intended Learning Outcomes</p>	<p>Upon completion of the Programme, students will be able to:</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td data-bbox="590 642 730 889">PILO1</td> <td data-bbox="730 642 1441 889"> <p>Demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of the cultural dimensions of tourism, analysing their significance and impact on the industry and local communities;</p> <p>展現對旅遊業文化維度的全面認知，並能分析其對行業發展及本地社群的重要性和影響；</p> </td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="590 889 730 1099">PILO2</td> <td data-bbox="730 889 1441 1099"> <p>Synthesise cultural and historical knowledge to craft engaging interpretive narratives and authentic tourism experiences;</p> <p>融匯文化與歷史知識，策劃富有感染力的詮釋性內容，打造真實的旅遊體驗；</p> </td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="590 1099 730 1429">PILO3</td> <td data-bbox="730 1099 1441 1429"> <p>Elucidate the fundamental principles underlying immersive, interactive and intelligent technologies, and critically evaluate their applications in deepening cultural experiences globally;</p> <p>闡釋沉浸式、交互式及智慧科技的核心原理，並對其在全球層面上深化文化體驗的應用作出批判性評估；</p> </td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="590 1429 730 1639">PILO4</td> <td data-bbox="730 1429 1441 1639"> <p>Apply appropriate software and equipment related to smart technologies to develop cultural tourism products; and</p> <p>選用合適的智慧科技相關軟件及設備，以開發文化旅遊產品；及</p> </td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="590 1639 730 2013">PILO5</td> <td data-bbox="730 1639 1441 2013"> <p>Use project management skills to orchestrate technologically-enriched and sustainable cultural tourism initiatives with community stakeholders for business and cultural sectors within the smart city ecosystem.</p> <p>運用項目管理及創業技能，於智慧城市生態系統中與社區持份者籌劃及執行結合創新科技的且具備可持續性的文化旅遊項目，服務商業及文化產業。</p> </td> </tr> </table>	PILO1	<p>Demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of the cultural dimensions of tourism, analysing their significance and impact on the industry and local communities;</p> <p>展現對旅遊業文化維度的全面認知，並能分析其對行業發展及本地社群的重要性和影響；</p>	PILO2	<p>Synthesise cultural and historical knowledge to craft engaging interpretive narratives and authentic tourism experiences;</p> <p>融匯文化與歷史知識，策劃富有感染力的詮釋性內容，打造真實的旅遊體驗；</p>	PILO3	<p>Elucidate the fundamental principles underlying immersive, interactive and intelligent technologies, and critically evaluate their applications in deepening cultural experiences globally;</p> <p>闡釋沉浸式、交互式及智慧科技的核心原理，並對其在全球層面上深化文化體驗的應用作出批判性評估；</p>	PILO4	<p>Apply appropriate software and equipment related to smart technologies to develop cultural tourism products; and</p> <p>選用合適的智慧科技相關軟件及設備，以開發文化旅遊產品；及</p>	PILO5	<p>Use project management skills to orchestrate technologically-enriched and sustainable cultural tourism initiatives with community stakeholders for business and cultural sectors within the smart city ecosystem.</p> <p>運用項目管理及創業技能，於智慧城市生態系統中與社區持份者籌劃及執行結合創新科技的且具備可持續性的文化旅遊項目，服務商業及文化產業。</p>
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<p>Education Pathways</p>	<p>Graduates of the programme are well-prepared to pursue further academic and professional development in fields related to cultural heritage, tourism studies, digital humanities, and technology-enhanced learning. They may apply for MPhil, PhD, or other doctoral programmes (such as the Doctor of Social Sciences/Tourism) at universities in Hong Kong and overseas, including the MPhil and PhD programmes offered by Hong Kong Shue Yan University. The interdisciplinary training provided by this programme offers a strong foundation for advanced research and specialised qualifications.</p> <p>Key education pathways include:</p> <p>PhD in Cultural Heritage Studies, Museum Studies, Tourism Studies – engage in advanced academic research focusing on cultural tourism, digital heritage, or smart destination planning, with opportunities to contribute to policy, innovation, and critical scholarship</p> <p>Professional Doctorate in Cultural Policy or Creative Industries – develop practice-based research that informs real-world applications in cultural governance, public engagement, and sustainable cultural economy</p> <p>Postgraduate Training in Education or Communication – prepare for careers in cultural education or public communication, focusing on curriculum development, museum learning, or media-based outreach</p> <p>International Fellowships or Research Residencies – participate in global cultural and academic programmes offered by institutions or cultural innovation labs, allowing engagement in cross-cultural knowledge exchange and applied research</p>
<p>Employment Pathways</p>	<p>Graduates of the programme are equipped to pursue careers in Cultural Institutions, Tourism Industry, Creative Industries, Technology Sector, Government and Policy, Research and Academia, Entrepreneurship, Leisure Industry, Cultural Event Management, and Estate Management. What sets our graduates apart is their ability to combine technological innovation with cultural storytelling and interpretation, offering a distinct advantage over existing professionals in the sector. Key career pathways include:</p> <p>Tourism Manager/Coordinator – design and manage in-depth cultural tourism experiences, develop sustainable tourism planning, and create culturally authentic heritage tourism experiences for companies and clients</p>

	<p>Smart Technology Specialist – develop culturally- informed web-based and app-based services, VR/AR content, and digital tools that enhance visitor experiences across tourism and leisure sectors</p> <p>Policy Analyst/Researcher – conduct visitor studies and trend analysis, contribute to cultural policy-making, and research related to smart cities and sustainable cultural tourism with deep understanding of cultural implications</p> <p>Cultural Entrepreneur – create innovative startups that bridge cultural tourism with cutting-edge technologies while maintaining authentic cultural narratives</p> <p>Cultural Programming Manager – coordinate cultural events combining cultural expertise with technological solutions, and design thematic events that enhance various properties and estates as cultural destinations through meaningful storytelling and interpretation</p>
<p>Minimum Admission Requirements</p>	<p>The admission requirements for the Programme are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Hold a recognised bachelor’s degree (Preference will be given to those who hold a bachelor’s degree in arts and social sciences, heritage studies, tourism, management, media and communication or other related areas from an institution recognised by the University); – Fulfill language requirements: <p><u>Chinese Proficiency Requirement (exclusively for the Chinese stream)</u></p> <p>All applicants for the Chinese stream must demonstrate proficiency in Chinese (Putonghua). The applicant needs to satisfy one of the following requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Obtained a bachelor’s degree or above in which the medium of instruction was Putonghua; or ▪ Achieved Level 4 or above in the Chinese Language subject in the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education Examination (HKDSE); or ▪ Achieved Level 6 or above in the Hanyu Shuiping Kaoshi (HSK); or ▪ Other equivalent qualifications. <p><u>English Proficiency Requirement (exclusively for the English stream)</u></p>

	<p>All applicants for the English stream are required to be proficient in both spoken and written English. This requirement is generally met by applicants who have obtained a bachelor's degree or above from an institution where the medium of instruction is English.</p> <p>Applicants whose entrance qualification is obtained from an institution where the medium of instruction is not English should fulfil the following minimum English proficiency requirement:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Overall score 6.0 in the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) (Academic), with no subtest score lower than 5.5; or ▪ Score 550 (Paper-based test) or 80 (Internet-based test) in TOEFL; or ▪ CET6 450; or ▪ Other equivalent qualifications.
Operator	<p>Hong Kong Shue Yan University 香港樹仁大學</p>

HKCAAVQ Report No.: 25/181