

The HKCAAVQ Newsletter gathers information on news and events relating to HKCAAVQ and its fields of interest. This Newsletter is usually sent out quarterly to all HKCAAVQ Council Members, its quality partners and anyone interested in the work that we do.

Spotlight

From the Executive Director

Since the last edition of this Newsletter it is my privilege to have taken up the role as the Executive Director of the Hong Kong Council of Accreditation for Academic and Vocational Qualifications (HKCAAVQ).

There has never been a more exciting time to take be involved in quality assurance of education. The educational landscape in Hong Kong is constantly changing and evolving. Over the years, there has been significant development of the higher education (HE) as well as vocational and professional education and training (VPET) sectors, coupled with a growing trend in transnational education which brings quality of education and the need for quality assurance in focus.

HKCAAVQ has laid down the blueprint for future development in its Strategic Plan 2015-2019. We have initiated various projects which focus on addressing the needs of stakeholders and contribute to the improvement of our practices. These include the Manual for Institutional Review (IR) for the purpose of applying for university title under Cap 320, the new classification system for Programme Area Accreditation (PAA), Liaison Committees for VPET and HE, and a Review of the Standards and Criteria we use in accreditation and review exercises.

The review of Standards and Criteria is a major exercise that will be rolled out over the next two years. The review is managed by the Secretariat and the work is overseen by a Council Task Force. However, it is not HKCAAVQ's task alone. We need input and feedback from all relevant stakeholders to ensure that the revised Standards and Criteria reflect the quality that we want to strive for in the future. We will there seek your active support in making the review success. Information about the review will be provided through our newsletter and website. Your continued support is of significant value to us to ensure that we provide quality services and continue to improve. I look forward to working with all of you in the coming years.

Happy 2016!
新年快樂!



New Leadership

The Hong Kong SAR appointed Chairman Ir Dr Alex Chan Siu-kun and Vice-Chairman Mr. Roger Thomas Best assumed their new roles on 1 October 2015. Dr. Chan and Mr. Best have served the HKCAAVQ as members since 2009 and 2013 respectively. Together with seven newly appointed and seven re-appointed serving members, the Council composition combines expertise and experience in quality assurance, education and training both locally and internationally perspectives. The list of Council members 2015-2017 is available here: <http://www.hkcaavq.edu.hk/en/about-us/the-council-membership-list>

Furthermore, Ms. Dorte Kristoffersen, who has served HKCAAVQ since October 2014 as Deputy Executive Director (Academic), also assumed her new role as Executive Director on 2 November 2015.

HKCAAVQ 25th Anniversary

2015-2016 marks the 25th Anniversary of HKCAAVQ. To commemorate this special occasion, HKCAAVQ has organised a series of activities to share experience and insights into various topics regarding quality assurance of higher education and vocational and professional education and training.

Seminar on Effective Governance and Quality Assurance of Transnational Education held in September 2015

The celebration of the 25th Anniversary of HKCAAVQ began with the first thematic seminar on Effective Governance and Quality Assurance (QA) of Transnational Education (TNE). This was delivered by Dr Anna Ciccarelli, Fellow of The University of South Australia (UniSA), on 15 September 2015. Following Dr Ciccarelli's presentation was a Panel Discussion with local representatives from higher education institutions and professional bodies, including Mr Eric Ng, Registrar and Secretary of The Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK); Dr Louis Ma, Director of the School of Continuing and Professional Education (SCOPE) of City University of Hong Kong; and Mr Albert Chow, Director of Qualifications cum Registrar of The Hong Kong Institution of Engineers (HKIE).

With 25 years' experience initiating and managing Australian international education programmes in an executive leadership role, Dr Ciccarelli shared her wealth of expertise with the audience on her views and analysis in the areas of challenges faced by host and home countries in ensuring effective governance and QA in TNE. The presentation focused on reflections of lessons learnt from Hong Kong as a host country and Australia as a source country; and the current and future trends in TNE. The key to ensuring effective governance and QA of TNE, according to Dr Ciccarelli, is the harmonisation of local and non-local QA frameworks, which can be achieved through continuous communication and cooperation with local and non-local QA and professional bodies. Local representatives at the Panel Discussion echoed Dr Ciccarelli's views and shared their experience and perspectives on the importance of safeguarding the quality of TNE programme delivery for the benefit of local learners, as well as the adaptation of an outcome-based approach in the QA process of TNE programmes.

The seminar held at Youth Square, Chai Wan, was attended by nearly 100 participants, including local and overseas Council Members, senior members of UGC-funded institutions, AAA operators, representatives from professional bodies and QA agencies, as well as professional staff of HKCAAVQ.

25th Anniversary Gala Dinner

On 17 September 2015, HKCAAVQ held the major celebration of its silver jubilee, the 25th Anniversary Gala Dinner with close to 150 guests. The overwhelming support from all key stakeholders contributed to the undeniable success of the evening.



Mr Eddie Ng Hak-kim, SBS, JP, Secretary for Education, was invited as the Guest-of-Honour and delivered a thoughtful speech. Mr Ng said that HKCAAVQ has grown from humble beginnings to gradually establishing itself as a nationally and globally recognised independent quality assurance body. He emphasised the importance of HKCAAVQ having developed a robust quality assurance mechanism underpinning the Qualifications Framework, while also acting as a gatekeeper to safeguard the quality of learning programmes and qualifications.

The Honourable Martin Liao, then Chairman of HKCAAVQ in taking stock of past achievements, reiterated HKCAAVQ's commitment to contributing to the quality of education and training in Hong Kong and congratulated the new Chairman Dr Alex Chan as his successor.

HKCAAVQ also delivered to all guests its 25th Anniversary publication titled "Future Directors of Quality Assurance: Perspective from 10 Agencies", which has gathered valuable insights from QA agencies all around the world on future directions and challenges of quality assurance. The publication is available on our website: http://www.hkcaavq.edu.hk/files/publications/others/25AnniversaryPublication_Full.pdf

Seminar on Meeting Industry Training Needs – The New Zealand Experience held in January 2016



The second seminar, Meeting Industry Training Needs – The New Zealand Experience, was co-organised with Qualifications Framework Secretariat (QFS) on 6 January 2016 at Central Government Offices. Mr. Dean Minchington, CEO of ServiceIQ in New Zealand was invited to be the keynote speaker to share with around 150 participants, coming from ITACs and training providers, the roles of Industry Training Organisations in New Zealand, the approaches of Service IQ used for qualification design and assessment in vocational training to meet the industry needs.

After the sharing from Mr Minchington, a panel discussion session on the topic "Riding on the ServiceIQ experience: How the Industry Training Advisory Committee (ITACs) can work closely with the training providers" was conducted. Representatives from QFS, ITACs, and training providers were invited to share their views on the development of vocational training in Hong Kong, the roles of ITACs and the possible collaboration with training providers. Member of the audiences also actively participated in the fruitful discussions.

Open House

An Open House, to be held on 23 April 2016 is one of our upcoming 25th Anniversary celebration activities. We hope that this will help raise public awareness on the importance of the quality assurance work, enhance understanding of our work and showcase our efforts over the years. We look forward to building a stronger connection with our various stakeholders and the public.

Annual Operators Briefing 2015

HKCAAVQ organised its Annual Operators Briefing 2015 on 5 November 2015. It was well attended by some 100 representatives of academic and vocational operators.

In her welcoming remarks, Ms Dorte Kristoffersen, Executive Director, shared with participants an overview of recent developments, including the revised vision and mission Statement, the Strategic Plan 2015-2019 as well as the composition of the newly appointed Council. After that, Mr Sam Ho, Registrar, Research, Consultancy and Training, reported on the results of the Annual Operator's Survey and provided integral feedback on areas for improvement.

In order to enhance operator's understanding of accreditation requirements, HKCAAVQ had invited Dr Keith Tong, Associate Director, Center for Language Education at the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology to join an interactive session with Mr Wilbur Pang, Registrar, Academic Accreditation and Audit and Ms Polly Wong, Registrar, Vocational Accreditation and Development to share his professional experience from the perspective of an experienced Panel member. The main topics covered were:

- Accreditation process: the importance of the accreditation document and the site visit
- Accreditation outcomes: principles and process
- Cooperative relationship between HKCAAVQ and Operators

QR Updates

In 2014, the Liaison Committee on Quality Assurance (LCQA) conducted a review of the existing classification of 21 Areas of Study and Training on QR. In June 2015, LCQA endorsed a new broader classification system of 14 Areas of Study and Training for the QR. HKCAAVQ in its capacity as QR Authority is now in the process of adapting the QR system to the new classification system. The re-classification is targeted for completion in the first quarter of 2016 and the incorporation of sub-areas in the second quarter of 2016. An update on the progress of the changes will be provided to QR operators at the forthcoming QF Conference/QR Operators Briefing on 22 March 2016.

In response to concerns expressed in the annual QR Operators' survey about the user-friendliness of the "Export" function in the operators log-in interface, the usability of this function has been enhanced commencing from mid-January 2016. With an aim to facilitate operators to export their published QR records in a more convenient way, an addition of four selection criteria were incorporated in the interface, i.e. (a) Registration Status; (b) QR Registration Number; (c) Title of Qualification; and (d) Types of Qualification. Apart from these, the use of the "Keywords" data field in the qualification uploading process has been changed from mandatory to optional. To view these new features, operators can logon to QR via the link http://www.hkqr.gov.hk/HKQRPRD/web/hkqr-en/operators/Operators_Login/.

Capacity Building for Operators and HKCAAVQ Specialists

HKCAAVQ continues to provide training opportunities for Operators and Specialists:

Workshop on Writing Learning Outcomes

Learning outcomes are the starting point of outcome-based programme development. With a view to strengthening operators' formulation of appropriate outcome statements that reflect programme objectives and the targeted QF Level, a workshop was arranged on 7 December 2015. 37 representatives from 17 operators attended and explored the relevant techniques in formulating outcome statements.



Tailor-made Training to Operators

HKCAAVQ continues to offer tailor-made training on request of operators in accordance with their training needs. Recently, HKCAAVQ has conducted tailor-made training events to different organisations on more advanced topics, including "Outcome-based Programme Design and Development" and "Exploring the Requirements for Programmes pitched at Level 5 of QF".

Refresher Workshop for Specialists

On 11 December 2015 a Refresher Workshop was arranged for Specialists who had already received the preliminary training or participated in accreditation exercises. The purpose of the workshop was to share with Specialists the global trends in quality assurance of education and training provision, to update Specialists on the latest development of quality assurance in HKCAAVQ, and to explore common issues encountered in the course of accreditation for the purpose of continuous improvement. 31 Specialists attended and appreciated the role plays and case studies in the Workshop.

Visit by the UK Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA)

Dr Fabrizio Trifiro, Deputy Head International of QAA, visited HKCAAVQ on 26 & 27 November 2015. During his two-day visit, QAA and HKCAAVQ colleagues talked about the registration and accreditation of non-local learning programmes (NLP) offered in Hong Kong. Views and experience on quality assurance matters were exchanged and opportunities for collaboration in NLP accreditation were explored.

Delegation visits to HKCAAVQ

HKCAAVQ is committed to international engagement to share our practices with partners and interested organisations and to learn about their good practices. To this end, we have recently received three delegation visits as follows:

- NingBo Education Bureau on 16 October 2015
- Fiji Higher Education Commission on 23 October 2015
- Jiangsu Open University on 7 December 2015

News Roundup

- The Education Bureau published the documents titled [“List of New and Discontinued Full-time Locally-Accredited Self-financing Sub-degree Programmes by Institution from the 2014/15 to 2016/17 Academic Year”](#) and [“Average Annual Tuition Fee and Levels of Adjustment of Full-time Locally-Accredited Self-financing Sub-degree Programmes by Institution from the 2013/14 to 2015/16 Academic Year”](#).
- The Education Bureau and the Indonesian Ministry of Education & Culture signed a memorandum of understanding on 16 Dec 2015 to enhance education collaboration between Hong Kong and Indonesia. [Details](#)

Latest Update

Review of Accreditation Criteria and Standards

Since the launch of the Four-stage Quality Assurance Process in 2008, there have been a number of important developments in the education and training sector. To ensure that the accreditation criteria and standards included in the Four-stage Quality Assurance Process continue to be fit for purpose for the wide diversity of operators and learning programmes operating under the QF, a review of the criteria and standards will be conducted over the next two-years starting in late 2015. The review is monitored by a Taskforce set up by the Council.

The scope of the review will cover the accreditation criteria and standards used in the Four-stage Quality Assurance Process, Institutional Review for the purpose of seeking Cap 320 registration, and accreditation of Non-local Learning Programmes.

The review will make reference to current practices of quality assurance and accreditation standards, views from stakeholders, and both local and international practices and experiences.

Input will be sought from an Advisory Committee comprising members from a broad cross section of the education and training sectors, desktop research, and focus group meetings with stakeholders. Extensive consultations will be conducted to seek comments and support from stakeholders at a later stage of the development. A dedicated page will be set up on the HKCAAVQ website to post relevant information about the review and update on progress.

INQAAHE External Review Recommendations

Based on the report from the External Review Panel that undertook a review of HKCAAVQ against the International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE) Guidelines of Good Practice in June 2015, the INQAAHE Board in October 2015 confirmed HKCAAVQ's alignment with the Guidelines of Good Practice (GPP). Of the twelve individual Guidelines in the GPP, HKCAAVQ has demonstrated full alignment with eight and substantial alignment with four of them. The report prepared by the Review Panel explains the achievement of HKCAAVQ in each of the Guidelines. It also puts forth a number of commendations and recommendations, which are also supported by the INQAAHE Board. The Review report is available [here](#).

The Review Panel commends HKCAAVQ, in particular for its:

- high level of commitment to the goals of the agency demonstrated by the Council members and the Secretariat as a whole.
- commitment to, and success in, disseminating documentation for the policies, procedures and criteria it uses in accreditation activities.
- high quality and expertise of the Case Officers appointed to support the entire process of accreditation and work as members of Panels.

The other commendations and the recommendations can be found in the Review Report. While noting the commendations, HKCAAVQ accepts the recommendations and is formulating initiatives to take forward these recommendations. The initiatives include the setting up of Stakeholders Liaison Committees to provide a platform for dialogue with representatives of our main stakeholders of accreditation services to discuss the parameters within which HKCAAVQ operates and topics of mutual interests related to the development of our services.

HKCAAVQ in Numbers

Summary Accreditation Reports

To increase transparency about the outcome of quality accreditation processes to stakeholders, HKCAAVQ began publishing summary accreditation reports in 2013. As of January 2016, the web page of the summary accreditation reports has recorded over 10,900 page views. The following statistics provide a breakdown of the reports uploaded on our official website as of 15 January 2016:

Total Summary Accreditation Reports online: 440
 Initial Evaluation (IE): 38
 Learning Programme Accreditation (LPA): 62
 Combined Learning Programme Accreditation (Combined LPA): 1
 Initial Evaluation + Learning Programme Accreditation (IE+LPA):18
 Learning Programme Re-accreditation (Re-LPA): 272
 Learning Programme Accreditation + Learning Programme Re-accreditation (LPA + Re-LPA): 49
 Click [here](#) to view Summary Accreditation Reports.

Qualifications Register

As of 15 January 2016, there are 7,546 qualifications on the Qualifications Register.

Click [here](#) to view detailed breakdown of the January statistics.

Note:

“LPA” and “Re-LPA” were previously known as “Programme Validation (PV)” and “Programme Revalidation (Re-PV)” before the update of the Four-Stage QA Process Guidelines in August 2014.

Around the World

Australia

- Professor Belinda Probert of the Office for Learning and Teaching (OLT) published a discussion paper titled "The quality of Australia's higher education system: How it might be defined, improved and assured". It sets out to encourage an informed and critical debate concerning why educational quality needs to be demonstrated and what has been learned from the last two decades of policy and practice. [Details](#)

Europe

- The new EU Directive on recognition of professional qualifications takes effect on 18 January 2016, with an aim to expedite mobility procedures across all EU member states by either confirming that the individual's professional qualifications have been recognised by the host country, or that the individual has met the conditions to provide services on a temporary or occasional basis. [Details](#)
- INQAAHE will organise its Biennial Forum in Sigatoka, Fiji from 22nd- 24th May 2016. The main Forum theme is "Quality Assurance in Higher Education in Challenging Times". [Details](#)

Ireland

- Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) published a white paper and opened a consultation process on draft Policy and Criteria for the Validation of Education and Training Programmes. This will be of interest to prospective and current providers of further or higher education and training programmes leading to QQI awards. [Details](#)

New Zealand

- Academic Quality Agency for New Zealand Universities (AQA) announced the appointment of Professor Sheelagh Matear as its new Executive Director with effective from 29 February 2016, following the retirement of Dr Jan Cameron after six years in the position of AQA Director. [Details](#)

UK

- Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education, UK (QAA) published the Subject Benchmark Statements for Biosciences and Biomedical Sciences, which forms part of the UK Quality Code for Higher Education. [Details](#)

USA

- Council for Higher Education Accreditation published "The Condition of Accreditation". It contains quantitative information about accredited U.S. institutions and programs, accrediting organizations, international accreditation activity and recognition of accreditors. [Details](#)

Upcoming Events

QF Conference cum CAT Info Day 2016

The QF Conference cum CAT Info Day 2016 organised by Education Bureau (EDB) and supported by Qualifications Framework Secretariat (QFS) and HKCAAVQ will be held on Tuesday, 22 March 2016 at the Central Government Office.

More details and the programme rundown of the event are to be provided near the time.

Specialist Appointment Ceremony 2016

To express our warm welcome to newly-appointed Specialists, the annual Specialists Appointment Ceremony will be held on 15 April 2016 (Friday) at Holiday Inn Golden Mile Hong Kong Hotel.

The Ceremony is not only a special occasion for us to present the Certificate of Appointment to our Specialists, it is also an opportunity for Council Members and staff of HKCAAVQ and Specialists to get to know one another during the networking session. We will also be able to share with the Specialists some of our important milestones at the ceremony.

Contact us

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