



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

ACCREDITATION REPORT

THE HANG SENG UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG

LEARNING PROGRAMME ACCREDITATION

**MASTER OF ARTS IN
ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING AND TESTING**

AUGUST 2021

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1. TERMS OF REFERENCE

1.1 Based on the Service Agreement (No.: AA709), 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 Hang Seng University of Hong Kong (the Operator) to conduct a Learning Programme Accreditation with the following Terms of Reference:

- (a) To conduct an accreditation test as provided for in the AAVQO to determine whether the Master of Arts in English Language Teaching and Testing programme of the Operator meets the stated objectives and QF standard and can be offered as an accredited programme; and
- (b) To issue to the Operator an accreditation report setting out the results of the determination in relation to (a) by HKCAAVQ.

2. HKCAAVQ'S DETERMINATION

2.1 HKCAAVQ has determined that the Master of Arts in English Language Teaching and Testing programme (the Programme), retitled as Master of Arts in English Language Teaching and Assessment, meets the stated objectives and QF standard at Level 6. Subject to the approval by the Chief Executive in Council, the Programme can be offered as an accredited programme with a validity period of three years.

2.2 Validity Period

2.2.1 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.

2.3 The determinations on the Programme are specified as follows:

Name of Operator	The Hang Seng University of Hong Kong 香港恒生大學
Name of Award Granting Body	The Hang Seng University of Hong Kong 香港恒生大學
Title of Learning Programme	Master of Arts in English Language Teaching and Assessment 英語教學與評核文學碩士
Title of Qualification (Exit Award)	Master of Arts in English Language Teaching and Assessment 英語教學與評核文學碩士
Primary Area of Study and Training	Languages and related studies
Sub-area (Primary Area of Study and Training)	Languages and related studies
Other Area of Study and Training	Education
Sub-area (Other Area of Study and Training)	Education and Teacher Education
QF Level	Level 6
QF Credits	108
Mode of Delivery and Programme Length	Full-time, 1 year Part-time, 2 years
Start Date of Validity Period	1 September 2022
End Date of Validity Period	31 August 2025
Number of Enrolment	Two enrolments per year
Maximum Number of New Students	35 full-time students per year 10 part-time students per year
Address of Teaching / Training Venue	Hang Shin Link, Siu Lek Yuen, Shatin, New Territories

2.4 Recommendation

HKCAAVQ offers the following recommendation for continuous improvement of the Programme.

- 2.4.1 The Operator should keep the structure and content of the Programme, especially the three core modules on testing and assessment, under review to enhance their coherence and linkages. (Para. 4.3.3)

- 2.5 HKCAAVQ will subsequently satisfy itself whether the Operator remains competent to achieve the relevant objectives and the Programme continues to meet the standard 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 Operator acquired private university title in October 2018. Its predecessor, Hang Seng Management College (HSMC), was restructured from Hang Seng School of Commerce (HSSC) in 2010 as a self-financing post-secondary college registered under the Post Secondary Colleges Ordinance (Cap. 320).
- 3.2 HKCAAVQ formed an expert Panel (the Panel) for this accreditation exercise (Panel Membership in **Appendix 1**). In view of the outbreak of the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), the site visit was conducted via video conference on 10-11 June 2021 to reduce social contact. HKCAAVQ's *Manual for the Four-stage Quality Assurance Process under the Hong Kong Qualifications Framework* was the guiding document for the Operator and the Panel in conducting this exercise.

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 Programme Objectives and Learning Outcomes

The learning programme must have objectives that address community, education and/or industry needs, with learning outcomes that meet the relevant QF standards, for all exit qualifications from the programme.

- 4.1.1 The Programme is hosted by the Department of English of the Operator with the following objectives and intended learning outcomes:

Programme Objectives (PO)

The Programme aims to:

PO 1	provide students with up-to-date knowledge of theories and practice in teaching English to learners of diverse backgrounds
PO 2	provide students with up-to-date knowledge of theories and practice in English language testing for learners of diverse backgrounds
PO 3	develop students' abilities to critically reflect on and evaluate teaching and testing performance
PO 4	introduce research concepts and skills in English language teaching and testing
PO 5	instill in students a strong sense of commitment to professional ethics in language education

Programme Intended Learning Outcomes (PILOs)

Upon completion of the Programme, students are expected to be able to:

PILO 1	demonstrate a clear understanding of current trends and practices in English language teaching and testing for learners of diverse backgrounds
PILO 2	apply knowledge of language teaching and learning to daily English teaching work

PILO 3	critically and effectively design tests and other assessment tasks for English language learners
PILO 4	demonstrate basic abilities to analyse learner data for assessment and research purposes
PILO 5	show a strong sense of upholding ethical values in language education and research

- 4.1.2 To demonstrate the intended learning outcomes that meet the QF standard at Level 6, the Panel was provided with (a) mapping of POs and PILOs, (b) mapping of PILOs and MILOs (module intended learning outcomes), (c) mapping of MILOs and Generic Level Descriptors (GLDs) at QF Level 6, and (d) samples of teaching and learning materials and assessments.
- 4.1.3 In response to the Panel's comments, the Operator provided sample materials to illustrate how PO 4 and PILO 4 are to be achieved and assessed. The Operator also shared with the Panel that relevant research methods have been included in various modules, such as conducting secondary research and writing a literature review, designing appropriate research methods to test hypotheses, and analysing research data for practical use.
- 4.1.4 Regarding the programme title, the Panel observed that "language testing" is rather narrow in meaning and it does not resonate well with the broader content of the Programme. After considering the Panel's comments, the Operator revised the programme title from "Master of Arts in English Language Teaching and Testing" to "Master of Arts in English Language Teaching and Assessment". The Panel noted from the responses provided by the Operator that the change had been approved by its Department Board, School Board, Graduate Studies Committee and Academic Board.
- 4.1.5 The Operator confirmed that the Programme is not a teacher training programme leading to a teacher qualification, however, it provides relevant training in teaching English as a second/foreign language with a relatively high proportion of programme content devoted to the area of English language testing and assessment as compared with other teacher training programmes offered by other local institutions.
- 4.1.6 To demonstrate the potential demand for the Programme, the Operator shared with the Panel its market analysis which includes an industry survey and a survey of potential students. The industry representatives and the external advisors whom the Panel met in

the site visit meeting expressed strong support for the Programme. Potential education and employment pathways of the graduates of the Programme can be found in **Appendix 2**.

- 4.1.7 In consideration of the above information and the discussion with various stakeholders, the Panel formed the view that the Programme has objectives that address education and industry needs, with intended learning outcomes that meet the QF standard at Level 6.

4.2 **Learner Admission and Selection**

The minimum admission requirements of the learning programme must be clearly outlined for staff and prospective learners. These requirements and the learner selection processes must be effective for recruitment of learners with the necessary skills and knowledge to undertake the programme.

- 4.2.1 As understood from the accreditation documents and the responses provided by the Operator, the Panel noted the minimum admission requirements of the Programme as follows:

- a) A bachelor's degree in a discipline in or closely related to liberal arts or humanities components from a recognised university or equivalent; and
- b) Documentary evidence demonstrating applicants' English language proficiency, which includes:
 - completion of a degree from a tertiary institution or programme where the medium of instruction is English; or
 - a minimum of 550 (paper-based) and 79 (internet-based) in TOEFL; or
 - a minimum of 6.5 with at least 6.0 in each paper in IELTS; or
 - a minimum of 500 in College English Test-Band 6 (CET-6); or
 - an equivalent of any of the above.

(Remark: On top of the above minimum admission requirements, the Operator will conduct interview and written test to confirm applicants' suitability to study the Programme.)

- 4.2.2 Taking into consideration the Panel's comments, the Operator advised that applicants with a bachelor's degree in other disciplines

such as social sciences, science and applied science may also be considered if they meet other admission requirements and demonstrate a strong interest in English language teaching and assessment.

- 4.2.3 To ensure that students can cope with the high linguistic demands of the Programme, the Panel noted that the Operator had set a minimum score for individual papers of IELTS (i.e. at least 6.0 in each individual paper) and will conduct interview and written test to confirm applicants' suitability to study the Programme.
- 4.2.4 The Panel noted that the maximum number of new students per year for the Programme is 35 full-time students and 10 part-time students. In line with the HKCAAVQ's policy on the yearly quota of non-standard admission for its accredited programmes, the maximum number of non-standard admission (i.e. admitted applicants not meeting the stipulated minimum admission requirements) should be capped, on a programme basis, at a maximum of 5% of the actual number of new students of the year.
- 4.2.5 In consideration of the above information, the Panel considered that the minimum admission requirements, the student selection process and the proposed maximum number of new students per year are appropriate. In view of the potentially varied and diverse student body, the Panel reminded the Operator to develop a teaching and learning environment that supports students with different backgrounds and experience.

4.3 **Programme Structure and Content**

The structure and content of the learning programme must be up-to-date, coherent, balanced and integrated to facilitate progression in order to enable learners to achieve the stated learning outcomes and to meet the programme objectives.

- 4.3.1 The curriculum of the Programme comprises six core modules and two out of five elective modules. The programme structure is summarised in the table below. To be eligible for the award of Master of Arts in English Language Teaching and Assessment, students have to (a) complete and obtain a Grade D or above in the required 24 university credits which include six core modules and two elective modules, and (b) obtain a minimum cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA) of 2.0.

Modules	University Credits	QF Credits
6 core modules	18	81
2 out of 5 elective modules	6	27
Total: 8 modules	24	108

Remark: All the modules of the Programme are three University Credits each.

- 4.3.2 The Panel asked the Operator how the content of the Programme facilitates students especially those without prior knowledge and experience of English language teaching and/or assessment to achieve its intended learning outcomes. The Operator advised that the first two core modules (i.e. *ELTA6000 Linguistics and Applied Linguistics*, and *ELTA6001 Second Language Teaching: Theory and Practice*) would lay a solid foundation for students with different backgrounds for studying other modules. Furthermore, the Operator will support students with different backgrounds by providing academic writing workshops, academic consultations and a mini-practicum.
- 4.3.3 The Panel had a view that the structure and content of the three core modules on testing and assessment (i.e. ELTA 6002, 6003 and 6005) could be re-arranged to improve their linkages further. In this connection, the Panel **recommended** that the Operator should keep the structure and content of the Programme, especially the three core modules on testing and assessment, under review to enhance their coherence and linkages.
- 4.3.4 The Panel noted that the Programme includes a mini-practicum for students to translate theories of language teaching and assessment into practice in authentic pedagogical settings, with around 8-10 hours of supervised practice. The Panel noted that the Operator has good connections with some schools and institutions to support the mini-practicum. The Panel suggested the Operator to modify the arrangement of the mini-practicum especially for students who do not have prior teaching experience as a school attachment; and mentors in schools may invite students to co-teach with them or to conduct classroom observations if they see fit during the attachment.
- 4.3.5 The Operator indicated that modules from its other MA programmes that fit the POs and PILOs of the Programme may be made available to student as electives in the future. In response to the Panel's comments, the Operator confirmed that it will seek prior approval of HKCAAVQ before implementation of such change.

- 4.3.6 In consideration of the above information and the discussion with various stakeholders, the Panel considered that the structure and content of the Programme is appropriate in general and would enable students to achieve the stated learning outcomes and meet the programme objectives.

4.4 **Learning, Teaching and Assessment**

The learning, teaching and assessment activities designed for the learning programme must be effective in delivering the programme content and assessing the attainment of the intended learning outcomes.

- 4.4.1 The teaching and learning activities of the Programme include lectures, tutorials, case studies, group discussions, role-playing, projects and a mini-practicum. The Panel noted that the medium of instruction of the Programme is English and the teaching and learning activities will be facilitated through the use of technology such as cloud-based technology and Virtual Reality (VR). The *Module Outlines* of the Programme provide summary information of each module such as module aims, module intended learning outcomes, module content, contact hours, teaching and learning activities, assessment tasks and references. The Operator provided the Panel with samples of teaching and learning materials to demonstrate the academic standard of the Programme.
- 4.4.2 The assessments of the Programme include written assignments, presentations and projects. The Panel reviewed sample assessments of the Programme and considered that they demonstrated academic standard at QF Level 6. The Panel noted that external examiners will be appointed to give advice on the assessments of the Programme and *VeriGuide* will be used to detect plagiarism in student assessments.
- 4.4.3 In consideration of the above information and the discussion with various stakeholders, the Panel formed the view that the learning, teaching and assessment activities designed for the Programme are appropriate in delivering the programme content and assessing students' attainment of the intended learning outcomes.

4.5 Programme Leadership and Staffing

The Operator must have adequate programme leader(s), teaching/training and support staff with the qualities, competence, qualifications and experience necessary for effective programme management, i.e. planning, development, delivery and monitoring of the programme. There must be an adequate staff development scheme and activities to ensure that staff are kept updated for the quality delivery of the programme.

4.5.1 The Operator provided the following information to demonstrate the academic leadership and staffing for the Programme:

- (a) qualifications and experience of the Programme Director, who is also the Associate Head of the Department of English;
- (b) mapping of proposed modules and staff expertise;
- (c) profiles of potential teaching staff which includes six full-time teaching staff;
- (d) teaching experience in school setting of potential teaching staff; and
- (e) staffing plan and recruitment plan for the Programme.

4.5.2 While the Panel noted that the Operator has a dedicated teaching team to support the delivery of the Programme, the Panel considered that an additional full-time teaching staff who specialises in English language testing and assessment is necessary for quality delivery of the Programme. The Operator provided evidence to demonstrate that relevant staff recruitment has been in progress. As a contingency plan, the Operator may invite its external advisors with expertise in English language testing and assessment to serve as part-time teaching staff. The Panel noted that the Operator will avoid such a situation as relying on part-time staff or guest speakers may not be a cohesive or sustainable arrangement.

4.5.3 The Panel noted that teaching staff of the Operator have been engaging in relevant scholarly activities such as undertaking research projects and taking part in conferences and seminars. From the discussion with staff representatives, the Panel noted that the Operator has staff development plans that would strengthen the staff expertise for quality delivery of the Programme.

4.5.4 The Operator informed the Panel that it calculates the teaching load of academic staff on an annual basis. The Panel noted that the average weekly teaching hours of full-time professors, associate

professors, assistant professors, senior lecturers and lecturers are 6, 9, 9, 12-15 and 15-18 hours respectively (i.e. a maximum of 12, 18, 18, 27 and 33 hours per week on an annual basis). For part-time teaching staff, the teaching hours are capped at six hours per week. The Panel also noted that the Operator will monitor the overall staff deployment to avoid overloading its existing staff.

- 4.5.5 In consideration of the above information and the discussion with relevant stakeholders, the Panel formed the view that the programme leadership and staffing are appropriate in general, and the staff development activities of the Operator can ensure that teaching staff will be kept updated for the quality delivery of the Programme.

4.6 **Learning, Teaching and Enabling Resources/Services**

The Operator must be able to provide learning, teaching and enabling resources/services that are appropriate and sufficient for the learning, teaching and assessment activities of the learning programme, regardless of location and mode of delivery.

- 4.6.1 The Operator provided information about learning, teaching and enabling resources relevant to the delivery of the Programme such as teaching facilities, library resources, information technology support and language support. A virtual tour of relevant learning, teaching and enabling resources was also provided to the Panel.

- 4.6.2 From the responses provided by the Operator, the Panel noted that the following journals will be made available to students:

- *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*
- *ELT Journal*
- *Studies in Educational Evaluation System*
- *Innovations in Education and Teaching International*
- *The Curriculum Journal*
- *Curriculum Inquiry*
- *Journal of Curriculum Studies*
- *Applied Linguistics*
- *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*
- *British Journal of Sociology of Education*
- *Journal of Social Science Education*
- *Language, Culture and Curriculum*
- *The Sage Handbook of Curriculum and Instruction*
- *European Journal of Curriculum Studies*

- *Language Learning*
- *Globalisation, Societies and Education*

4.6.3 The Panel observed that the Programme requires students' mastery of various academic genres and discourse. From the responses provided by the Operator, the Panel noted that relevant academic support including academic writing workshops and quantitative analysis trainings will be made available to students.

4.6.4 In consideration of the above information and the discussion with relevant stakeholders, the Panel considered that the Operator is able to provide learning, teaching and enabling resources that are appropriate and sufficient for the delivery of the Programme.

4.7 **Programme Approval, Review and Quality Assurance**

The Operator must monitor and review the development and performance of the learning programme on an on-going basis to ensure that the programme remains current and valid and that the learning outcomes, learning and teaching activities and learner assessments are effective to meet the programme objectives.

4.7.1 The Operator provided to the Panel the following information to demonstrate that it has in place a system to monitor and review the development and performance of the Programme on an on-going basis:

- (a) quality assurance mechanism in programme development, approval, management and review;
- (b) mechanism on collection and follow-up of stakeholders' feedback;
- (c) comments of external advisors on each module and the overall programme, and the Operator's responses to the comments of external advisors;
- (d) meeting minutes of relevant committees;
- (e) quality assurance manual;
- (f) annual programme review report form;
- (g) annual department review report form;
- (h) annual school review report form;
- (i) student feedback form on modules and teaching; and
- (j) student learning experience survey.

4.7.2 The Panel noted that the Operator had obtained external inputs from its module vetting process and programme review process to

improve the Programme, and the Programme had gone through the internal quality assurance system of the Operator with the approval of its Academic Board and other relevant committees. The Panel also noted that there is a good quality assurance mechanism in place to monitor and review the development and performance of the Programme.

- 4.7.3 In consideration of the above information and the discussion with relevant stakeholders, the Panel formed the view that the Operator has in place mechanisms to monitor and review the development and performance of the Programme on an on-going basis.

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 accreditation status of Operator and/or Programme 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 <https://www.hkqf.gov.hk>.

5.3 **Qualifications Register**

- 5.3.1 Qualifications accredited by HKCAAVQ are eligible for entry into the Qualifications Register ("QR") at <https://www.hkqr.gov.hk> for recognition under the QF. The Operator should apply separately to have their quality-assured qualifications entered into the QR.

- 5.3.2 Only learners who commence the study of the named accredited learning programme during the validity period and who have graduated with the named qualification listed in the QR will be considered to have acquired a qualification recognised under the QF.

Ref: 56/35/01

3 August 2021

JoH/SF/CCh/cch/asc

The Hang Seng University of Hong Kong

**Learning Programme Accreditation for
Master of Arts in English Language Teaching and Testing**

10 - 11 June 2021

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

Appendix 2

Graduate Profile of the Programme

Qualification Title	Master of Arts in English Language Teaching and Assessment 英語教學與評核文學碩士
Qualification Type	Master's Degree
QF Level	Level 6
Primary Area of Study and Training	Languages and related studies
Sub-area (Primary Area of Study and Training)	Languages and related studies
Other Area of Study and Training	Education
Sub-area (Other Area of Study and Training)	Education and Teacher Education
Programme Objectives	The Programme aims to: 1. provide students with up-to-date knowledge of theories and practice in teaching English to learners of diverse backgrounds; 2. provide students with up-to-date knowledge of theories and practice in English language testing for learners of diverse backgrounds; 3. develop students' abilities to critically reflect on and evaluate teaching and testing performance; 4. introduce research concepts and skills in English language teaching and testing; and 5. instill in students a strong sense of commitment to professional ethics in language education.
Programme Intended Learning Outcomes	Upon completion of the Programme, students are expected to be able to: 1. demonstrate a clear understanding of current trends and practices in English language teaching and testing for learners of diverse backgrounds; 2. apply knowledge of language teaching and learning to

	daily English teaching work; 3. critically and effectively design tests and other assessment tasks for English language learners; 4. demonstrate basic abilities to analyse learner data for assessment and research purposes; and 5. show a strong sense of upholding ethical values in language education and research.
Education Pathways	Potential education pathways include: MPhil or PhD in the areas of applied linguistics, TESOL, and language education.
Employment Pathways	Potential employment pathways include: ▪ English teacher* (primary schools) ▪ English teacher* (secondary schools) ▪ ESL/EFL instructor/lecturer* (colleges/universities) ▪ Instructor* (tutorial centres) ▪ Researcher ▪ Test designer (textbook publishers) ▪ Test designer (English language testing services/agencies) ▪ Education consultant (publishers/education agencies) ▪ Civil Service (Government) *Remark: These posts may require relevant teaching qualifications such as a Postgraduate Diploma in Education (PGDE).
Minimum Admission Requirements	The minimum admission requirements of the Programme are as follows: a) A bachelor's degree in a discipline in or closely related to liberal arts or humanities components from a recognised university or equivalent; and b) Documentary evidence demonstrating applicants' English language proficiency, which includes: ▪ completion of a degree from a tertiary institution or programme where the medium of instruction is English; or ▪ a minimum of 550 (paper-based) and 79 (internet-based) in TOEFL; or ▪ a minimum of 6.5 with at least 6.0 in each paper in IELTS; or ▪ a minimum of 500 in College English Test-Band 6 (CET-6); or ▪ an equivalent of any of the above. (Remark: On top of the above minimum admission requirements, the Operator will conduct interview and written test to confirm applicants' suitability to study the Programme.)
Operator	The Hang Seng University of Hong Kong 香港恒生大學

