Determining QF Levels

1. There are ten criteria for Learning Programme Accreditation (LPA). Of these, five are the fundamental core underpinning the design and delivery of outcome-based learning programme(s). They should be evaluated in relation to each other, for the purpose of determining QF level. The five criteria are listed below.

   - Programme Objectives and Learning Outcomes
   - Programme Content and Structure
   - Admission Requirements and Student Selection
   - Teaching and Learning
   - Student Assessment

2. The inter-relationship of the fundamental criteria in LPA is addressed and explored through a set of key questions as depicted in the following diagram.
3. The process depicted in the diagram shows the process for designing a learning programme meeting the QF standards, starting from questions exploring programme design at the conceptual and theoretical level, and then progressing gradually towards actual implementation.

**Key questions to be addressed**

**Question 1.** Whether the programme intended learning outcomes (PILOs) are commensurate with the claimed QF level in Hong Kong (e.g. QF level 5 for bachelor’s degree)?

For non-local learning programmes (NLPs) from countries with a qualifications framework, this question can be addressed indirectly by considering how the PILOs are benchmarked against the QF of the home country. A comparison of the two QFs at the appropriate level is then performed.

**Question 2.** Whether the PILOs are sufficiently and reasonably supported by the module intended learning outcomes (MILOs)?

A mapping of the MILOs to the PILOs can be used to illustrate the contributions from the MILOs to each of the PILOs. The meanings of ‘sufficiently’ and ‘reasonably’ are illustrated below.

**Question 3.** Whether the MILOs are appropriately reflected in the assessments?

This question can be considered at the system level and the implementation level. At the system level, this refers to the design of the assessment tools. A module description typically would contain information such as the assessment weightings and strategies. At the
implementation level, assessment papers, marking schemes / criteria and marked assignments / scripts, etc. should be reviewed for the purpose of ascertaining the alignment of the MILOs with the design of the assessments. In particular, attention should be paid to the alignment between the expected level of challenges of MILOs and the actual assessment employed. It may also be useful to point out that the MILOs should be considered as the minimum requirements for a student to pass a module. While it is not possible to fully examine all the modules in a programme, it would be useful to provide examples of some representative modules for the above purpose.

Question 4. Whether the assessments suitably correspond to the content of modules?

Again, this question can be considered at the system level and the implementation level. At the system level, the link between individual module topics and the assessments should be reviewed to ensure that the topics are suitably covered by the assessments, and vice versa. At the implementation level, the actual teaching / learning materials should be compared side-by-side with the examination papers to ensure that the nature of questions asked, or the required performance in a practical assessment, is appropriate. It may not be practical to perform such analysis for all modules. Some representative modules should be selected for this purpose.

Question 5. Whether an average student admitted to the programme would have the necessary knowledge, skills and attitude to achieve the PILOs?

At the system level, this includes a review of the stipulated admission requirements and the process of making admission decisions. At the implementation level, the actual admission decisions should be judged using evidence such as admission profile, exemptions granted and non-standard entries. Adherence to the authority of the admission decision making process should also be emphasised.

4. Determination of QF level requires evidence from each of the fundamental five LPA criteria:

- Programme Objectives and Learning Outcomes
- Programme Content and Structure
- Admission Requirements and Student Selection
- Teaching and Learning
- Student Assessment

Evidence under each of these criteria should be presented in an integrated manner following the sequence of the five questions with cross-referencing so as to holistically and systematically demonstrate to the Accreditation Panel the rationale for the programme design pitched at a particular QF level.