



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

CONFIDENTIAL

ACCREDITATION REPORT

HANG SENG UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG

LEARNING PROGRAMME ACCREDITATION

**MASTER OF SOCIAL SCIENCES IN
PUBLIC POLICY AND RISK GOVERNANCE**

SEPTEMBER 2021

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Appendix 1 HKCAAVQ Panel Membership

Appendix 2 Graduate Profile of Master of Social Sciences in Public
Policy and Risk Governance

1. TERMS OF REFERENCE

1.1 Based on the Service Agreement (No.: AA 711), 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 (HSUHK/the Operator) to conduct 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 Social Sciences in Public Policy and Risk Governance of The Hang Seng University of Hong Kong (HSUHK/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, subject to the fulfilment of the conditions set out below, the Master of Social Sciences in Public Policy and Risk Governance Programme (the Programme) 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 from 1 September 2022 to 31 August 2025.

2.2 Validity Period

2.2.1 The validity period will, provided the Operator fulfills the pre-conditions to the commencement of validity period as set out in para. 2.4., 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(s)	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 Social Sciences in Public Policy and Risk Governance 公共政策及風險治理社會科學碩士
Title of Qualification	Master of Social Sciences in Public Policy and Risk Governance 公共政策及風險治理社會科學碩士
Primary Area of Study and Training	Social Sciences
Sub-area (Primary Area of Study and Training)	Social and Behavioural Sciences
Other Area of Study and Training	Not applicable
Sub-area (Other Area of Study and Training)	Not applicable
QF Level	Level 6
QF Credits	108
Mode(s) 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(s)	One enrolment per year
Maximum Number of New Students	30 full-time and 10 part-time students per year
Specification of Competency Standards-based Programme	☐ Yes ☒ No
Address of Teaching Venue	Hang Shin Link, Siu Lek Yuen, Shatin, New Territories

2.4 Conditions

Pre-conditions

- 2.4.1 HSUHK is to review and revise its assessment mechanisms and/or designs to ensure that all assessments align with the appropriate QF Level and intended learning outcomes.

HSUHK is to submit a review report, including approval records, three sets of sample assessment papers and rubrics for the fulfilment of the above pre-condition to HKCAAVQ **on or before 31 March 2022**. (para. 4.4.7)

- 2.4.2 HSUHK is to review and revise the staff deployment plan for the Programme and the policy concerning the appointment criteria for Honorary / Adjunct Lecturer. Amongst other considerations, the review should include:

- (a) Staff deployment plan specifying (i) a breakdown detailing module allocation for full-time teaching staff and/or Honorary / Adjunct Lecturer; and (ii) the required expertise and qualifications of teaching staff for each module;
- (b) The appointment criteria for Honorary / Adjunct Lecturer for the Programme to ensure that both relevant qualification and industry experience are required; and
- (c) A policy specifying that on an exceptional basis, teaching staff who do not have a doctoral degree in a relevant discipline will only be appointed on the basis of equivalent and relevant professional or industry experience to conduct specific teaching duties.

HSUHK is to submit documents, including approval records setting out a revised staff deployment plan and the relevant policy for the fulfilment of the above pre-condition to HKCAAVQ **on or before 31 March 2022**. (para. 4.5.4)

2.5 Recommendations

HKCAAVQ also offers the following recommendations for continuous improvement of the Programme.

- 2.5.1 HSUHK should specify a clearer definition of risk in the context of public policy to reflect the niches of the Programme. (para. 4.1.6)
- 2.5.2 HSUHK should provide a clearer indication of sequencing of core and elective modules in the Programme Handbook to provide a logical progression for the students during the course of the Programme. (para. 4.3.3)
- 2.6 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 Hang Seng University of Hong Kong (HSUHK), formerly known as the Hang Seng Management College (the College), has been registered under the Post Secondary Colleges Ordinance (Cap. 320) as a privately-funded, non-profit post-secondary college since 2010, and it started to offer bachelor degree programmes accredited by HKCAAVQ in September 2010. On 30 October 2018, the College was granted the university title and changed its name to The Hang Seng University of Hong Kong (HSUHK).
- 3.2 Currently, HSUHK offers accredited bachelor's degree programmes and master's degree programmes. HSUHK has attained Programme Area Accreditation (PAA) status at QF Level 5 in various programme areas such as General Business Administration, General Management and Marketing. Since the Master of Social Sciences in Public Policy and Risk Governance is a QF Level 6 programme, HSUHK commissioned HKCAAVQ to conduct a Learning Programme Accreditation (LPA) for the Programme. HKCAAVQ formed an expert panel (the Panel) for this exercise (Panel Membership at Appendix 1).
- 3.3 In view of the outbreak of the Coronavirus Disease-2019 (COVID-19), the site visit was conducted via video-conference from 15 to 16

July 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 HSUHK and the Panel in conducting this accreditation 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.

Learning Programme Accreditation

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 HKQF standards, for all exit qualifications from the programme.

- 4.1.1 The Programme, which is hosted by the Department of Social Science (the Department), aims to provide students with comprehensive knowledge in public policy analysis with a strategic focus on risk governance.

Programme Objectives

- 4.1.2 The Programme Objectives (POs) are to:

- PO1 Instill students the theoretical and interdisciplinary expertise necessary for the practice of risk governance in public policy;
- PO2 Gain broad and deep knowledge of the public policymaking processes in which decisions about risks are taken and implemented;
- PO3 Demonstrate knowledge of research principles and methodologies relevant to public policy studies from the perspective of risk governance;

- PO4 Acquire the analytics managerial skills in public sector that can be applied to developing innovative solutions to a broad range of risk problems in policy issues; and
- PO5 Reflect critically on the challenges relating to risk governance on the management, implementation and evaluation of public policies and respond to these in innovative ways.

Programme Intended Learning Outcomes (PILOs)

4.1.3 Upon completion of the Programme, students should be able to:

- PILO1 Critically examine key theoretical and analytical perspectives and debates in risk and public policy studies;
- PILO2 Develop a risk-based approach in understanding the public policy institutions and processes and its implications on policy development and implementation;
- PILO3 Conduct risk analysis and public policy research using appropriate research methods;
- PILO4 Apply skills and knowledge acquired in the curriculum to analyse various policy issues; and
- PILO5 Devise innovative and professional policy recommendations to complex policy problems in a changing risk society.

4.1.4 HSUHK provided the Panel with the following information to show that the Programme meets the QF standard at Level 6:

- (a) Mapping of HSUHK's desired attributes of taught postgraduate students, POs and PILOs;
- (b) Mappings showing the contributions of the PILOs to the POs;
- (c) Mappings of the PILOs to the Generic Level Descriptors (GLDs) of the QF at Level 6; and
- (d) Mappings showing the contributions of Module Intended Learning Outcomes to the PILOs.

4.1.5 In reviewing the Programme Objectives (POs) and Programme Intended Learning Outcomes (PILOs), the Panel held the view that

learning outcomes are in alignment with the programme objectives and meet the standards at the stated QF Level.

- 4.1.6 The Panel was informed that this is a master's degree programme in public policy focusing on risk studies. The Programme aims to enhance students' professional knowledge in risk governance and policy making to prepare students to be professional or advanced policy practitioners capable of managing the complexity of the policy community issues and making informed decisions in risk and crisis situations in a complex, diverse and rapidly-changing world. The Panel held the view that there are no universal definitions of risk. Senior management, who met the Panel, agreed that the concept of risk varies across and within disciplines. Considering the complexity of risk definition, the Panel considered that a clearer definition of risk in the context of public policy is needed to enable students to better understanding the key feature of the Programme.

Recommendation

HSUHK should specify a clearer definition of risk in the context of public policy to reflect the niches of the Programme.

- 4.1.7 To ascertain the potential market demand for the Programme, the HSUHK cited data suggesting that there exists a demand for postgraduate training in policy studies. For example, the Census and Statistics Department reports that there were 43,500 professionals and 240,500 associate professionals employed in the sector of public administration, social and personal services in the second quarter of 2020. HSUHK also surveyed its potential students and conducted an employer survey in 2020. 90% respondents of 145 Year 3 and Year 4 students surveyed agreed that acquiring a master's degree in public policy and risk governance would be beneficial for them to obtain a job in the future. 90% of 20 responses from employers replied positively when asked if they would recommend their associates and employees to acquire a master's degree related to public policy studies and risk governance. During the site visit, the Panel discussed this with the external members of the Independent Review Panel (IRP), module vetters and the potential employer who had supported the launch of the Programme. Details of education and employment pathways are provided in the Graduate Profile in Appendix 2.
- 4.1.8 Notwithstanding the recommendation, the Panel considered that the POs and PILOs are pitched at QF Level 6. Moreover, external

members, who met the Panel, showed support for the launch of the Programme.

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 HSUHK provided its minimum standard admission requirements for the Programme as follows:

- (a) A Bachelor's degree from a recognised university or equivalent; and
- (b) Documentary evidence demonstrating the applicant's English proficiency, which includes:
 - Graduated from an institution where the medium of instruction is English; or
 - A minimum of 550 (paper-based) and 79 (Internet-based) in TOEFL; or
 - A minimum of 6.0 in IELTS; or
 - A minimum of 430 in College English Test-Band 6 (CET-6) or "Pass" if the test was taken before June 2005; or
 - Equivalent of the above.

4.2.2 HSUHK explained in the response document to the Panel's initial comments that the minimum admission requirements of the Programme are aligned with the admission requirements of Taught Postgraduate (TPG) programmes in HSUHK and other institutions.

4.2.3 The Programme targets students from different backgrounds, but does not accept non-standard entrants. All applicants are required to attend an admission interview and their academic background, work experience, and interview performance will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. The Panel also noted that the Programme Team would analyse the students' background after admission and induction, such as orientation workshop and a personal advisor system to cater for the different needs of students. The Panel considered that HSUHK has a selection process to ensure that

students have sufficient knowledge or skills to undertake the Programme.

- 4.2.4 The Programme does not allow transfer of credit, but students are allowed to be exempted from taking a maximum of two modules of the Programme based on their previous studies. Students will have to take other modules to make up the required credits, and there is no consideration of work experience for module exemption.

Maximum Number of New Students

- 4.2.5 HSUHK proposed the following maximum number of new students for the Programme in the coming academic years:

	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Full-time	30	30	30
Part-time	10	10	10

- 4.2.6 The Programme Team stated that the proposed maximum number of students was based on the availability of resources and estimated market demand in Hong Kong. Senior management shared its recruitment strategies in outreaching to local and non-local students, for example, the Head of Global Development under the Office of Vice-President (Academic and Research) will provide support to promote TPG programmes. Having considered the available resources, the Panel considered that HSUHK has the capacity to admit the number of students proposed.
- 4.2.7 Having reviewed the information and discussed with the different stakeholders, the Panel considered that the minimum admission requirements are clearly outlined. The minimum admission requirements are appropriate and comparable to similar local programmes.

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 Programme is of a one-year full-time and two-year part-time duration. The Programme consists of 1,080 notional learning hours,

including contact hours and self-study hours, making up 108 QF credits. Each module consists of 45 contact hours including examination and 90 self-study hours with 3 credits/13.5 QF credits. The ratio of contact hours to self-study hours is 1:2. HSUHK provided the following to illustrate content and structure:

- (i) A study plan;
- (ii) The module outlines that list module description, module intended learning outcomes (MILOs), content, assessment, teaching and learning activities of individual modules; and
- (iii) Reports from module vetters.

4.3.2 The Programme consists of three components: core modules, thematic electives and general elective modules. The core modules are designed to nurture students' fundamental knowledge of public policy analysis, risk governance and research methodologies. The thematic elective modules are designed to provide students with advanced knowledge in public policy in the area of public health, environment, and information and communications technology (ICT). The elective modules cover communicating and governing risk in the wider society. Students are required to take four core modules with 12 credits/54 QF credits and four elective modules with 12 credits/54 QF credits in which at least one module must be taken from the three thematic elective modules. The core and elective modules to be offered in the Programme are as follows:

Component	Module	Credit	QF Credits
Core Modules	Public Policy Analysis	3	13.5
	Governing Risk in Public Sector	3	13.5
	Public Policy Research Methods	3	13.5
	Workshop on Policy and Risk Simulation	3	13.5
Thematic Elective Modules	Critical Issues in Public Health	3	13.5
	Environment and Global Governance	3	13.5
	Risk Governance in the Digital Era	3	13.5
Elective Modules	Political Communication in Public Policy	3	13.5
	Managing Risk Society	3	13.5
	Advanced Quantitative Methods for Public Policy Research	3	13.5
	Selected Topic in Public Policy and Risk Governance	3	13.5
	Individual Project	3	13.5

- 4.3.3 The Programme Team explained there is no pre-requisite for all modules, except for *Advanced Quantitative Methods for Public Policy Research*. This is a one-year full-time master's degree programme and students are required to take four core modules before taking electives. In addition, the study plan provided, in the response to the Panel's initial comment, specifies the sequencing of both core and elective modules. However, the Panel considered that pre-requisite modules should also be required for some advanced modules, such as Individual Project or thematic elective modules, designed to provide students with advanced knowledge in specific areas. In addition, the study plan in the Programme Handbook does not mention the sequencing of core and elective modules. To ensure that the overall experience of students have a logic and an intellectual integrity that are related to clearly defined purpose, the Panel made the following recommendation:

Recommendation

HSUHK should provide a clearer indication of sequencing of core and elective modules in the Programme Handbook to provide a logical progression for the students during the course of the Programme.

- 4.3.4 Notwithstanding the recommendation, the Panel considered that the programme content can enable students to achieve the stated learning outcomes and required standards.

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 Programme employs a variety of learning and teaching methods, such as lecture, guest lecture, seminar, in-class exercise and discussion, presentation, individual or group project, and written assignment. The teaching staff who met the Panel also expressed that tutorial discussions will be conducted during lectures. The maximum number of students in a lecture is 40. The Individual Project is supervised on a one-on-one basis. Guided supervision will be provided.

- 4.4.2 The medium of instruction (MoI) in the Programme is English. The specific learning, teaching and assessment methods are given in the module outlines. After reviewing the sample teaching and learning materials and the discussion with the teaching staff during the site visit, the Panel considered that the teaching and learning methods used are appropriate and contribute to the achievement of the Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs).
- 4.4.3 In relation to assessment, the Panel was provided with the following information:
- (a) *Academic Regulations for Taught Postgraduate Programmes*;
 - (b) Guidelines on Assessment;
 - (c) *Assessment Policy on Criterion-Referenced Assessment and Grading with Rubrics*; and
 - (d) Sample assessment papers with respective assessment rubrics and marking schemes.
- 4.4.4 The Panel noted that regulations about attendance, examination, grade review and approval of final results of assessments are provided in *the Academic Regulations for Taught Postgraduate Programmes*. HSUHK has put in place an assessment moderation system, including moderation of assessment tasks and marks/grades. Moderation is done internally by staff members and externally by the External Examiner. An External Examiner (Programme) (EEP) is responsible for assessing the overall appropriateness of the standards of examinations/assessment and making relevant recommendations on the programme for the Programme Committee while an External Examiner (Module) (EEM) vets the marking of sample answer scripts exemplifying good, average and poor performance for examination papers/ assessment for the module at least once every two academic years.
- 4.4.5 The Programme uses a variety of methods to assess students' performance. These methods include, among others, tests, assignments, essays, presentations, examinations, projects and reports. To graduate, students must (i) complete and pass a minimum of 24 credits (at least one module must be chosen from the thematic elective modules) as laid down in the programme curriculum and (ii) obtain a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.0.

- 4.4.6 After reviewing sample assessment tasks and their associated rubrics/criteria, the Panel found that the Module Intended Learning Outcomes (MILOs), assessment methods, QF Level are not fully aligned. For example, one of MILOs of *Governing Risk in Public Sector* requires students to examine concepts and theories of risk and crisis, but a sample question with 20% of weighting requires students to describe the characteristics of crisis. In addition, one of MILOs of *Advanced Quantitative Methods for Public Policy Research* requires students to propose and evaluate a policy by evidence from quantitative research. But a sample question requires students to identify independent variables and dependent variables. Multiple choice questions are also used.
- 4.4.7 The Programme Team that met the Panel, explained that the pilot assessment papers have not gone through the internal QA process. Those sample questions are only one of the assessment questions. In addition, MC questions used in *Advanced Quantitative Methods for Public Policy Research* are related to basic knowledge of research methods. However, the Panel held the view that some sample questions were more of a rote-learning type. The external members shared the view that postgraduate students are not commonly required to use MC to demonstrate their ability to apply various research methods. Given that this a master's degree programme, assessment methods and questions should be reviewed and revised to align with QF Level 6, which requires students to apply knowledge and skills in a broad range of specialised technical, professional or management activities. Therefore, the Panel stipulated the pre-condition as follows:

Pre-condition

HSUHK is to review and revise its assessment mechanisms and/or designs to ensure that all assessments align with the appropriate QF Level and intended learning outcomes.

HSUHK is to submit a review report, including approval records, three sets of sample assessment papers and rubrics for the fulfilment of the above pre-condition to HKCAAVQ **on or before 31 March 2022**.

- 4.4.8 In summary, the Panel held the view that the learning and teaching activities are appropriately designed for the delivery of the learning outcomes and programme content. But there is a need to review and revise assessment mechanisms and/or designs to ensure that

assessments align with the appropriate QF Level and 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.

Staffing

4.5.1 On staffing, the Panel noted the following:

- (a) The Programme Director is responsible for providing academic leadership in the planning, review, development and management of the Programme.
- (b) There are 22 full-time and 16 part-time teaching staff in the Department of Social Science. For the Programme, the staffing plan from 2022/23 to 2024/25 is shown below:

	Full-time	Part-time
Existing number of teaching staff	7	0
2022/23	8	3
2023/24	8	3
2024/25	8	3

- (c) The ratio of full-time teaching staff and part-time teaching staff is 8:3. The teaching staff-student ratio (SSR) for the Programme will be 1:22.5.
- (d) On minimum appointment criteria of teaching staff for the Programme, HSUHK confirmed during the site visit that full-time teaching staff and research supervisor should possess a Doctoral Degree in Social Sciences, preferably in Sociology, Political Science, or Policy Studies while Honorary Lecturers should have a master's degree or above in related disciplines or at least 10 years industry experience in related fields.

- 4.5.2 The CVs and profiles of seven serving full-time teaching staff, with the information on which modules they would be responsible for teaching, were provided. However, the Panel found that there was inconsistent information in different versions of staff deployment plan. For example, one staff deployment plan indicates one core and two electives will be solely taught by three potential Honorary Lecturers, who are part-time teaching staff. But, another one shows that seven full-time current staff will teach all modules, without mentioning Honorary Lecturers. Senior management who met the Panel explained that the staff deployment plan only shows the general capability of Programme Team members in teaching the modules of the Programme. Some modules may be solely taught by Honorary Lecturers who are potential industry practitioners. While the Panel agreed that the Honorary Lecturers would bring in proven industrial experience and enhance student learning experience, there is a need to have a coherent and consistent staff deployment plan with indication of full-time teaching staff and/or Honorary Lecturers to ensure the appropriate level of coverage for all modules.
- 4.5.3 After reviewing the Staff Handbook, the Panel found that there is no mention of the minimum appointment criteria for teaching staff. HSUHK provided the Panel with the relevant criteria and sample job advertisements for the Programme. The Panel found the appointment criteria of Honorary Lecturers require either a master's degree or industry experience in related fields. Considering the nature of the Programme, the Panel held the view that the appointment criteria for Honorary Lecturers should include both relevant qualifications and industry experience. The Panel also considered that staff tasked with teaching functions generally have a qualification one level higher than the programmes they teach, or a terminal qualification in a relevant area of study/training. If individual teaching staff do not meet the minimum qualification requirements, the Panel considered that HSUHK must be able to justify its decision to assign part-time teaching staff to particular modules. These decisions should be supported by policy and procedures and made on an exception basis.
- 4.5.4 While the Panel recognised the creditable efforts being made to ensure adequate staffing for the Programme, it stipulated a pre-condition for submission of evidence addressing the observations above.

Pre-condition

HSUHK is to review and revise the staff deployment plan for the Programme and the policy concerning the appointment criteria for Honorary / Adjunct Lecturer. Amongst other considerations, the review should include:

- (a) Staff deployment plan specifying (i) a breakdown detailing module allocation for full-time teaching staff and/or Honorary / Adjunct Lecturer; and (ii) the required expertise and qualifications of teaching staff for each module;
- (b) The appointment criteria for Honorary / Adjunct Lecturer for the Programme to ensure that both relevant qualification and industry experience are required; and
- (c) A policy specifying that on an exceptional basis, teaching staff who do not have a doctoral degree in a relevant discipline will only be appointed on the basis of equivalent and relevant professional or industry experience to conduct specific teaching duties.

HSUHK is to submit documents, including approval records setting out a revised staff deployment plan and the relevant policy for the fulfilment of the above pre-condition to HKCAAVQ **on or before 31 March 2022**.

Staff Development

4.5.5 In terms of staff development, the Panel was provided with the following:

- (a) A list of seminars and workshops organised for academic staff (as at 31 October 2019);
- (b) Data on training time and hours of the Department's Staff Development Activities in 2018/19 and 2019/20;
- (c) Analysis of full-time academic staff development records (2018/19);
- (d) Policy Guidelines Governing the Sponsorship of Staff Development Programmes for Academic Staff;

- (e) List of activities related to political and policy studies organised by the Centre for Greater China Studies; and
- (f) Planned staff development activities in the 2022/23 and 2023/24 academic years.

4.5.6 The Panel noted that the Department adopts and follows the policies established by the Academic Staff Development Committee of HSUHK. After reviewing the staff development plan, the Panel noted that workshops on academic quality assurance at QF Level 6 (master's degree) as well as research supervision will be organised. Sharing sessions by experienced faculty members will also be conducted to facilitate teaching and learning at the postgraduate level. During the site visit, senior management elaborated that seminars and funding are available for teaching staff. Research related training activities, such as workshop on enhancing research will be conducted at the department level. At the programme level, training will focus on pedagogical training and student support for the specific programme. Teaching staff who met with the Panel indicated that they were given staff development opportunities, such as seminars and sharing sessions to enhance the quality of teaching and the currency of their knowledge.

4.5.7 Notwithstanding the pre-condition above, the Panel held the view that there are staff development plans and activities to keep teaching staff up-to-date to ensure the quality of the Programme. However, there is a need to review the staff deployment plan for the Programme and the policy concerning the appointment criteria for the Honorary / Adjunct Lecturer.

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.

Financial Resources

4.6.1 HSUHK operates on a self-financing basis and relies on student tuition fees as its major source of income. HSUHK provided the income and expenditure projection for the Programme for 2022/23 and 2026/27 and analysed the financial sensitivity at different levels of projected student enrolment. It is noted that it is projected to have

a surplus for the Programme with the proposed maximum number of students in the coming years. In addition, the estimated budgets for acquiring additional teaching and resources materials as well as software packages are included. Senior management assured the Panel that HSUHK would finance the first two years of the operation of the Programme and a Programme Review would be conducted to review the financial viability of the Programme if it is continuously under-enrolled. Based on the track record of HSUHK, it is considered that HSUHK has adequate financial resources to support the Programme.

Physical Resources

4.6.2 The Panel noted that HSUHK has established the Library and Learning Resources Committee to advise the development and use of the library resources, services and facilities. A video and PowerPoint show that various teaching and student support facilities, such as computer laboratories, postgraduate study room, group viewing room and library services and sports facilities will be provided. Postgraduate students are eligible to order scanned copies of journal articles, book chapters and conference proceeding papers from public universities. Software licenses, such as SPSS, Zoom and Qualtrics are available to students. When asked how the Centre for Public Policy Research (the Centre) supports the Programme and helps students build networks, the Panel was informed that the Centre will organise seminars and invite guest speakers to share their industry experience with students.

4.6.3 In light of the above, the Panel concluded that the teaching, learning and enabling resources are appropriate and sufficient for student learning.

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 Panel reviewed the following in regard to quality assurance in the Programme:

(a) Extracts of records of board and committee meeting minutes;

- (b) *HSUHK Quality Assurance Manual*;
- (c) Reports of the module vetters;
- (d) Report of Independent Review Panel (IRP) Meeting and HSUHK's response to the comments of IRP; and
- (e) Templates of Annual Programme Report, Annual Department Report and Annual School Report.

4.7.2 The Academic Board (AB) is responsible for overseeing the quality assurance of all academic development of HSUHK. A Graduate Studies Committee (GSC) has been established to advise the Academic Board (AB) on the overall academic development plan in postgraduate education. The GSC works with different committees to monitor the quality of postgraduate programmes at different stages including programme proposal, development, management, monitoring, modification and review. The Panel obtained the following information:

Programme Development

- (a) A new programme is initially proposed by the hosting Department/School, reviewed by the School Board (SB) and approved by the GSC. After the initial approval from the GSC, a Programme Development Committee (PDC) of proposed programme is set up, which includes at least one external members to advise on the programme development.
- (b) The PDC engages external stakeholders such as External Veters to advise on the academic and industry aspects of module design. An Independent Review Panel (IRP) is formed to examine the programme. Based on suggestions by the IRP, the PDC will further refine the new programme for review and endorsement by the SB and GSC. The final version of the new programme is approved by the AB before submitting to HKCAAVQ for external accreditation.

Programme Management and Review

- (c) Once a programme is launched, a Programme Committee (PC) chaired by the Programme Director is formed to monitor the quality of the programme and oversee its implementation. The Programme Director will prepare an Annual Programme Report, which consolidates all essential records and evidence

regarding the programme to facilitate continuous improvements.

- (d) Surveys and meetings gather student and graduate feedback. The students' views on individual modules and teachers' performance will be gauged through student questionnaires, such as Students' Feedback on Modules and Teaching and Taught Post-Graduate Student Learning Experience Survey. A Staff-Student Consultative Committee of student representatives and teaching staff is established at the university and school levels to gather students' views.
- (e) External stakeholders are engaged. For example, external examiners advise assessment and academic standards while industry experts provide advice on benchmarking industry standards. A Programme Advisory Committee will be established for the Programme once it is in operation. Feedback from employers to assess the performance of HSUHK graduates will be collected by the Student Affairs Office (SAO).

- 4.7.3 During the site visit, the Panel exchanged views with representatives from the various committees and boards responsible for quality assurance of the Programme and with the external members who showed their support for the Programme. The Panel held the view that HSUHK has in place a committee structure at different levels to monitor the quality of new programmes.
- 4.7.4 After reviewing the minutes of relevant committees and reports, the Panel found that the Programme had undergone internal approval process, including Academic Board, Graduate Studies Committee, School of Humanities and Social Science, and Department of Social Science. In addition, the report of the module vetters and the IRP show that HSUHK's responses addressing external members' concerns were clearly documented. The sample of Annual Programme Report also includes findings of employment and graduate surveys to collect graduate opinions.
- 4.7.5 Based on the above, the Panel concluded that effective quality assurance processes are in place for the review of the development and performance of the Programme to ensure that the Programme remains current and continues to meet the stated programme objectives.

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 <http://www.hkgf.gov.hk>.

5.3 Qualifications Register

- 5.3.1 Qualifications accredited by HKCAAVQ are eligible for entry into the Qualifications Register ("QR") at <http://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.

Appendix 1

Hang Seng University of Hong Kong

**Learning Programme Accreditation for
Master of Social Sciences in Public Policy and Risk Governance**

15 – 16 July 2021

Panel Membership

Panel Chair

Professor Stein Haugom OLSEN
Acting Dean and Professor
Faculty of Humanities and Letters
University of Bilkent
TURKEY

*** Panel Secretary**

Dr Clara CHONG
Registrar
Academic Accreditation and Assessment
Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of
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**Professor Karen Ann Joe
LAIDLER**
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* The Panel Secretary is also a member of the Accreditation Panel.

Appendix 2

Graduate Profile of Master of Social Sciences in Public Policy and Risk Governance

Qualification Title	Master of Social Sciences in Public Policy and Risk Governance 公共政策及風險治理社會科學碩士
Qualification Type	Master's Degree
QF Level	6
Primary Area of Study and Training	Social Sciences
Sub-area (Primary Area of Study and Training)	Social and Behavioural Sciences
Other Area of Study and Training	Not applicable
Sub-area (Other Area of Study and Training)	Not applicable
Programme Objectives	PO1 Instill students the theoretical and interdisciplinary expertise necessary for the practice of risk governance in public policy; PO2 Gain broad and deep knowledge of the public policymaking processes in which decisions about risks are taken and implemented; PO3 Demonstrate knowledge of research principles and methodologies relevant to public policy studies from the perspective of risk governance; PO4 Acquire the analytics managerial skills in public sector that can be applied to developing innovative solutions to a broad range of risk problems in policy issues; and PO5 Reflect critically on the challenges relating to risk governance on the management, implementation and evaluation of public policies and respond to these in innovative ways.
Programme Intended Learning Outcomes	Upon completion of the Programme, students should be able to: PILO1 Critically examine key theoretical and analytical perspectives and debates in risk and public policy studies;

	PILO2 Develop a risk-based approach in understanding the public policy institutions and processes and its implications on policy development and implementation; PILO3 Conduct risk analysis and public policy research using appropriate research methods; PILO4 Apply skills and knowledge acquired in the curriculum to analyse various policy issues; and PILO5 Devise innovative and professional policy recommendations to complex policy problems in a changing risk society.
Education Pathways	Graduates of the Programme may pursue further study at MPhil or PhD levels, particularly in the field of policy studies, and government and public administration.
Employment Pathways	The Programme is designed for those who plan a career involved in any aspects of public administration, risk governance and policy studies, from political parties to non-government organisations to policy think tanks. Career opportunities include positions in administration and policymaking in government agencies, political organisations, NGOs, charities and international organisations; political consultancy; public relations and public affairs agencies; business; media policymaking; and higher education, including doctoral studies.
Minimum Admission Requirements	A Bachelor's degree from a recognised university or equivalent; and Documentary evidence demonstrating the applicant's English proficiency, which include: • Graduated from an institution where the medium of instruction is English; or • A minimum of 550 (paper-based) and 79 (Internet-based) in TOEFL; or • A minimum of 6.0 in IELTS; or • A minimum of 430 in College English Test-Band 6 (CET-6) or "Pass" if the test was taken before June 2005; or • Equivalent of the above.
Operator	The Hang Seng University of Hong Kong 香港恒生大學

