Policy on Specialists Appointment and Management

1. Purpose

1.1 This document outlines the policy on the appointment and management of HKCAAVQ Specialists.

2. Background

2.1 Peer review is one of the guiding principles of HKCAAVQ’s quality assurance process. Peers from universities, industry and the professions are engaged as Specialists to provide informed opinions on quality issues including but not limited to accreditation, assessment and consultancy. For accreditation, these Specialists normally participate in accreditation exercises as panel members.

2.2 Specialists with relevant financial and corporate governance qualifications and experience may be engaged as Finance and Corporate Governance Experts (Experts) to act as advisors to panels in accreditation exercises. These Experts provide their expert opinion to accreditation panels on issues relating to financial management and corporate governance.

3. Approval Authority

3.1 The Specialists Selection Committee (SSC) (Attachment 1) advises on the policies and guidelines governing the selection of HKCAAVQ Specialists / Experts; endorses the appointment, re-appointment and termination of appointment of the Specialists / Experts for approval by the Executive Director (ED); and advises on the maintenance of the personal information of Specialists / Experts. The SSC is a committee of the Secretariat chaired by a Council Member appointed by the Council Chairman. The members of the SSC are Heads of the following three functional areas: (a) Academic Accreditation and Audit (AAA),
(b) Vocational Accreditation and Development (VAD); and (c) Research, Consultancy and Training (RCT).

Appointment and Termination / Suspension of Appointment

4. Appointment of Specialists / Experts

4.1. Specialists are normally identified from HKCAAVQ’s established networks including the Industry Training Advisory Committees (ITACs), trade unions, trade associations, industrial organisations, professional bodies, academia and other local and international quality assurance organisations. Specialists are appointed on the basis of their experience and expertise in relevant industries and/or disciplines as well as in quality assurance and/or the qualifications framework. Criteria for appointment include the following:

- Expertise and years of experience in areas of study / training and industry
- Academic / vocational qualifications
- Professional expertise (as members of professional bodies)
- Relevancy of past experience as evidenced from:
  - Consultancy / Advisory / Training Experience
  - Accreditation / Skills Assessment Experience
  - Training received in relation to Accreditation / Quality Assurance or related activities

4.2. Nominations are normally made by professional staff of the accreditation functional areas (the proposer) having consulted their respective heads (the seconder). The Curriculum Vitae Form for Specialist Nominees (nomination form) is used to capture the required information for consideration by the SSC.

4.3. To avoid conflict of interest, the relevant SSC member will abstain from a decision on the appointment if the nomination is made / seconded by him / her. If any SSC member has a potential conflict of interest concerning the appointment of a nominee, the relevant SSC member has to make a declaration for decision by the SSC chair. The procedure for Specialist Appointment is in Attachment 2.

4.4. Nomination of Specialists to join the pool of Experts follows the same procedures outlined in paragraphs 4.2 & 4.3.

4.5. HKCAAVQ does not accept self-nomination.
4.6. The appointment period of Specialists is normally three years with a maximum of two consecutive terms of appointment offered on or after 20 October 2010. The last day of all appointments made in the first half of a calendar year will be 30 June of N+3 (where N = the calendar year when appointment is made); and the last day of all appointments made in the second half of a calendar year will be 31 December of N+3. The SSC may consider endorsing second term of appointment based on the recommendations from the Heads, having regard to the personal particulars, experience and appointment criteria specified in paragraph 4.1, as well as the Specialists’ experience and performance in HKCAAVQ accreditation exercise(s) and/or other services. The procedure for Specialist Re-appointment is in Attachment 3.

4.7. Specialists whose terms of service have expired after the second term of appointment may be re-nominated after a cooling-off period of normally six months. Personal particulars and experience specified in paragraph 4.1 as well as experience and performance in HKCAAVQ accreditation exercise(s) and/or other services will be considered in the re-nomination process. The procedure for re-nomination of Specialist is in Attachment 4.

4.8. Specialists serve in a voluntary and individual capacity. They must abide by HKCAAVQ’s Code of Conduct when participating in accreditation exercises.

5. Termination / Suspension of Appointment

5.1. Specialists’ service normally ends upon the expiry of their term of appointment, except for the case of re-appointment under paragraph 4.6 or re-nomination under paragraph 4.7.

5.2. Appointments of Specialists can be terminated by HKCAAVQ for good cause. Under such circumstances, the appointment will end on the date of the ED’s decision on the recommendation of the SSC.

---

1 Specialists serving the erstwhile HKCAA were invited to join the HKCAAVQ on its inception in 2007. On 14 Oct 2009, the Secretariat introduced a system of compulsory retirement to the Specialists upon expiry of their three consecutive terms of service, each lasting 3 years (3x3 year-terms). On 20 Oct 2010, the terms of service of Specialists was revised to 2x3 years (i.e. two consecutive terms of service, each lasting three years) for appointments made thereafter.
5.3. Termination of service can also be initiated by Specialists. Under such circumstances, the day of receipt of such written notice by HKCAAVQ will be the last day of the Specialist(s)’ service.

5.4. Specialists who decline HKCAAVQ’s offer of re-appointment will have their service terminated upon expiry of their first term of service.

5.5. When Specialists are appointed as HKCAAVQ Council Members or Appeal Board Members, their appointment as Specialists will be suspended with effect from the date of commencement of their appointment in HKCAAVQ Council or the Appeal Board. Their Specialists’ appointment will be reactivated when their appointment in HKCAAVQ Council or Appeal Board ends.

**Management of Specialists / Experts**

6. **Training of Specialists**

6.1. Appointed Specialists will be invited to join training workshops where appropriate. The overall training strategies for Specialists are as follows:

(a) To develop and implement training, development and briefing activities related to accreditation work.
(b) To disseminate approved policies, processes and good practices on accreditation.

6.2. Training activities and events ranging from appointment ceremony to induction, refresher and chairmen workshops, sharing sessions and pre-visit panel briefings are designed and developed to meet the strategies as well as the following objectives:
- Capacity building to effectively execute the Specialists’ roles and responsibilities in accreditation
- Cultivation of sense of belonging among the Specialists as members of HKCAAVQ extended family.

6.3. Further training support is provided to Specialists via the access controlled Online Specialists Resource Centre that hosts the online training module and reference materials among other things. All panel members, local or non-local, are required to attend a pre-visit briefing prior to conducting an on-site visit.
7. **Deployment of Specialists**

7.1. Appointed Specialists may be engaged in various kinds of HKCAAVQ activities, including but not limited to the following:
- In the capacity of panel chairs and members, to participate in accreditation exercises;
- In the capacity of Experts, to provide expert opinions on financial and corporate governance matters of accreditation exercise(s);
- In the capacity of HKCAAVQ review committee chair and members; and
- In the general capacity of Specialists, to
  - provide expert opinions on Qualifications Assessment and consultancy projects;
  - provide expert opinions on aspects of quality assurance work of HKCAAVQ in general; and
  - provide updates on specific topics and/or industry development to HKCAAVQ through staff forums and sharing sessions.

8. **Personal Data**

8.1. Specialists’ personal data are handled in accordance with the Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance (Chapter 486). Specific policy guidelines on the handling of Specialists’ personal data are in [Attachment 5](#).

HKCAAVQ
November 2014
Specialists Selection Committee

Composition

The composition of the Committee is as follows:

a) a Council Member appointed by the Council Chairman as chair
b) Heads of the following functional areas as members:
   i. Academic Accreditation and Audit (AAA);
   ii. Vocational Accreditation and Development (VAD);
   iii. Research, Consultancy and Training (RCT)
c) the subject officer (Specialists) of RCT as secretary

Terms of Reference

The terms of reference (ToR) of the Specialists Selection Committee are as follows:

1. To advise on the policies and guidelines governing selection of HKCAAVQ Specialist(s)/Expert(s) and ensure regular review and monitoring.

2. To review specialist/expert nominations and to endorse nominees’ suitability for appointment as HKCAAVQ Specialist(s)/Expert(s) based on transparent selection criteria, policies and guidelines.

3. To endorse renewal or termination of HKCAAVQ of Specialist(s)/Expert(s) appointment for decision by the Executive Director in accordance with stipulated policies and guidelines.

4. To advise on the maintenance of a database of Specialists in accordance with the stipulated policies / guidelines and Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance.

Meeting Schedule and Decision making

The Committee normally meets yearly with monthly circulation on routine matters resolved by simple majority vote. If there is a tie, the case will be referred to the Executive Director for final decision. To avoid conflict of interest, the relevant SSC member will abstain from making a decision on the appointment if the nomination is made / seconded by him / her.
Specialist Appointment Flowchart (Oct 2014)
(Note: HKCAAVQ does not accept self-nomination)

Source of Potential Nominees

Proposer identifies potential nominees

Head of relevant accreditation functional area assesses suitability as Specialist

Potential nominees suitable as Specialists?

Yes

Proposer sends nomination forms to identified nominees for completion of Part 1 of the nomination form

Proposer signs Part 2 of the completed nomination form

Head of relevant accreditation functional area signs Part 3 of the completed nomination form

RCT acknowledges receipt of the completed nomination form

Data Verification and Entry

Missing or inconsistent information on nomination form?

No

Yes

RCT clarifies with proposers/nominees

End

Endorsement by Specialists Selection Committee (SSC)

Nominee meets the appointment criteria?

Yes

SSC endorses nominations. Nominations made/recommended by Heads should be endorsed by other members of the SSC

End

No

SSC reviews nominations at meeting / by circulation

SSC endorses nominations? Nominations

No

Yes

Endorsement by Specialists Selection Committee (SSC)

Yes

Endorsement by Specialists Selection Committee (SSC)

No

Approval by ED and Documentation Preparation

ED approves specialist appointment and signs appointment letters and Certificates of Appointment prepared by RCT

RCT notifies the nominee of the outcome

RCT notifies all parties concerned to erase/destroy the relevant personal data within 2 weeks

End
RCT circulates list of specialists whose appointment is due to expire in 3 months to Heads of accreditation functional areas

Heads of accreditation functional areas recommend Specialist’s suitability for re-appointment

RCT consolidates recommendations from Heads of accreditation functional areas for SSC’s consideration.

SSC reviews recommendations from Heads of accreditation functional areas at meeting / by circulation

Specialist meets the re-appointment criteria?

Yes

SSC endorses re-appointment. Recommendations by Heads should be endorsed by other members of the SSC.

ED approves offer of re-appointment

RCT issues letter to offer re-appointment

Specialist accepts re-appointment?

Yes

ED signs Certificate of Appointment

No

RCT prepares Certificate of Appreciation for signature by ED

ED signs Certificate of Appreciation
Yes

RCT circulates list of specialists whose appointment is due to expire in 3 months to Heads of accreditation functional areas

Heads of accreditation: functional areas considers Specialist’s suitability for re-nomination?

Yes

Heads of accreditation functional areas to sign confirmation form to recommend re-nomination

End

No

Former Specialists agree to be re-nominated?

Yes

Former Specialist to confirm accuracy of personal data and sign declaration and consent sections of the re-nomination form

End

No

Former Specialists

Re-nomination of Former Specialists by RCT

Endorsement by Specialists Selection Committee (SSC)

Nominee meets the appointment criteria?

Yes

SSC endorses nominations. Nominations made/recommended by Heads should be endorsed by other members of the SSC.

End

No

SSC reviews nominations at meeting / by circulation

End

Appointment of Specialist Expires

RCT ascertains whether former specialists would like to be re-nominated as Specialists

End

Re-nomination of Former Specialist Flowchart (Oct 2014)

RCT notifies relevant functional area

End

Appointment of Specialist Expires

Heads of accreditation functional areas to sign confirmation form to recommend re-nomination

End

SSC endorses nominations. Nominations made/recommended by Heads should be endorsed by other members of the SSC.

End

Former Specialists to confirm accuracy of personal data and sign declaration and consent sections of the re-nomination form

End

RCT notifies relevant functional area

End

Yes

RCT notifies the nominee of the outcome

End

ED approves specialists appointment and signs appointment letters and Certificates of Appointment prepared by RCT

End

Approval by ED and Documentation Preparation

Heads of accreditation functional areas considers Specialist’s suitability for re-nomination?
Personal Data Collected from Specialists and Specialists Nominees

Data Maintenance

1. RCT is responsible for the proper maintenance of personal data of specialists and specialist nominees (data subjects) collected from the completed Specialist Nomination Form (under the procedure of Data Verification and Entry in Attachment 2) as well as from subsequent requests of the data subjects to correct the data. Such data are kept in the Specialists/Panel Members Database (SPMD). Personal data may also be kept in other data systems managed by designated personnel of HKCAAVQ for various administrative processes in line with the policy regarding the handling of personal data as detailed in this Section.

Use of Personal Data

2. The data will / may be used by the relevant functional area(s) of HKCAAVQ for the following purposes:

   (a) processing nomination, including making enquiries within HKCAAVQ, other organisations or agencies for verification of the information given, if needed;
   (b) formally appointing the nominees as HKCAAVQ Specialists when found suitable, including storing the personal data in the data system of HKCAAVQ for the selection of Specialists to conduct quality assurance (QA) activities and participation in HKCAAVQ events as and when necessary thereafter;
   (c) conducting QA activities such as accreditation and assessment activities of HKCAAVQ including recording the personal particulars of the specialist concerned, i.e. his / her name, the country, the affiliated organisation and prevailing post title in the relevant Accreditation or Assessment Report and the data system of HKCAAVQ. The Report will become a permanent record and a summary accreditation report will be published on HKCAAVQ website for accreditation cases signed on or after 1 March 2013;
   (d) conducting other activities such as consultancy projects. The handling of personal particulars under such circumstances will be decided on a case by case basis, subject to prior agreement reached with the Specialist(s) concerned;
   (e) conducting HKCAAVQ events which include but are not limited to Specialists Workshops, Specialists Appointment Ceremonies and any other activities / information sharing events to help the Specialists stay connected with HKCAAVQ and to prepare them for their roles as HKCAAVQ Specialists; participants’ information i.e. specialists identification numbers, names and
areas of study and training / industries will become the permanent records of HKCAAVQ;

(f) communicating and promoting the events and services stated in 2(c) to (e) directly with HKCAAVQ Specialists through various communication channels such as mail, email, fax, phone call, Online Specialists Resource Centre or other means of communication;

(g) publicising the names and areas of study and training / industries of the Specialists in the online Specialists Register on HKCAAVQ website upon agreement by the Specialists;

(h) approaching the Specialist(s) for agreement to refer his / her / their names, areas of study and training / industries and contact means to accreditation and / or relevant bodies upon request for such referral, subject to prior agreement by the Specialist(s);

(i) conducting research and compiling statistics on the condition that the resulting statistics and results of the research will not identify the specialists concerned or attribute data to them in a form which will identify the data subjects or any of them;

(j) any other legitimate purposes as may be required, authorised or permitted by law which are directly related to the functions or activities of HKCAAVQ; and

(k) any other purpose(s) not specified above, subject to prior agreement by the Specialist(s).

Retention of Personal Data

3. If the nomination is not approved, HKCAAVQ will erase / destroy all personal data and related documentation, if any, in 2 weeks after notification of the nomination outcome to the nominee.

4. On termination of appointment of the Specialists (paragraphs 5.1 - 5.4 of this policy paper), HKCAAVQ will keep their personal data for no more than 3 years (counted from the date when the appointment ends), except in the circumstances as prescribed under paragraphs 2 (c) to (e) of this Attachment.

Access to and Correction of Personal Data

5. Individuals who have submitted the completed nomination form and appointed Specialists or relevant persons, on their own behalf, may request access to and the correction of their personal data which HKCAAVQ may hold under Cap. 486.
6. Requests concerning correction of personal data may be made by completing the relevant form available in the Online Specialists Resource Centre or in writing to the Senior Registrar (Head of Research and Training), Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications (Address: 10 Siu Sai Wan Road, Chai Wan, Hong Kong; Fax No: (852) 2812 6178). Normally, requests will be followed up within three working days after receiving the requests.

7. Requests concerning access to personal data may be made in writing to the Senior Registrar (Head of Research and Training), Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications (Address: 10 Siu Sai Wan Road, Chai Wan, Hong Kong; Fax No: (852) 2812 6178). Normally, requests will be complied with not later than 40 days after receiving the requests.

8. In compliance with Cap. 486, HKCAAVQ will not respond to any telephone enquiry related to personal particulars of Specialists by phone or any form of requests for access to / correction of personal data by a third party other than the specialist or relevant person.

**Notice to Specialists and Nominees about the Policy on the Use of Personal Data**

9. Information about the treatment of personal data is available to the Specialist Nominees in the nomination form and in the Fact Sheet distributed to Specialists on appointment as well as in the Online Specialists Resource Centre.