



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

ACCREDITATION REPORT

**THE HONG KONG ACADEMY FOR
PERFORMING ARTS**

PERIODIC INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW

FOR

DANCE

DRAMA

MUSIC

THEATRE AND ENTERTAINMENT ARTS

FILM AND TELEVISION

JUNE 2021

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1. TERMS OF REFERENCE

1.1 Based on the Service Agreement (No.: AA682), 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 The Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts (the Academy) to conduct a Periodic Institutional Review with the following Terms of Reference:

- (a) To conduct an accreditation test as provided for in the AAVQO to determine whether the Academy can be approved to maintain the Programme Area Accreditation status for the Programme Areas (as listed under Specifications of the Programme Areas undergoing Periodic Institutional Review) for a specified validity period; and
- (b) To issue to the Academy an accreditation report setting out the results of the determination in relation to (a) by HKCAAVQ.

1.2 Specifications of the Programme Areas undergoing Periodic Institutional Review

Area of Study and Training	Sub-area	Programme Area	Claimed QF level
Arts, Design and Performing Arts	Performing Arts	Dance	6
		Drama	6
		Music	6
		Theatre and Entertainment Arts	6
	Fine Arts and Visual Arts	Film and Television	6

2. HKCAAVQ'S DETERMINATION

2.1 HKCAAVQ has determined that the Academy can be approved to maintain the Programme Area Accreditation (PAA) status for the programme areas of (i) Dance, (ii) Drama, (iii) Music, (iv) Theatre and Entertainment Arts, and (v) Film and Television at QF Level 6 under the Area of Study and Training "Arts, Design and Performing Arts" with a validity period of five years.

2.2 The Operator approved to maintain the PAA status is considered as meeting the HKCAAVQ accreditation standards of the Periodic Institutional Review. The Operator's policies are in line with the strategic plans and are consistent with the overall mission, aims and objectives of its operation. The Operator continues to have appropriate mechanisms and management procedures to ensure effective academic development, quality assurance, staffing and staff development. Its resources allocation supports the development and management of the programme areas. The Operator also has robust internal processes in place that ensure its learning programmes meet the stated objectives and QF standards.

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 maintenance of the PAA status are specified as follows:

Name of Operator	The Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts 香港演藝學院	
Address of Operator	One Gloucester Road, Wan Chai, Hong Kong	
Name of Award Granting Body	The Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts 香港演藝學院	
Area of Study and Training	Arts, Design and Performing Arts	
Sub-area	Performing Arts	Fine Arts and Visual Arts
Programme Area (in bold) and Scope of Programme Area	Dance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Study and training in principles, choreography, performance, pedagogy, dance and technology, dance science, teaching and learning, documentation, and research for Dance. 	Film and Television <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Study and training in cinema directing, cinema producing and production management, cinematography, cinema sound recording and soundtrack design, cinema editing,

	<p>Drama</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Training, study and research in acting, directing, playwriting, Drama and Theatre Education, and Applied Theatre. 	cinema production design, documentary, screenplay, and research for Film and Television.
	<p>Music</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Study and training in Chinese and Western instrumental and voice performance, conducting orchestras, composition, and research in music. 	
	<p>Theatre and Entertainment Arts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Study and training in costume and scenic design, lighting and sound design, technical direction, arts and event management, and research for Theatre and Entertainment Arts. 	
QF Level	Level 6	
Start Date of Validity Period	1 August 2021	
End Date of Validity Period	31 July 2026	
Address of Teaching / Training Venue(s)	(1) One Gloucester Road, Wan Chai, Hong Kong (2) 139 Pokfulam Road, Pokfulam, Hong Kong	

2.5 HKCAAVQ will subsequently satisfy itself whether the Operator remains competent 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 fulfilment of any condition and compliance with any restriction stipulated in this Accreditation Report.

3. INTRODUCTION

- 3.1 The Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts (the Academy) was established by The Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts Ordinance (Cap 1135) (HKAPA Ordinance) in 1984. Since its establishment, the Academy has undergone several Institutional Reviews and a number of Learning Programme Accreditation/Re-accreditation (LPA/Re-LPA) exercises, as well as Programme Area Accreditation (PAA) exercises respectively at QF Levels 5 and 6 for five programme areas, namely Dance, Drama, Music, Theatre and Entertainment Arts, and Film and Television. As of the 2020/21 academic year, the Academy offers 20 learning programmes.
- 3.2 The Academy commissioned HKCAAVQ to conduct a Periodic Institutional Review covering the above-mentioned approved programme areas under its PAA status at QF Level 6. HKCAAVQ's *Manual for the Four-stage Quality Assurance Process under the Hong Kong Qualifications Framework (Version 1.2, November 2020)* served as the guiding document for the Academy and the Panel in conducting this exercise. HKCAAVQ formed an expert panel (the Panel) for this exercise (Panel Membership at **Appendix**).
- 3.3 A site visit for this exercise was scheduled from 29 March to 1 April 2021. As quarantine for inbound travellers due to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic was still in force in Hong Kong at the time of the site visit, overseas members of the Panel as well as representatives of the Academy currently residing outside Hong Kong participated in the site visit via video-conference. A small number of local representatives also chose to take part in site visit meetings via video-conference. While the site visit was conducted via video-conference for overseas Panel members and some local/overseas participants, local Panel members/Academy representatives had face-to-face meetings at the Academy's campus in Wan Chai. At the end of each meeting, the Panel obtained confirmation from the meeting participants that communication via video-conference had not been compromised due to any technical issues.

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 Organisational Effectiveness and Planning

The Operator must demonstrate that it is meeting its educational/training objectives, aligned with its vision and mission, and informed by comprehensive review of organisational effectiveness and implementation of strategically planned initiatives.

4.1.1 The vision and mission of the Academy, as stated in the accreditation documents, are as follows:

Vision

The Academy aspires to remain the institution of choice for the many talented Hong Kong performing arts students and become an institution of choice for talented young international students who are excited and motivated to explore the performing arts in Asia.

Mission

To cultivate 21st century performing artists with an Asian heart and a global view by providing an innovative, multidisciplinary, and globally focused education that capitalises on its position within a dynamic and diverse cultural metropolis and its strong industry and community partnerships.

4.1.2 To underpin the Academy's commitment of "cultivating 21st century performing artists" in its mission, the Academy developed the following Core Values, collectively known as "I4P". The I4P also guides the development of the Academy's programmes to ensure alignment between education/training objectives of the programmes and the Academy's vision and mission:

- Industry Engagement
- Innovation
- Interdisciplinarity
- Internationalisation
- Practice-as-Research

4.1.3 To continuously drive the achievement of the Academy's vision and mission, it has in place a strategic planning process which involves the formulation, implementation and review of strategic plans at regular intervals at institutional and school levels. The Academy's current Strategic Plan for a ten-year period (2013 to 2023) seeks to capitalise on its inherent strengths, track record of quality education and training in performing arts and artistic and professional assets to create a holistic learning experience in practice-based performing arts education that fosters the I4P Core Values among its students. In alignment with its vision and mission, the Academy's Strategic Plan 2013-2023 specified the following educational philosophy and objectives of its academic and artistic training:

- (a) To explore innovative approaches to performing arts education;
- (b) To provide a multidisciplinary learning environment within the diverse and dynamic cultural metropolis of Hong Kong – a unique point of intersection between Eastern and Western cultural practice offering students a rich, authentic, real world and engaging learning experience;
- (c) To ensure that students have the opportunity to work alongside the very best performing artists from around the world and to benchmark themselves against international best practice;
- (d) To challenge new creative paradigms that can reshape the way we view the performing arts; and
- (e) To make the Academy graduates the first choice of performing arts companies in the 21st century by equipping them with high level skills they will need to build careers as performing and creative arts practitioners, educators and cultural leaders in Hong Kong, the broader Asian region and within a global community of practice.

4.1.4 The Academy strives to enhance, on an on-going basis, the effectiveness of Strategic Plan implementation through evidence-based practices in its decision-making process. One prominent example is the establishment of the Strategic Planning and Institutional Research (SPIR) unit in 2017 to assist the directorate and senior management in (a) developing and implementing an enhanced strategic planning process; (b) monitoring the implementation of strategic plan and associated Key Performance Areas (KPA's); (c) providing institutional data and analyses to inform decision-making; and (d) conducting background research to assist

evidence-based decision-making. During the development of mechanism for strategic planning process, the SPIR considered and addressed recommendations made by the HKCAAVQ PAA Panels in 2012 and 2016, conducted a benchmarking study of strategic planning of 19 performing arts schools, and held consultations with Deans and Heads of administrative units.

- 4.1.5 The Academy's current strategic planning mechanism, as a result of the research and development work done by the SPIR, is designed and implemented with an aim to connect the ten-year Strategic Plan with medium (three-year) and short-term (one-year) plans at Schools/Unit levels, and to harmonise the direction, priorities and resource allocation of the Strategic Plan and the School/Department Development Plans (SDPs/DDPs). Within the SDPs/DDPs, the goals and initiatives at school/departmental levels are mapped against the Strategic Plan at the Academy level, so that the school/departmental goals and initiatives and related financial implications are aligned with the strategic development areas and educational/training objectives of the Academy. The SDPs/DDPs are reviewed on an annual basis with updates on internal/external environment assessment such as SWOT analysis, the progress of implementing the plan and issues encountered, and initiatives which may require additional resources/funding. Besides linking School/Unit planning with the Academy's planning cycle, the current strategic planning mechanism has also expanded the scope of planning beyond core academic matters by enhancing the role of academic and administrative units in the planning process, so as to facilitate a holistic view of pertinent issues across both organisational and discipline levels.
- 4.1.6 To substantiate the attainment of educational/training objectives through strategic planning and the effective use of evidence-based practices in reviewing and enhancing the Academy's educational offerings and services, the Academy provided to the Panel a compendium of information and documentary evidence of the implementation of the Academy's strategic plan in the past three years as measured against its planned organisational outcomes and KPAs, as well as its strategic planning including SDPs/DDPs for the next three years. The Panel considered the documentary evidence presented was meticulously prepared, comprehensive, and of good quality. Furthermore, the Panel noted that input from diverse stakeholders within the Academy has been channelled into the organisational processes to inform strategic planning and develop a common understanding about pertinent issues, strategies, and priorities across institutional levels, through discussion platforms

such as Academy Planning Retreats, Budget Hearing Meetings and Resource Planning Advisory Committee Meetings. Progress on the goals and initiatives set by Schools/Units in the current three-year period (since 2017/18) have been monitored and adjusted as necessary, showing a high degree of continuity and adaptability during the implementation of the SDPs/DDPs. To better align with the HKCAAVQ PIR cycles, it is noted that the Academy has approved the migration of strategic planning cycles from three-year to five-year intervals from the 2020/21 academic year onwards.

- 4.1.7 Within the Academy's structure, the Council, established under the HKAPA Ordinance by the HKSAR Government, provides strategic oversight on the Academy's operations and educational/training offerings as the governing and executive body. Various committees have been established under the Council to oversee different aspects of the Academy's operations and activities, namely Audit Committee, Development Committee, Finance Committee, Honorary Awards Committee, Human Resources Committee, Main Tender Board, Senior Staff Appointments and Remuneration Committee, and Staff Retirement Benefit Schemes Management Committee. The Council works closely with the Academy's directorates in setting institutional strategic directions, overseeing the development of the Academy according to approved plans, and monitoring the performance and effectiveness of the Academy in achieving its goals and targets through the KPAs. Each year, the Council Chairman works with the Academy Director to identify and agree on a list of KPAs for the Council's approval. The KPAs is a set of strategic priorities of the Academy covering high priority academic, administrative and institutional matters with strong organisational impact. Upon approval of the KPAs, the Academy Director then assigns a responsible officer for each KPA to formulate an action plan to delineate major actions, milestones and timeframe. During the academic year, the SPIR assists the directorate in monitoring the implementation of KPAs and compiling progress reports (three times a year) to the Council.
- 4.1.8 In respect of the oversight of academic developments, the Academic Board (AB), which has specific powers and duties in accordance with Section 19 of the HKAPA Ordinance, is the ultimate approving authority of academic policies and proposals of the Academy. The AB has delegated authorities to the Boards of Undergraduate/Postgraduate Education (BUE/BPE) to monitor undergraduate/post-secondary and postgraduate education respectively, as well as the Academic Policy and Quality Assurance Committee (APQAC) for all matters relating to academic policy and

quality assurance and enhancement policy and practice. The AB, BUE/BPE and APQAC form an integral part of the Academy's internal quality assurance system, supported by a structure of boards/committees at the institutional and school/departmental/unit levels (please refer to Section 4.5 for details of organisational quality assurance and enhancements).

- 4.1.9 During the site visit, the Panel met with representatives of the Council and senior management team to discuss their roles in strategic planning as well as oversight of the Academy's operations and activities. Through the discussion, the Panel had a view that the Academy's Council and senior management team are well informed and engaged, and the Council and senior management team have been working closely in executing and monitoring the progress of the Academy's Strategic Plan. They are well aware of the initiatives which would drive the achievement of the Academy's vision and mission and have been actively planning for such initiatives; for instance, the planned construction of a Student Hostel supported by the HKSAR Government for the purpose of attracting more international/non-local students, and the implementation of a revised undergraduate curriculum for enhanced interdisciplinarity in teaching, learning and production/research activities (please refer to Section 4.3 for details of programme area development and management). It was also observed that a culture of quality and collegiality has been instilled into the Academy through its governance and management teams, with an aim of achieving the vision of "One Academy". The Panel considered that management leadership and oversight would be one of the important factors for success in implementing the Academy's various strategic initiatives in the upcoming years.
- 4.1.10 In consideration of the above, the Panel concluded that the Academy has demonstrated the achievement of educational/training objectives continuously. The achievement of educational/training objectives has also aligned with the Academy's vision and mission, and informed by comprehensive reviews of organisational effectiveness and implementation of strategically planned initiatives.

4.2 **Organisational Leadership and Staffing**

The Operator must demonstrate that it continues to have a sufficient number of qualified and competent programme leaders, teaching and support staff, as a result of effective staff planning and development, and that these arrangements align with the development of the programme area(s).

- 4.2.1 Organisational leadership of the Academy, at the institutional level, is provided by a senior management team comprising the Academy Director, the Deputy Director and Provost, and six Assistant Deputy Directors responsible for key functional areas in the Academy's academic and administrative operations. The senior management team steers and executes the strategic, academic and administration direction of the Academy and ensures all operations are in line with the strategic action plans as approved by the Council. At the School level, leadership is provided by the Dean. With support by senior academic staff and the School Office, the Dean leads the academic development of the disciplines of the School. There are also two academic units under the Centre for Education and Research, namely the Complementary Studies (CS) unit and the Performing Arts Research (PAR) unit that respectively coordinate and provide General Education (comprising Liberal Arts and Language courses and Academy Electives) and postgraduate competency courses. These two units are led by the respective Heads working under the leadership of the Assistant Deputy Director (Programme Development).
- 4.2.2 For management at programme level, the Academy has formally established under its quality assurance mechanism a Programme Management Structure. Under this structure, a Programme Leader assisted by Major Leaders and Course Coordinators form a team to provide leadership in academic and management matters of the programme/major/courses under their management. Programme Leaders and Major Leaders are subject experts of relevant disciplines; Course Coordinators are either subject experts of contextual studies courses or a cluster of courses of cognate discipline(s) within the Schools or under the CS/PAR units. The Programme Teams report to the Dean of respective Schools. The roles and responsibilities of Programme Leader/Major Leader/Course Coordinator are described in the Quality Assurance Manual.
- 4.2.3 During the site visit, the Panel met with representatives of institutional, school and programme management to discuss their roles and responsibilities in the planning, development, oversight and review of programme(s) under their purview. Through the discussion, the Panel formed the view that the Academy's staffing plan in tandem with current and future programme/course offerings is appropriate. Staff responsible for academic and operational management at various levels have made use of the internal quality assurance system effectively to gauge the strengths and weaknesses of programmes/courses and to take remedial actions on

a timely manner. Furthermore, staff's workload has been monitored in accordance with Academy policy, with the Academy's overall Staff-to-Student Ratio (SSR) maintained at around 1:5 in the 2019/20 academic year.

- 4.2.4 To demonstrate sufficiency of academic, teaching and support staff within the approved programme areas, the Academy provided figures of actual headcounts and full-time equivalent (FTE) of academic, administrative, technical and academic support staff as well as visiting and temporary academic staff from the 2017/18 to 2020/21 academic years (cut-off date for 2020/21 was 23 October 2020). Staffing projection for the next five years was also provided, and it is noted that any growth in staff numbers must be linked with the development of strategic initiatives, with funding supported by the HKSAR Government through the annual Resources Allocation Exercise (please refer to Section 4.4 for details of management of resources and services).
- 4.2.5 Each of the five Schools operating the approved programme areas, namely School of Dance, School of Drama, School of Music, School of Theatre and Entertainment Arts, and School of Film and Television provided in the accreditation documents information on full-time, part-time and visiting academic staff as well as Programme/Major Leaders. It is noted from the information and meeting with academic staff representatives during the site visit that individual Schools have maintained a balanced mix of local and overseas staff in their teaching teams, which is in line with the Academy's long-term strategy of internationalising its academic and teaching expertise. To supplement regular teaching, the Academy has invited a significant number of local and international guest artists and Artists-In-Residence over the past years to offer master class/workshop programmes to students and engage in exchanges with academic staff for professional development purposes.
- 4.2.6 The Academy recognises that one of the key factors in maintaining the attractiveness of its programmes to students, especially students from outside Hong Kong, is the reputation of its staff as leaders in their disciplines. Opportunities for professional development is also considered by the Academy as important for its academic staff to keep up to date with their knowledge, widen their experience/exposure, develop new skills, and upgrade their academic qualifications. To ensure these factors for effective programme development and delivery are sustainably realised, all members of the faculty in the Schools are actively associated with related industries, such as being invited as speakers/presenters in

seminars, workshops and symposia, and serving as chair/members of government/industry advisory bodies and local/international industry associations. In terms of staff development activities, an annual allocation of funds to the Schools is supported by the Academy's staff development budget line. The funds are distributed through the Staff Development Fund Committee in each School according to Academy policy and School priorities. The Panel was provided with information on funded and non-funded staff development activities within and outside of the Academy participated by individual academic staff from each School since 2016, as well as information on professional awards received by individual staff, and publications and research and scholarly activities by individual staff.

- 4.2.7 As evident from the ratings and comments provided by students in the Student Feedback Questionnaire (SFQ) Survey in the past three years, staff's external engagement and professional development have contributed positively towards maintaining the quality of programme delivery. The Panel was also of the view that academic staff of the Academy are well linked with industry as practising artists, and from discussion with many academic staff during the site visit, the Panel observed and commended a strong collegiality among academic staff of different Schools as well.
- 4.2.8 In terms of current policy and practices in staff appraisal and development, the Academy provided to the Panel procedural guidelines for academic staff performance appraisal and policy on staff development activities. The Panel was also provided with the latest Staff Handbook which contains general information on staff employment, personnel matters, staff benefits/allowances, as well as policies/procedures on performance appraisals, appeals/grievances, staff development, and other matters such as the use of facilities/services, goods purchasing, and handling public complaints. The above-mentioned policy, guidelines and practices are considered comprehensive, transparent and accessible, which have facilitated the Academy's effective management and appraisal of its staff.
- 4.2.9 In realising "Practice-as-Research" as one of the Academy's Core Values (Para 4.1.2), the Performing Arts Research (PAR) unit has been established since 2018. In addition to its duty to develop and cultivate research culture in the undergraduate programmes, it also coordinates master's degree programmes with Programme Leaders and supports the delivery of postgraduate competency courses. To assist master's degree students in conducting research as part of the

requirements for a Thesis Project, the PAR unit has organised “research clinics” in the past. When reviewing sample Thesis Projects conducted by students of the Master of Fine Arts (MFA)/Master of Music (MMus) programmes, the Panel observed that some research work involved the use of specific research methodologies in social sciences, which may not be the primary area of expertise of the thesis supervisors who specialise in performing arts disciplines. Moreover, it is noted that the training and support to master’s students on research competency has mainly been provided in-house by staff of the PAR unit. The Panel was of the view that master’s students may benefit from additional specialist support in conducting research for their Thesis Project, and such specialists could possibly be drawn from outside of the Academy’s staffing pool. In this regard, the Panel **advised** the Academy to encourage the establishment of linkages with other local institutions either through the PAR unit or individual thesis supervisors, so that individual master’s students may have opportunities to seek specialist advice for their research work in case such expertise is limited among current staff of the Academy.

- 4.2.10 Overall, in terms of organisational leadership and staffing, the Panel considered that the Academy has demonstrated sufficiency in the number, quality and competence of teaching and support staff. Leadership at institutional and school/departmental/unit levels have also functioned effectively for the planning and development of the programme areas.

4.3 Programme Area Development and Management

The Operator must demonstrate that the processes for programme approval, development, review, as well as the formulation of strategic plans at both the organisational and programme area levels, are linked and continue to remain effective to meet its educational/training objectives within the approved programme area(s).

- 4.3.1 Under the approved programme areas of Dance, Drama, Music, Theatre and Entertainment Arts, and Film and Television, the Academy operates learning programmes ranging from QF Levels 3 to 6. The programmes operating under the approved programme areas as of the 2020/21 academic year are listed below (by descending order of QF Level):

Name of Programme	QF Level
Master of Fine Arts in Cinema Production	6
Master of Fine Arts in Dance	6
Master of Fine Arts in Drama	6
Master of Fine Arts in Theatre and Entertainment Arts	6
Master of Music	6
Bachelor of Fine Arts (Honours) in Dance	5
Bachelor of Fine Arts (Honours) in Drama	5
Bachelor of Fine Arts (Honours) in Film and Television	5
Bachelor of Fine Arts (Honours) in Theatre and Entertainment Arts	5
Bachelor of Music (Honours)	5
Diploma in Dance Foundations	4
Diploma in Drama Foundations	4
Diploma in Music Foundations	4
Diploma in Theatre and Entertainment Arts Foundations	4
Advanced Diploma in Dance	4
Advanced Diploma in Music	4
Certificate in Theatre and Entertainment Arts (Fast Track Vocational)	3

4.3.2 The Advanced Diploma programmes in the disciplines of Music and Dance will be phased out by the end of the 2020/21 and 2021/22 academic years respectively. Four Diplomas in Foundations (DipF) at QF Level 4 in the disciplines of Dance, Drama, Music, Theatre and Entertainment Arts were developed and internally validated by the Academy during the Mid-cycle Programme Review (MCPR) in March 2019 and have been in operation as QF-recognised programmes since the 2019/20 academic year.

4.3.3 To demonstrate that the design, delivery and assessment of programmes under the approved programme areas have remained effective in terms of achieving the intended learning outcomes at the claimed QF levels and maintaining coherence, balance and progression, the Academy provided to the Panel by electronic access a large quantity of sample student assessments from recent academic years covering a mix of formative and summative types at different levels of performance (high, medium and low marks), and from programmes pitched at different QF levels within the approved programme areas, along with associated assessment papers, project briefs and rubrics, and course instructor's written feedback to students. The Panel was also provided with Reports (including the Academy's responses) from External Academic Reviewers (EAR) appointed by each School and the CS unit to advise on quality

standard of the programmes from the 2017/18 and 2018/19 academic years. Upon review of sample assessments and EAR Reports, the Panel found that the achievement of outcome standards is appropriate to the level of the sampled programmes, with external benchmarking conducted on a regularly basis through the EAR feedback mechanism.

- 4.3.4 In addition to sample assessments, the Panel also reviewed summary information from Graduate Employment Surveys in 2016/17, 2017/18 and 2018/19 academic years and met with many of the Academy's graduates from various programmes during the site visit. The graduates and their diverse portfolios, in the Panel's view, demonstrate that competencies and qualities such as multi-skilling, innovativeness and entrepreneurship have been achieved through the Academy's educational/training provisions. The range of performance opportunities provided to students (in a normal year) has been extensive, which enabled them to fine-tune their practical skills and serve the local community at large. The graduates felt that they have benefited from cross-school collaborations in these performance opportunities, which allowed them to learn a common professional language for better preparation for a professional career in the performing arts.
- 4.3.5 In terms of the processes for new programme development, approval and review, it is noted that the DipF programmes pitched at QF Level 4 were examples of such processes being carried out effectively and appropriately under the Academy's internal quality assurance system. As a strategy to meet the challenges presented by the decreasing population of local secondary school graduates and increasing competition from other higher education institutions, the Academy conceptualised the offering of DipF programmes in 2017. With the initial approval by the AB, the DipF programmes underwent further developments in 2018 and were validated by an Internal Review and Validation (IRV) Panel during the MCPR in March 2019, and subsequently approved by the AB to be launched in the 2019/20 academic year. The Panel was provided with an action timeline of the development and approval of the DipF programmes from 2017 to 2019, and a paper trail of evidence documenting the conceptualisation of the programme framework, benchmarking study of language courses in the DipF programmes, internal vetting including responses to recommendations by the IRV Panel, and approval records by relevant Boards/Committees. According to the figures provided by the Academy, following the launch of the DipF programmes, the intake of first-year undergraduate students in the 2020/21 academic year grew by close to 9% (18 students out of a

total intake of 218). Among this cohort of first-year undergraduate students, 29 are graduates from the DipF programmes. It is noted that the Academy will continue to review the effectiveness of the DipF programmes as “feeder” to its undergraduate programmes, as well as the need to develop a similar programme in Film and Television as an institutional strategy for admission purpose.

- 4.3.6 Besides the launching of new DipF programmes, the curriculum of the Academy’s undergraduate programmes, namely the Bachelor of Fine Arts (Honours) (BFA) and Bachelor of Music (Honours) (BMus) programmes are in the process of undergoing Curriculum Review since 2016. It is noted that Stage I of the Curriculum Review, with interim refinements of the BFA/BMus programmes, has been approved for implementation in the 2019/20 academic year. Based on findings from Stage I, a model for developing the Academy’s Common Curriculum Framework was reported to the AB in mid-2019. Subsequently, a Task Force on Curriculum Review was established in the same year to lead the development of the Common Curriculum Framework. Stage II of the Curriculum Review, which laid down the agreed curriculum model and semester structure, was approved by the AB in mid-2020. Currently, the Academy is in the process of the final stage (Stage III) of Curriculum Review, which is the re-development of BFA/BMus programmes (referred to as Curriculum C by the Academy) based on the agreed curriculum model. Curriculum C, developed in a phased manner, is expected to be completed by the 2021/22 academic year for implementation in the 2022/23 academic year.
- 4.3.7 The Panel was provided with evidence documenting key stages of the Curriculum Review, such as initial data collection from international consultants for benchmarking purposes from 2016 to 2018; consultation of internal stakeholder at the Academy’s Planning Retreat in 2019; and progress reports and corresponding phases of Curriculum C developments submitted to the AB for information and approval in 2020. Sample Programme/Course Specification Documents of the BFA, which are still in development stage, were also provided to the Panel for information and review.
- 4.3.8 As provided in the accreditation documents, the following are some of the major changes to be implemented under Curriculum C:
- (a) The Academy’s semester structure will be revised as “4-2-4-2-4”, allowing two 2-week periods for interdisciplinary and collaborative practice/performance/production, and a

standardised approach for delivering Complementary Studies courses;

- (b) All courses will span over 12 weeks, with the Academy Credit to Notional Learning Hours (NLH) ratio to be standardised as 1:36 (i.e. 3 NLHs per week over 12 weeks of regular classes);
- (c) Variations within a specified range (90-96 credits) of Major/Contextual Studies are allowed to address pedagogical needs of respective programme areas, but each programme should have one single total credit value;
- (d) Specialisations are possible under the respective Major Study areas, but “Double Majors/Minors” will no longer be a feature in all programmes;
- (e) Study load will be spread over four years, with a minimum of 12 credits per semester and a maximum of 40 credits per annum, and credit load of year-long courses should be evenly split over the two semesters; and
- (f) Five components of courses serve respective functions in the curriculum. No School and Academy Electives will be offered in Year 1 Semester 1, and no Academy Electives will be offered in Year 4 Semester 2.

4.3.9 In light of developments in related field of performing arts, and the realisation of the Academy’s strategic planning towards interdisciplinarity and “Practice-as-Research” in its undergraduate programme curriculum, the Panel was of the view that the changes to be implemented under Curriculum C of the BFA/BMus programmes by the 2022/23 academic year are appropriately planned, well consulted internally and externally, and effective in enabling the BFA/BMus programmes to remain current and valid. Nevertheless, the Panel suggested that more considerations could be given to the operational practicalities for ensuring effective use of the two-week “white space” in the revised undergraduate semester structure (4-2-4-2-4), for the actualisation of interdisciplinary collaborations among staff and students of different Schools. The Panel also **advised** the Academy to devise ways in the future to formalise interdisciplinary collaborative activities which may be initiated by the students themselves, so that the workload in addition to scheduled classes and assignments could be recognised and alleviated.

- 4.3.10 To summarise, the Panel was of the view that the Academy has demonstrated the processes for programme approval, development and review remained effective, and that the strategic planning at organisational and programme area levels are linked and continue to contribute towards the realisation of its educational/training objectives.

4.4 **Management of Resources and Services**

The Operator must demonstrate that, within the approved programme area(s), the mechanisms for management and deployment of resources and services continue to be effective to meet the educational/training objectives, as a result of implementing organisational resource allocation policies and financial budgets.

- 4.4.1 As a statutory body operating under the HKAPA Ordinance, the Academy is funded by the HKSAR Government through the Home Affairs Bureau (HAB). Similar to other Government-funded local education institutions, government subvention and student tuition fees are major sources of the Academy's annual revenue for its undergraduate (QF Level 5) and post-secondary (QF Levels 3/4) provisions. In this context, the Academy submits annual budget estimates to the HAB for approval.
- 4.4.2 To support the Academy's on-going academic and related activities, the HKSAR Government provides an annual recurrent grant based on approved public policy objectives, while capital grants are provided to approved expenditures for building works projects and major equipment installations. The Academy is vested with autonomy and flexibility in utilising its funds in accordance with the provisions of the HKAPA Ordinance and the Memorandum of Administrative Arrangements (the Memorandum). The Memorandum also allows the Academy to retain its savings from recurrent grant subject to an agreed maximum limit.
- 4.4.3 The annual operation plan in alignment with the Strategic Plan sets out the Academy's direction for financial planning. Each year, the Resource Planning Advisory Committee (RPAC), chaired by the Director of the Academy and consists of eight senior staff members, considers funding proposals submitted by Schools and Departments and provides professional views on the appropriateness of the proposals. Prior to the RPAC meeting, a budget hearing meeting convened by the Academy Director with panel members comprising the Deputy Director and Provost, and the Assistant Deputy Director

and Chief Financial Officer, reviews the funding proposals and discuss to what extent the school/departmental funding proposals are aligned with the Academy's strategic goals. The Finance Office then recommends to the directorate how these proposals are to be funded. Apart from seeking government funding, other options may include virements, re-deployment of existing funding or more effective appropriation of reserves. Recommendations are then submitted to the Council for endorsement via the Finance Committee before the proposals are submitted to the HKSAR Government (via HAB) as part of the HKSAR Government's annual Resource Allocation Exercise (RAE). The HAB also undertakes a detailed scrutiny of the Academy's funding proposals from a funding body's perspective.

- 4.4.4 Besides government funding, other sources of income of the Academy include donations, sponsorships from donors and net operating surpluses from enterprise and development activities, such as continuing education programmes, renting of venues and car park operations. These sources of income are used to finance new developments, enhance the quality of education provision, and support activities currently not funded by the government, including, for example, self-financing master's degree programmes (MFA/MMus). In the Academy's Response to Panel's Initial Comments, it is noted that although some additional sources of income, such as venue hiring activities, have been adversely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic situation since 2020, the Academy has successfully raised close to HK\$160 million under the Eighth Matching Grant Scheme launched by the HKSAR Government in July 2019. This lump sum from the Matching Grant Scheme would serve as contingency funding for the on-going COVID-19 pandemic and related economic uncertainties that may affect the Academy's income in the coming years.
- 4.4.5 The Academy provided to the Panel for review during the site visit consolidated financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2020, including an Independent Auditor's Report to the Council of HKAPA with an opinion that the consolidated financial statements give a true and fair view of the consolidated financial position of the Academy as at 30 June 2020. From the audited consolidated financial statements, it is also noted that the Academy has an accumulated reserve permitted under the Memorandum (Para 4.4.2) amounting close to HK\$54 million as at 30 June 2020. As for the reserve appropriated by the HKAPA Council since 2005 which has been designated for the development and implementation of the master's degree programmes, it is noted that approximately HK\$2 million out

of the HK\$35 million reserve has been utilised so far. The above information on the Academy's financial position demonstrates that it has utilised its reserves efficiently during times of financial austerity. It is also evident that the Academy has made use of government funding efficiently and effectively for valuable purposes in alignment with its educational/training objectives. Furthermore, the Academy provided five-year financial projections of the Academy and of the master's degree programmes, which show that the Academy will continue to exercise prudent use of funding amidst times of economic uncertainties.

- 4.4.6 In terms of physical resources and services, the Academy's main campus located on the Wan Chai waterfront houses a complex of academic facilities, administration offices, and performance venues. It has a range of purpose-built teaching, learning and rehearsal facilities for performing arts disciplines including Chinese Opera, Dance, Drama, Film and Television, Music, and Theatre and Entertainment Arts. There are 18 fully equipped studios for dance, drama, and Chinese Opera, 38 music teaching rooms, 20 music practice rooms and two electronic music/composition rooms. Other facilities include digital recording studios and audio workstations, specialist and general computer laboratories, a dance science laboratory, a fully equipped television studio and professionally equipped workshops for costumes, props, scenic art and construction, and specialist laboratories for theatre lighting, sound, and stage technology. There is also a fully equipped Seminar Room with a desk capacity of 100. Support facilities include a student health centre with a full-time physiotherapist and a visiting nurse, a doctor, and a student counsellor.
- 4.4.7 In order to accommodate increased spatial needs resulting from the extension of the BFA/BMus curriculum from three to four years to align with the education reform in Hong Kong in 2012, the Academy obtained approval from the HKSAR Government in 2012 for funding to further enhance its teaching and learning facilities with an On-Campus Expansion (OCE) project. The OCE involved the construction of a nine-storey annex building on the existing Wan Chai campus. Major components of the OCE include studios, classrooms, student workstations, music rooms, laboratories, and other purpose-built academic space, as well as re-provisioned offices. Some of the studios are equipped with specialised equipment to enhance the teaching and learning potential of the space and encourage collaboration between the Schools. The OCE facilities have been in full operation since the 2019/20 academic year.

- 4.4.8 The Academy's second campus is in Béthanie, an 1875 heritage building located in Pokfulam. It houses the School of Film and Television, providing space for postgraduate teaching and learning and other activities. Facilities at the Béthanie include a television production laboratory, editing suites, Computer-Generated Imagery Laboratories (CGI Labs) and digital post-production facilities. A Screen Production and Research Centre (SPaRC), hosted by the School of Film and Television, is scheduled to become operational starting from September 2021. The SPaRC will be equipped with motion-capture technology, digital effects and animation to enhance teaching, production and research in digital screen for film and other performing art forms.
- 4.4.9 Apart from Wan Chai and Béthanie campuses, the HKSAR Government has also granted the use of the former Dairy Farm administration building adjacent to the Béthanie as a facility for the Certificate in Theatre and Entertainment Arts programme offered by the School of Theatre and Entertainment Arts. The facility houses a fully equipped lighting laboratory, sound laboratory, technical management workshop, two classrooms, a common room, offices and some storage areas.
- 4.4.10 The Academy provided to the Panel videos and 3D scenes of campus facilities, including common facilities such as the library and performance venues and specialised facilities designated for each of the five Schools, as well as information on online/digital teaching and learning resources provided by the Education-Information Technology unit (EDuIT). During the site visit, the Panel discussed with institutional and school level key personnel responsible for resources planning/management and student affairs/services to learn more about the strategies employed for better integration between campuses and support provided to students, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic when there were periods of campus lockdowns. It is noted from the discussion as well as relevant evidence provided in the accreditation documents that the Academy has taken a student-centred approach in its provision of student services, and it has been fully aware of students' needs and well-being during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Academy has responded quickly and effectively during campus lockdowns to shift to remote learning and provided alternative means of student support such as online counselling and additional financial and learning support to students in need. As for integration of campuses, the Academy has specifically planned to locate new Year 1 undergraduate students of the School of Film and Television predominately at the Wan Chai campus, so that students can attend CS courses more conveniently

and have more opportunities for integration with students from other Schools.

- 4.4.11 In regard to spatial planning, it is noted from the Response to Panel's Initial Comments that the Academy has engaged an international consultant in 2017 to conduct a Space Needs Studies for the purpose of developing space requirements guidelines and formulae. The Academy provided utilisation rates of teaching and performance venues since the implementation of space formulae and room specificity methodologies developed from the Space Needs Studies. It is observed that the utilisation rates, although not yet exceeded maximum capacity, have been on the high side in the past few years, for instance, with approximately 95% utilisation rates for general teaching venues and approximately between 70% and 89% utilisation rates for performance venues and specialised teaching venues, when the campus was in full operation during the 2018/19 academic year. With the implementation of Curriculum C from the 2022/23 academic year onwards, allowing more "white space" for interdisciplinary collaborations (Para 4.3.8), there may be possible increase in spatial demand by staff and students. The Panel therefore **advised** the Academy to be mindful of future increase in demand for physical space and specialised facilities arising from more cross-school collaborative activities and projects, so as to ensure an equitable distribution of resources and services.
- 4.4.12 On the management of resources and services, after considering documentary evidence provided by the Academy and discussing with key stakeholders, the Panel formed the view that the Academy has in place mechanisms for effective management and deployment of resources and services, such as organisational resource allocation policies and financial budgets, to continue to meet its educational/training objectives.

4.5 **Organisational Quality Assurance and Enhancement**

The Operator must demonstrate its on-going maintenance of an effective quality assurance system for ensuring the quality and standards of its learning programmes at the stated HKQF level(s) in the approved programme area(s), aligning with its educational/training objectives.

- 4.5.1 The Academy has in place an internal quality assurance and enhancement (QAE) framework, which ensures appropriate checks and balances, facilitates involvement of academic staff in QAE

matters, and engages key stakeholders for regular feedback on the quality of the Academy's provision in education and artistic training. The QAE framework and processes at institutional, school and programme levels for award-bearing and non-award bearing programmes of the Academy are documented in the Quality Assurance (QA) Manual. The Panel was provided with the latest version of the QA Manual (as of January 2021), and noted from the Academy's Response to Panel's Initial Comments that the latest version of the QA Manual documented minor adjustments to the process of collecting feedback on course delivery during the COVID-19 pandemic.

- 4.5.2 The boards and committees at the institutional and school/unit levels which are responsible for quality assurance-related matters at the Academy are summarised below:

Institutional-level

- (a) The Academic Board (AB), which is the ultimate approving authority of policies and proposals;
- (b) The Academic Policy and Quality Assurance Committee (APQAC), which is responsible for reviewing and developing academic-related rules, regulations and policies for the AB's approval; and
- (c) The Boards of Undergraduate/Postgraduate Education (BUE/BPE), which are executive boards of the AB working with the APQAC on all matters relating to academic policy development and quality assurance and enhancement, including but not limited to proposals for new/revised programmes, majors and courses.

School/Unit-level

- (a) For individual Schools, the School Management Committee (SMC) is responsible for establishing, maintaining and monitoring the academic standards of programmes within the policies and procedures set by the AB. The SMCs also submit recommendations to the BUE/BPE on relevant quality assurance and academic management matters for decision/endorsement;
- (b) Under the SMC, the School Teaching and Learning Committee (STLC) of individual Schools are charged with conducting

regular reviews on all aspects of the programmes offered by the Schools. Supported by Programme Leaders and their teams, the STLCs also make recommendations on relevant programme matters to the respective SMCs for consideration;

- (c) For the Complementary Studies (CS) Unit, the Complementary Studies Management Committee (CSMC) is responsible for establishing, maintaining and monitoring the academic standards of Complementary Studies courses within the rules, regulations and policies set by the AB; and
- (d) Under the CSMC, the Complementary Studies Teaching and Learning Committee (CSTLC) is responsible for reviewing all aspects of the academic operations of courses run by Complementary Studies Unit, including course delivery, teaching quality and learning outcomes.

4.5.3 The terms of reference, composition and membership of the boards and committees as mentioned in Para 4.5.2 are documented in the Academy's Committee Manual. The Committee Manual also serves as a reference document for relevant personnel of the Academy, which sets out the operational guidelines of the boards and committees.

4.5.4 As for policies relevant to ensuring the quality and standards of the Academy's learning programmes, they are documented in the Academy's Policy Manual and Operational Guide, which contains the latest policies and operational guidelines pertinent to students' academic matters from admission to graduation. The Policy Manual and Operational Guide is accessible by all staff as a reference on quality operation and compliance with the Academy's policies and regulations, and it is updated when there are new or revised policies.

4.5.5 To demonstrate effective implementation of the Academy's quality assurance system and policies/procedures in regard to the approved programme areas, the Academy provided examples of curriculum review and new programme development which were initiated and conducted since the 2016/17 academic year, including curriculum review of the Bachelor of Fine Arts (Honours) (BFA) and Bachelor of Music (Honours) (BMus) programmes, to be completed by the end of the 2021/22 academic year, and the design, development and review of the Diploma in Foundations (DipF) programmes in the disciplines of Dance, Drama, Music, and Theatre and Entertainment Arts, which were launched in the 2019/20 academic year. From the documentary evidence provided by the Academy, the Panel noted

that the above-mentioned curriculum review and new programme development have appropriately followed the Academy's internal system, policies and procedures in ensuring the expected programme standards have been met, and involved an extensive range of internal and external stakeholders in providing advice and feedback. There is also evidence of adequate use of external benchmarking in the curriculum review/programme development process, such as input from international experts on student performance and engagement of consultants from regional and international performing arts institutions on recommendations for curriculum review.

- 4.5.6 Apart from the use of external benchmarking in curriculum review and new programme development, the Panel noted that the Academy also regularly engages with its External Academic Reviewers (EARs) and External Examiners (EEs) to collect feedback for continuous improvement and enhancement of programme quality. EARs advise on the quality standard of programmes and/or academic management of the School, and EEs are appointed to assess students' work on an assessment panel together with in-house academic staff, to provide an external benchmarking of the assessment standards. To collect feedback on the quality and competencies of the Academy's graduates, each School has established a School Advisory Committee (SAC) comprising members from the industry, professional practitioners and potential employers. The Panel reviewed samples of recent EAR reports provided by the Academy, and met with representatives of EAR, EE and SAC from each School during the site visit. Based on a review of the written reports and exchanges with representatives during the site visit, the Panel formed the view that feedback collection from external academic/industry stakeholders has been a very interactive process, and the level of satisfaction expressed by these external stakeholders towards the achievements of students and graduates further affirms the Academy's strong reputation in Hong Kong and alignment with its educational/training objectives.
- 4.5.7 For the purpose of on-going maintenance of an effective quality assurance system, the Academy has recently reviewed its programme monitoring mechanism. It was approved in June 2020 to introduce an annual programme monitoring mechanism starting from the 2020/21 academic year, in addition to the existing Mid-cycle Programme Review (MCPR) process. The annual programme monitoring mechanism will consider internal and external feedback from various sources, such as analytical reports of student progress and attainment of learning outcomes, feedback from academic staff,

Student Feedback Questionnaire (SFQ) Survey Reports, EARs' reports, external stakeholders' comments, as well as reflections by Programme Teams. Individual Schools' responses and follow-up actions with timeline are reported to and monitored by the AB annually, in the form of an Annual Programme Monitoring Report Template submitted by the Schools. The annual programme monitoring exercise is expected to lead to identification of good practices for sharing across the Academy, room for improvement at School and institutional levels with follow-up actions and timeline for implementation. During discussion with academic staff with programme management responsibilities at the site visit, the Panel also learnt that enhancements have been made towards the central repository of course/curriculum documents and quality assurance-related data, from paper-based files to a digital content management system.

- 4.5.8 Noting the above actions taken to maintain its quality assurance system, the Panel considered that the Academy has demonstrated a highly efficient approach towards keeping its quality assurance system effective and up-to-date for the purpose of ensuring the quality and standards of its learning programmes.

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 maintenance of the PAA status 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 (<http://www.legislation.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 <http://www.hkqf.gov.hk>.

5.3 Qualifications Register

5.3.1 The PAA status as defined by the approved programme area(s) will enable the Operator, upon the completion of the Periodic Institutional Review exercise, to continue to offer programmes up to the QF level specified for the approved programme area(s) without prior learning

programme accreditation. The programmes offered by the Operator up to the QF level specified for the approved programme area(s) are eligible for entry into the Qualifications Register (QR). All other programmes offered by the named Operator falling outside the approved programme area(s) and which have not obtained accreditation status will not be considered as accredited programmes.

- 5.3.2 Upon completion of relevant procedures by Operators as determined by the Qualifications Register Authority, Operators may enter the qualifications covered within the scope of the PAA status into the QR at <http://www.hkqf.gov.hk> for recognition under the Hong Kong Qualifications Framework (QF).
- 5.3.3 Only learners who commence the study of a qualification covered within the scope of the PAA status during the validity period and who have graduated with the qualification listed in the QR will be considered to have acquired a qualification recognised under the QF.

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23 June 2021

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The Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts

Periodic Institutional Review for

Dance

Drama

Music

Theatre and Entertainment Arts

Film and Television

29 March – 1 April 2021

Panel Membership

Panel Chair

Professor Barbara VAN ERNST

Education Consultant
Non-Executive Director
AUSTRALIA

*** Panel Secretary**

Dr Jennifer LAW

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

Panel Members

Professor Ian BROWN

Professor Emeritus in Drama
Kingston University, London /
Honorary Senior Research Fellow in
Scottish Literature
University of Glasgow
UNITED KINGDOM

Professor FUNG Ying Him Anthony

Professor, School of Journalism
and Communication
The Chinese University of Hong Kong
HONG KONG

Ms Kerry LIVINGSTONE

Head of Ballet
Royal Conservatoire of Scotland /
Head of Associate Programme
Scottish Ballet
UNITED KINGDOM

Professor YU Kwan Wai Eric

Professor & Associate Vice-President
(Quality Assurance)
The Education University of Hong Kong
HONG KONG

* The Panel Secretary is also a member of the Accreditation Panel.

