



## **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 and is also at the heart of the quality assurance process of HKCAAVQ. Peers from universities and industries 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 HKCAAVQ has established a Specialists Selection Committee (SSC) to consider and endorse, amongst other things, the (re-)appointment of Specialists for approval by the Executive Director (ED). Membership and Terms of Reference of the SSC is in [Appendix 1](#).

### **4. Appointment of Specialists**

- 4.1 Specialists are normally identified from HKCAAVQ's established networks including the Industry Training Advisory Committees (ITACs), trade unions, trade associations, industry training 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 and Training and/or industries
  - Academic / vocational qualifications
  - Professional expertise (as members of professional bodies)
  - Relevancy and currency of experience as evidenced from:
    - o Academic and professional activities
    - o Consultancy / Advisory / Training Experience
    - o Accreditation / Skills Assessment Experience
    - o Training received in relation to Accreditation / Quality Assurance or related activities
- 4.2 Nominations are normally made by the staff of the Secretariat (the proposer) having consulted their respective Heads (the seconder). Nominations can also be accepted from Council Members, the Qualifications Framework Secretariat, and professional bodies within the areas of education and training that HKCAAVQ provides accreditation services. The Curriculum Vitae Form for Specialist Nominees (nomination form) is used to capture the required information for consideration of the SSC.
- 4.3 To avoid conflicts of interest, the relevant SSC Member will abstain from a decision on an endorsement if the nomination is made or seconded by the member. If any SSC Member has a potential conflict of interest concerning the nomination/endorsement of a nominee, the relevant SSC Member has to make a declaration for decision by the SSC Chair.
- 4.4 Nomination of Specialists to join the pool of Experts follows the procedures outlined in paragraphs 4.2 and 4.3.
- 4.5 HKCAAVQ does not accept self-nomination.
- 4.6 The appointment period of Specialists is normally six years, split into two consecutive terms of appointment of three years. The last day of all appointments would be three years from the last day of the month in which the appointments are made. The appointment of the second term is subject to no negative observations in HKCAAVQ accreditation exercise(s) and/or accreditation/business needs of HKCAAVQ.
- 4.7 Specialists whose terms of service have expired after the second term of appointment may be re-nominated (following the procedure in paragraphs 4.2 and 4.3) 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 accreditation/business needs of HKCAAVQ will be considered in the re-nomination process.

- 4.8 Specialists serve in a voluntary and individual capacity. They must abide by HKCAAVQ's *Code of Conduct for Panels* when participating in accreditation exercises.
- 4.9 Due to business needs, HKCAAVQ may appoint panel members outside the pool of appointed Specialists as Case-Specific Invited Panel Members (CSIPMs). CSIPMs are not appointed Specialists and therefore are not managed under this policy. CSIPMs should be encouraged to become appointed Specialists after their first engagement with HKCAAVQ.

## **5. Termination 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. Upon expiry of appointment, a letter of appreciation will be sent to the Specialists.
- 5.2 Appointments of Specialists may be terminated by HKCAAVQ for good cause. Under such circumstances, the appointment will end on the date of the ED's decision based on the recommendation of the SSC.
- 5.3 Termination of service may 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.

## **6. Suspension of Appointment**

- 6.1 From time to time, Specialists may be appointed as:
- (a) a member of the HKCAAVQ Council under the HKCAAVQ Ordinance (Cap. 1150);
  - (b) a member of a Review Committee of HKCAAVQ established under Cap. 1150; or
  - (c) a member of the Appeal Board established under the Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications Ordinance (Cap. 592).
- 6.2 In the above circumstances, HKCAAVQ will not engage these Specialists in any accreditation, assessment and consultancy activities to avoid any potential conflicts of interest. Their appointments will be temporarily suspended until a time at which none of those circumstances is valid.

## **7. Training of Specialists**

7.1 Specialists will be invited to join training activities and events 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; and
- (b) To disseminate approved policies, processes and good practices on accreditation.

7.2 Face-to-face and online training activities and events ranging from induction to refresher, and chairperson workshops, sharing sessions and pre-visit panel briefings are designed and developed to meet the strategies as well as the following objectives:

- (a) Capacity building to effectively execute the Specialists' roles and responsibilities in accreditation; and
- (b) Cultivation of sense of belonging among the Specialists as members of HKCAAVQ extended family.

7.3 Further training support is provided to Specialists via the access controlled Online Specialists Resource Centre and Moodle platform 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 a site visit.

## **8. Engagement of Specialists**

8.1 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 a member of a Review Committee of HKCAAVQ established under Cap. 1150; and
- In the general capacity of Specialists, to
  - o provide expert opinions on Qualifications Assessment and consultancy projects;
  - o provide expert opinions on aspects of quality assurance work of HKCAAVQ in general; and
  - o provide updates on specific topics and/or industry development to HKCAAVQ through staff forums and sharing sessions.

- 8.2 Professional staff of accreditation units may also engage the Specialists through social events, or other means, for updating of HKCAAVQ's latest developments and collection of sector-specific intelligence.
- 8.3 As a token of appreciation of the contribution of Specialists in accreditation exercises, HKCAAVQ provides honorarium depending on their roles and QF Level(s) of an exercise. HKCAAVQ has a mechanism to review the rates every five years.

## **9. Personal Data**

- 9.1 Specialists' personal data are handled in accordance with the Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance (Cap. 486). Specific policy guidelines on the handling of Specialists' personal data are in Appendix 2.

## **10. Delineation of Roles and Responsibilities**

- 10.1 Head of RT is responsible for conducting data and profile analysis on the Specialists, and to keep the Directorates informed of any anticipated gaps so that appointment of new Specialists and relevant training can be timely arranged for ensuring availability of sufficient number of qualified Specialists to meet the needs of HKCAAVQ.
- 10.2 Heads of AAA and VPA are responsible for collecting feedbacks from the relevant stakeholders such as the Case Officers, Operators and Panel Chairs/Members, and to keep the Directorates informed of the performance of the Specialists and the CSIPMs, and recommend suitable nominees to be appointed as new Specialists to meet the needs of HKCAAVQ.
- 10.3 Deputy Executive Directors are responsible for liaising with Council Members, QFS and professional bodies to identify suitable nominees to be appointed as Specialists, and assigning the staff of Corporate Communications to adopt a data-informed and coordinated engagement with potential, appointed and expired Specialists.

HKCAAVQ  
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## Specialists Selection Committee

### Terms of Reference

1. To advise on 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 suitable nominees for appointment as HKCAAVQ Specialist(s)/Expert(s) based on the stipulated selection criteria, policies and guidelines.
3. To endorse renewal or termination of HKCAAVQ of Specialist(s)/Expert(s) appointment for approval by the Executive Director in accordance with the stipulated policies and guidelines.
4. To advise on the maintenance of a database of Specialists/Experts in accordance with the stipulated policies and guidelines as well as the Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance.

### Composition

**Chair:**

A Council Member appointed by the Council Chairman

**Members:**

A Council Member appointed by the Council Chairman

Deputy Executive Directors

Heads of the following units:

- (a) Academic Accreditation and Assessment (AAA)
- (b) Vocational and Professional Accreditation (VPA)
- (c) Research and Training (RT)

**Secretary:**

The Subject Officer (Specialists) of RT

### Personal Data Collected from Specialists and Specialists Nominees

#### Data Maintenance

1. RT is responsible for the proper maintenance of personal data of specialists and specialist nominees (data subjects) collected from the completed nomination form as well as from subsequent requests of the data subjects to correct the data. Such data are kept in the Quality Management System of HKCAAVQ.

#### Use of Personal Data

2. The data will / may be used by the relevant unit(s) of HKCAAVQ for the following purposes:
  - (a) processing (re-)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 activities and participation in HKCAAVQ events as and when necessary thereafter;
  - (c) conducting 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, which will be published on HKCAAVQ website in its entirety or in summary in accordance with the relevant policies;
  - (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 paragraphs 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 (re-)nomination is not approved, HKCAAVQ will erase / destroy all personal data and related documentation, if any, in two weeks after notification of the nomination outcome to the nominee.
4. On termination of appointment of the Specialists (paragraphs 5.1 - 5.3 of this policy document), 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 appendix.
5. Data relevant to appointment history and accreditation history is kept permanently as there is a legitimate business need for preserving such information, which is propriety data of HKCAAVQ.

### **Access to and Correction of Personal Data**

6. Individuals who have submitted the completed nomination form and appointed Specialists, or relevant persons as defined in Personal Data (Privacy) Ordinance (Cap. 486), may request access to and the correction of their personal data which HKCAAVQ may hold under Cap. 486.
7. 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 Head and Senior Registrar, 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.



8. Requests concerning access to personal data may be made in writing to the Head and Senior Registrar, 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.
9. In compliance with Cap. 486, HKCAAVQ will not respond to any telephone enquiry related to personal particulars of Specialists, 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**

10. 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.