



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

**PERIODIC INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW
FOR
ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND ENGLISH LITERATURE**

January 2024

Table of Contents

	<u>Page</u>
1. TERMS OF REFERENCE	1
2. HKCAAVQ'S DETERMINATION	1
3. INTRODUCTION	3
4. PANEL'S DELIBERATIONS	4
4.1 <i>Organisational Effectiveness and Planning</i>	4
4.2 <i>Organisational Leadership and Staffing</i>	9
4.3 <i>Programme Area Development and Management</i>	12
4.4 <i>Management of Resources and Services</i>	18
4.5 <i>Organisational Quality Assurance and Enhancement</i>	22
5. IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING THIS ACCREDITATION REPORT	
26	

Appendix HKCAAVQ Panel Membership

1. TERMS OF REFERENCE

1.1 Based on the Service Agreement (No.: AA869), 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 (Cap. 592), was commissioned by The Hang Seng University of Hong Kong (the University) 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 Hang Seng University of Hong Kong (HSUHK/ the University/ the Operator) can be approved to maintain the Programme Area Accreditation status for the Programme Area (as listed under the Specifications of the Programme Area undergoing Periodic Institutional Review) for a specified validity period; and
- (b) To issue to the Operator an accreditation report setting out the results of the determination in relation to (a) by HKCAAVQ.

1.2 Specifications of the Programme Area undergoing Periodic Institutional Review

Area of Study and Training	Sub-area	Programme Area	QF Level
Languages and Related Studies	Languages and Related Studies	English Language and English Literature	5

2. HKCAAVQ'S DETERMINATION

2.1 HKCAAVQ has determined that the University can be approved to maintain the Programme Area Accreditation (PAA) status for the Programme Area of English Language and English Literature at QF Level 5 under the Area of Study and Training, Languages and Related Studies, with a validity period of 5 years.

2.2 The Operator's approval to maintain the PAA status is considered 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 resource allocation supports the development and management of the programme areas. The Operator also has robust internal processes 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 Hang Seng University of Hong Kong 香港恒生大學
Address of Operator	Hang Shin Link, Siu Lek Yuen, Shatin, New Territories
Name of Award Granting Body	The Hang Seng University of Hong Kong 香港恒生大學
Area of Study and Training	Languages and Related Studies
Sub-area	Languages and Related Studies
Programme Area and Scope of Programme Area	<u>English Language and English Literature</u> The programme area covers (i) the study of the forms, meanings and uses of the English language in the context of human communication, and (ii) the study of the artistic expressions of the English language in various forms, including drama, poetry, fiction, essay and film.
QF Level	Level 5
Start Date of Validity Period	15 March 2024
End Date of Validity Period	14 March 2029
Address of Teaching / Training Venue(s)	Hang Shin Link, Siu Lek Yuen, Shatin, New Territories

2.5 Recommendation

HKCAAVQ also offers the following recommendation for continuous improvement of the Operator.

- 2.5.1 The University should expand the Department's journal list and review the classification of the journals under various tiers so that the journal list could be more compatible with both the Department's initiatives of Interdisciplinary development and research and the University's Strategic Academic Development Plan. (Paragraph 4.3.5)
- 2.5.2 The University should review and consider how information presented in records and documents such as meeting minutes, annual reports and KPI reports, could be enriched with further background and self-contained information, such as the analysis, interpretation and reflection, for clearer records of the deliberation process. (Paragraph 4.5.2 (e))
- 2.6 HKCAAVQ will subsequently satisfy itself on whether the Operator remains competent to achieve the relevant objectives as stated 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 the fulfilment of any condition and compliance with any restriction stipulated in this Accreditation Report.

3. INTRODUCTION

- 3.1 The Hang Seng Management College (HSMC), restructured from the Hang Seng School of Commerce (HSSC), has been registered under the Post Secondary Colleges Ordinance (Cap. 320) since 2010. HSMC acquired the university title in October 2018 and subsequently changed its title to The Hang Seng University of Hong Kong (the University). The University has attained HKCAAVQ PAA status at QF Level 5 for ten programme areas, namely (i) Accounting, (ii) English Language and English Literature, (iii) Finance, (iv) General Business Administration, (v) General Management, (vi) Marketing, (vii) Mass Media and Communications, Journalism and Public Relations, (viii) Logistics Studies, (ix) Supply-chain Management, and (x) Translation. The University offers a total of 27 bachelor's degree programmes at QF Level 5 and 13 master's and one

executive master's degree programmes at QF Level 6 as of the 2022/23 academic year. The offering of new degree programmes by the post-secondary colleges registered under the Post Secondary Colleges Ordinance (Cap. 320) is subject to the approval of the Chief Executive in Council.

- 3.2 The University commissioned HKCAAVQ to conduct a Periodic Institutional Review (PIR) covering the approved Programme Area of English Language and English Literature under its PAA status at QF Level 5. HKCAAVQ formed an expert panel (the Panel, with Panel Membership in the Appendix). HKCAAVQ's Manual for the Four-stage Quality Assurance Process under the Hong Kong Qualifications Framework served as the guiding document for the University and the Panel in conducting this exercise. The site visit for this exercise was conducted on 27-29 September 2023.

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 organizational effectiveness and implementation of strategically planned initiatives.

- 4.1.1 HSUHK has a system of governance with clear lines of accountability and responsibility to facilitate strategic planning and delivery of quality learning programmes. The University has the Board of Governors as the supreme governing body and the University Council being the executive body which administers the property and manages the general affairs of the University subject to the directions of the Board of Governors (BoG).
- 4.1.2 There are four constitutional bodies, namely the BoG, the Council, the Academic Board and the School Board for each School in the University, each having its own defined functions and responsibilities in the governance structure. The members of the BoG serve as Chairmen and Members of the four Board Committees, namely the

Audit Committee, Finance Committee, Foundation Management Committee and the Fundraising and Donation Committee, to assist in discharging the BoG's duties and provide reports to the BoG on a regular basis.

- 4.1.3 The Council, under the BoG, is the executive body of the University in formulating important University policies subject to the directions set out by the BoG and is responsible for ensuring that the University is managed effectively, the education of students is pursued in an appropriate manner that leads to desirable outcomes, and the various academic and resource plans put forward by the University are decided upon according to the financial resources approved and allocated by the BoG. In each Council meeting, the President, who is also the chairperson of the Academic Board, would present the Report on HSUHK's development to the Council and report to the Council the latest development on academic matters.
- 4.1.4 The Academic Board (AB) and School Boards (SB) are responsible for the University's academic governance. The AB, chaired by the President, is the principal academic body which regulates all academic affairs of the University subject to the financial control of the Council. There are 15 Standing Committees formed under the AB responsible for specific policy areas, involving academic staff and students from different Schools, Departments and Programmes.
- 4.1.5 Each School has a School Board responsible for the organisation and administration of academic programmes and modules offered by the School, as well as for the monitoring and maintenance of standards of its teaching, learning, research and public engagement activities.
- 4.1.6 The Senior Management Committee (SMC) of HSUHK is the principal administrative body regulating all administrative affairs of the University. SMC is responsible for the planning, implementation, coordination, and review of all financial, space, IT and staffing resources of the University, and for ensuring that the University's short-term and long-term development plans are well supported by its resources and that operational plans and major policy proposals are deliberated upon before they are presented to the BoG/ Council for consideration. A Risk Management Group (RMG) was established since 2018 to advise the SMC on the risk management policies and strategies of the University on, for example, legal, financial, operational aspects, information technology and information security, and reputational risks, identify major risks that may impact on the University, and monitor the compliance to related

policies and regulations. The RMG would also periodically review the policies and strategies concerned.

4.1.7 The Panel reviewed the membership composition and the terms of reference of the following boards and committees, including their appointment policy and codes of meeting where applicable:

- (a) The Board of Governors;
- (b) The Council;
- (c) The Academic Board;
- (d) The standing committees formed under the AB and SMC;
- (e) The other four boards at institutional level;
- (f) The Risk Management Group; and
- (g) The five committees at department level of the approved programme area, such as the Quality Assurance Committee, School Advisory Committee, Staff-Student Consultative Committee and Programme Advisory Committee.

4.1.8 The Panel noted that the governing body and its standing committees monitor the performance of various aspects of HSUHK through a clearly defined reporting mechanism.

4.1.9 The Panel observed that at the institutional level, the University has devised the Five-Year Strategic Plan, upon which the University has also mapped out an Academic Development Plan, which sets out the directions for programme development, enhancement of teaching and learning quality, research performance and student development. Each School/ Department has its own School Academic Development Plan, which guides the School's/ Department's academic development and growth that should be in line with the University's overall directions and strategies for growth.

4.1.10 The following documents on the Strategic Plan and the Academic Development Plan at the institutional and the department levels (the hosting Department of the approved programme area) were provided to the Panel for review:

- (a) HSUHK Strategic Plan 2018-2023;
- (b) HSUHK Strategic Plan 2018-2023 First Progress Report;
- (c) Academic Development Plan 2018-2023;
- (d) University Academic Development Plan 2022-2025;
- (e) Extract of the first draft of the University Strategic Plan 2023-2028; and
- (f) Department's Academic Development Plan 2022-2025 & Projection 2025-2028.

- 4.1.11 For planning and monitoring the progress on achievements at the institutional level, the University has identified a set of Key Profile Indicators (KPIs) to help measure the University's performance in different areas, review institutional effectiveness and consider appropriate changes in plans/ strategies. The Panel observed that various channels are in place to collect the KPI-related data and comments from different groups of stakeholders on a regular basis, such as the student information system, employer survey, student learning experience survey, graduate exit survey and student admission figures. The University provided to the Panel documentary evidence such as the Strategic Plan 2018-2023 and its progress report, the Academic Development Plan of the University, the Academic Development Plan of the School of Communication, the Key Profile Indicators (KPIs) to measure its performance in different areas, review institutional KPIs at the institutional level and samples of meeting minutes of relevant committees to demonstrate the implementation of its governance system and the review process of the organisational effectiveness.
- 4.1.12 The Panel also noted that an annual review and reporting system are in place to check on the relevant compliance, performance and progress. The University provided samples of relevant reports and other documents mentioned under Paragraph 4.5 to the Panel for review and informed the Panel of the following reporting system:
- (a) The University administration is required to submit an annual progress report to the Council on how far it has achieved the strategic goals in its Five-Year Strategic Plan.
 - (b) All Standing Committees formed under the AB are required to submit an annual report to the AB at the end of each academic year.
 - (c) All Standing Committees under the SMC are also required to submit an annual report to the SMC at the end of each academic year.
 - (d) All schools, departments, programmes, committees and offices are required to submit an annual plan to either the Academic Board or the Senior Management Committee to review the progress achieved in the past year and the development plan for the next year respectively, as part of the University's annual planning, review and reporting process, including all annual reports for the School of Humanities and Social Science (SHSS)

and the department reports since the last PAA exercise with parts that are related to the approved Programme Area of English Language and English Literature.

- 4.1.13 Regarding the implementation and monitoring of the Strategic Plans and the monitoring of the performance of the University during the validity period, HSUHK informed the Panel that the University Management had conducted an interim review of the Strategic Plan for 2018-23 to assess the progress and accomplishments achieved by HSUHK at the midpoint of the five-year period. The University also informed the Panel through documentary evidence showing how the strategic goals outlined in the five Strategic Focus Areas (SFA) had been accomplished, and the corresponding strategic initiatives currently being implemented. As the Strategic Plan has reached the end of its five-year term, a final report will be presented to the Council during its upcoming meeting in November 2023, after this PIR exercise.
- 4.1.14 The University also informed the Panel that some goals of the Strategic Plan 2018-23 were not fully realised and in some cases experienced delays due to the pandemic, for example the initiative to be a smart University, and thus they have included the modified versions of these goals in the Strategic Plan 2023-28 as evidence of how the University worked according to the changed landscape and how it provided new directions for their staff to ensure the achievements with practical means. Changes in the external environment, such as the rapid expansion of the Mainland China market, a growing demand for postgraduate programmes, and the increased significance of Environmental, Social, and Governance education have prompted the University to develop new strategic goals in the current Plan.
- 4.1.15 Regarding the strategic planning for 2023-28, the Panel was informed that during the validity period, a Strategic Planning Group (SPG), chaired by the Council Chairman, with members including Governors, Council Members and representatives of the University Management, was formed to steer the planning. The six new SFAs of the Strategic Plan 2023-28 were first devised after the University Management conducted the review of (a) the goals and objectives of the Strategic Plan for 2018-2023, (b) the Purpose, Mission, and Vision Statements, Motto, and Core Values of HSUHK, and (c) an environmental scanning and situation analysis, which aimed to identify trends in higher education globally, regionally, and in Hong Kong, as well as to assess the ecology of the local self-financing higher education sector. The six SFAs were further considered and

discussed by the SPG and the respective strategic planning sub-groups for each SFA under the SPG, and subsequently refined and confirmed based on the feedback received from various stakeholders.

- 4.1.16 During the site visit, the Panel met with various stakeholders to discuss their roles and involvement in the strategic planning and review of the University. Through the discussion, the Panel considered that the stakeholders are well-informed and engaged in executing and monitoring the progress of the University's Five-Year Strategic Plan.
- 4.1.17 In consideration of the above information and the discussion with various stakeholders, the Panel formed the view that the University has demonstrated the achievement of its educational objectives continuously. The achievement of educational objectives aligned with the University's vision and mission and has been 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 The senior management team comprises six positions, namely the President, Provost and Vice-President (Academic and Research), Vice-President (Learning and Student Experience), Vice-President (Organisational Development), and Associate Vice-President (Development and Campus Services).
- 4.2.2 The approved Programme Area of English Language and English Literature is hosted by the School of Humanities and Social Science (SHSS). The SHSS is led by a Dean who takes the overall responsibility for planning, administering and operating the SHSS to ensure that its operation is in line with the strategic directions of the University. The BA-ENG programme is led by a Programme Leader for the DoE. Together, these form the academic leadership of the approved programme area.

- 4.2.3 HSUHK sets out three paths for academic staff members: (a) the professorial track (i.e., Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, and Professor, whose main duties are teaching, research, and administration), (b) the professorial (practice) track (i.e., Associate Professor (Practice) and Professor (Practice)) and (c) the teaching track (i.e., Lecturer and Senior Lecturer). The main duties of both Track (b) and (c) are teaching and administration. The University also stipulates that the minimum qualification for academic staff members is a Master's degree or a professional qualification on top of a university degree. The University targets that at least 60% of the academic staff members should have a doctoral degree.
- 4.2.4 The University adopts a recruitment strategy of bringing in both experienced academics, young scholars, retired professors and experienced professionals from the relevant industries who would provide students with a practical sense of how to put theories into practices. The recruitment of international academic staff has also begun since AY2012/13.
- 4.2.5 The University's Policy Guidelines and Procedures for Appointment of Visiting Professorship, the samples of job advertisement of Department of English (DoE) and the profiles of DoE academic staff were provided to the Panel for review. The University also provided information on the breakdown of the ranks of DoE academic staff and the mapping between the subject matters of the Programme Area, English Language and English Literature, and the Staff Expertise of the BA-ENG programme.
- 4.2.6 All academic staff are expected to devote, apart from teaching, a portion of their time to scholarly activities, administrative duties, curriculum development, assessment and examinations and committee work. The accreditation document informed the Panel that academic staff members of each track all have different teaching hours according to their major duties. The Panel was also provided with the document, *Roles and Responsibilities in Academic Departments*, along with the summary of teaching hours, research output, and the administrative duties of academic staff members by rank and by post for review. The teaching staff whom the Panel met with verified their own teaching load and considered the workload reasonable.
- 4.2.7 The Panel noted a strong sense of support from the academic and administrative community of the University. Staff representatives showed the commitment in contributing to learners' experience and the development of the University. The collegial relationship among

the teaching team of the approved programme area is harmonious and supportive. The students whom the Panel met with also recognised the commitment of the teaching team and are appreciative of them being supportive, attentive and responsive to their questions during and outside classes, and are willing to provide prompt response through different means of communication such as emails and social media applications.

- 4.2.8 The Panel enquired about the administrative support to the programme area, including the number of administrative staff by rank in the programme area in each year since March 2021 (the last PIR exercise of the University for another programme area), and information about their experience. The University informed the Panel that the turnover rate of office staff was relatively high in 2019-2022. The situation improved as the impact of pandemic eased in the second half of 2022. The University also informed the Panel about how the annual appraisal exercise was conducted and the approval mechanism for staff promotion.
- 4.2.9 Further to the recruitment plan of the DoE for 2023/24 mentioned in the accreditation document, the University updated the Panel in the response to the initial comments that the recruitment plan has been completed. The DoE has successfully recruited two full-time Assistant Professors, as replacement of two departed faculty members in 2022/23, who specialise in the areas of modernist literature and corpus linguistics. A full-time chair professor in comparative literature has also been recruited. DoE has thus completed the recruitment process.
- 4.2.10 Regarding staff performance appraisal, it was noted that professorial staff are appraised on three appraisal areas, namely (a) Research and Scholarship, (b) Teaching and (c) Service, each with a point system. The Panel also noted that under the current system, points obtained from publication in one year cannot be carried forward when they exceed the maximum points for one single year. The Panel also noted that some of the teaching staff's published journals were not listed in the Department's journal list because the relevant journals have not been recognised under the list yet.
- 4.2.11 Based on the above observations, the Panel opined that it was worth reviewing whether the publication points can be carried forward to the following appraisal year and whether there could be a broader inclusion in the journal list and therefore **ADVISED** the University to revisit the appraisal mechanism and the evaluation criteria, particularly those under the category "Research and Scholarship", so

that the academic accomplishments by individual teaching staff could be considered more fully.

- 4.2.12 On staff development, the Human Resource Office is responsible for the reporting of the staff development activities in the University. The Panel was provided with a list of Staff Development Programmes held by the Centre for Teaching and Learning in AY2020/21 and AY2021/22 and also the Annual Budget for Staff Development 2022/23 showing how the University Research Committee has set aside funds to support the research-related activities for review. The Panel noted that since 2012, the University has been organising the Academic Planning Retreat annually to review and develop strategies for HSUHK's advancement.
- 4.2.13 In addition to the direct financial support for academic staff for attending external development activities, which reimbursement is up to 50% of course fee from the Staff Development Fund, and is capped at HK\$15,000 per person per academic year, HSUHK also organises in-house seminars and workshops for academic staff members periodically covering topics such as outcome-based teaching and learning, development of assessment rubrics, research and publication, quality assurance at HSUHK and programme accreditation/re-accreditation-related exercises. These activities are generally supported by the Staff Development Fund.
- 4.2.14 Based on the above information and the discussion with various stakeholders, the Panel formed the view that the University has demonstrated sufficiency in terms of the number, quality and competence of its management, teaching and support staff, resulting from effective staff planning, management and development in alignment with the development of the programme area.

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 The table below shows the programme covered under the programme area with PAA status. The BA-ENG programme is the only programme approved to operate under the Programme Area of Languages and Related Studies at QF Level 5.

Area of Study and Training	Sub-area	Programme Area	Programme
Languages and Related Studies	Languages and Related Studies	English Language and English Literature	Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in English (BA-ENG)

4.3.2 The University provided data and examples to demonstrate how the BA-ENG programme has been managed, reviewed and enhanced during the validity period with external inputs from industry and academia during the validity period.

4.3.3 The University also provided the following information of the BA-ENG programme through their documentation and during the site-visit meetings:

Admission Information

- (a) Samples of the records of individual interviews and written tests.
- (b) The minimum admission requirements of the BA-ENG programme and those of other bachelor's degree programmes of HSUHK.
- (c) Information on diversifying student intake, such as ethnic minorities, self-nomination, including the relevant policy and data on students' diversity since the last PAA exercise in 2018.

Learning and Teaching

- (d) The number of BA-ENG students with "Academic Warning" and "Academic Probation" status and the study progress of such students since the PAA exercise in 2018.
- (e) The participation rates of BA-ENG students' participation in the list of new activities organised by the English Language Centre since 2019.
- (f) The BA-ENG students' participation in exchange programmes.

- (g) The study- or career-themed talks by guest speakers (e.g. the BA-ENG alumni) and the relevant feedback by student participants.

Students and Alumni

- (h) The number of BA-ENG students and alumni who participated in the alumni cocktail party in 2019 and the in-campus sports day in August 2021.
- (i) The plans for further activities involving the BA-ENG students and alumni.

- 4.3.4 The Panel reviewed the Department's tabled journal list and strategic research areas. The Panel noted the plan of the University for Interdisciplinary development and research from the Academic Development Plan 2018-2023 by the Department of English (DoE) for the Programme Area of English Language and English Literature, and the University's Academic Development Plan 2022 – 2025 presented in the accreditation documents.
- 4.3.5 The Panel considered that there is room for enhancing the current journal list and the classification system adopted, and therefore **RECOMMENDED** that the University should expand the Department's journal list and review the classification of the journals under various tiers so that the journal list could be more compatible with both the Department's initiatives of Interdisciplinary development and research and the University's Strategic Academic Development Plan. (Paragraph 2.5.1)
- 4.3.6 The University appoints external examiners to provide external views on the academic standard of its programmes. The Panel observed that there are two types of External Examiners (EEs) to monitor and advise on the quality of the programme, including External Examiners (Module) (EEMs) and External Examiners (Programme) (EEPs). The EEMs are responsible for reviewing module assessment/examination results and grades of the modules of the programme and providing feedback on module development. The EEPs are responsible for assessing the overall appropriateness of the standard of the assessment/examinations, endorsing EEM reports and providing comments and suggestions for the Programme.
- 4.3.7 The Panel noted the following comments by the External Examiners whom they met with regarding the assessments of the BA-ENG programme and also noted the efforts made by the teaching team:

- (a) Detailed documents including the syllabus, description of assessment rubrics and guidelines were provided.
- (b) Assessments are generally well designed with a variety of assessment methods adopted in the modules reviewed.
- (c) The grade distributions of individual modules are considered appropriate.
- (d) Detailed feedback by teaching staff was found on all the marked assessment scripts provided for review and with reasons on how the grade was given to individual students' assessments.
- (e) Written responses to EEs' comments were provided with the support of the rationale behind them. The EEs also noted their comments have been considered in the next round of assessment.
- (f) The communication with the DoE was prompt and efficient.

4.3.8 During the meeting with the external stakeholders, the Panel observed that the external stakeholders have always been well informed regarding the development of the University and the external stakeholders are also committed to their roles in the process of programme area development and management.

4.3.9 The Panel noted from the KPI reports, which contained data and statistics, tables of benchmark and the records of discussions with the Dean and the Associate Dean of the School of Humanities and Social Science (SHSS) and the Head of DoE that since the University determined the criteria of the benchmarking by comparing the performance of other programmes and different schools internally, there was no external benchmarking exercise conducted so far. To better assist the progress of achievement of KPIs at the institutional level, the Panel **ADVISED** the University to consider expanding the scope of the relevant benchmarking exercises that would be used in the University Academic Development Plan for improvement by seeking external benchmarking with similar programmes of other institutions.

4.3.10 The Panel noted that the Career Planning and Development unit of the SAO has established a strong network with industries and employers to explore local and overseas internship opportunities for

students and asked the students and graduates to share their views on the Internship Programme. All students and graduates whom the Panel met with welcomed the internship opportunities, and one representative shared that participating in the internship did help to improve her speaking and writing skills and has also leveraged what she has learned in the BA-ENG programme. Some other representatives, however, shared that most of the current openings are business-related positions. Although there were internships related to the English studies directly, the number of offers were only a few;

- 4.3.11 The Panel sees the benefit of internship to students' learning experience and noted the observations shared by the students and graduates. Hence, the Panel **ADVISED** the University to consider reviewing and expanding the list of internship positions and partners to cover more opportunities that could better accommodate the students of the BA-ENG programme and future programmes under the approved programme area, and consider exploring the possibility of taking internship as part of the programme curriculum.
- 4.3.12 The University informed the Panel that since 2017, a total of 12 English major students have joined the Exchange Programme to experience learning in a new environment and broaden their horizons. The Panel reviewed information on the Exchange Programme 2018/19 – 2020/21 and a sample of BA-ENG student's feedback on the Exchange Programme. The University also provided the Panel with the documented recommendations made by the Mid-term Periodic Review Panel (MPRP) with the Department's follow-up actions showing that the University has made an effort to solicit new exchange partners in Europe. For example, the School of Humanities and Social Science has recently signed new exchange partnerships with two universities in Europe. The Panel also noted that all the teaching staff, external stakeholders and students and graduates whom they met with appreciated the exchange opportunities available. The stakeholders believed that apart from the Internship Programme, students should and could gain more experience in another culture and global exposure through activities such as the Internship Programme and international attachment. The Panel, hence, **ADVISED** the University to encourage students' participation by continuously promoting the Exchange Programme to students.
- 4.3.13 Regarding the new programme development under the approved programme area, the University provided to the Panel the HSUHK Academic Development Plan 2022 – 2025, the Academic

Development Plan (2022-2025) & Projection (2025-2028) of the DoE and the other information for review, such as the guiding principles for the development and launch of new programmes. In the coming three years, the University will take additional measures to review their programmes, to ensure better use of resources and coordination of efforts across the University.

- 4.3.14 The University has identified several directions and priority areas to guide its efforts in programme development such as (a) inter-school/ inter-departmental collaboration on new degrees, including possibly the options of Double Major, Double Degree and Pre-packaged One Major + One Minor programmes; and (b) Multi-disciplinary and Theme-based Programmes that aim to break down the boundaries of disciplines under each School's management and focus on the integration among different areas of study. In response, a new undergraduate programme with an interdisciplinary approach to humanities, namely Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in World Literature and Culture (BAWLC), is proposed to be offered under the approved programme area. The initial new programme proposal of the BAWLC was provided to the Panel for review.
- 4.3.15 The University also added that upon the discussions at the President/ Vice-Presidents/ Deans Meeting, a new mechanism was launched in September 2021 for reviewing existing UG and taught postgraduate (TPG) programmes for ensuring the financial sustainability of the programme.
- 4.3.16 At the department level, the senior management team informed the Panel of their development plan during the site visit that the DoE planned to develop new streams in undergraduate (UG) programme(s), professional master's programmes, Professional Doctorate and Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) programme(s). The Panel observed during the site visit that the teaching staff and external stakeholders whom they met with also saw the benefits of the development of PhD programmes within the SHSS and opined that solid plans will need to be prepared if the SHSS is to proceed with developing doctoral level of studies. The Panel also noted that DoE's plan for the development of interdisciplinary double degree or double major programmes had gained support from their external stakeholders.
- 4.3.17 In considering the above information, the Panel opined that these new programme proposals not only responded to the Department's initiatives of Interdisciplinary development and research and the University's Strategic Academic Development Plan mentioned in

Paragraph 4.2, but also aligned with the key Strategic Focus Areas of the HSUHK Strategic Plan 2023-2028, *Research, Scholarly Works and Knowledge Exchange*. Therefore, the Panel **ADVISED** the University to continuously explore the possibility of developing interdisciplinary/ double-major programmes under the approved programme area with collaborative efforts of the DoE and different Schools and Departments of HSUHK.

4.3.18 Regarding the launch of new programmes under the PAA status granted, the University confirmed the understanding that while an Operator with PAA status may develop and operate learning programmes within the approved scope of programme areas at the specified QF level or below within the validity period without undertaking HKCAAVQ's Learning Programme Accreditation/ Re-accreditation, HKCAAVQ's prevailing practice requires that such programmes should have been specified in the academic plan when the Operator underwent the PIR process. Prior approval from HKCAAVQ should be sought before implementing substantial changes to the approved programme area, including changes to the academic plan. It is also confirmed that the current academic plan for the approved Programme Area of English Language and English Literature will continue to be implemented.

4.3.19 Having reviewed the above information and the discussion with various stakeholders, the Panel formed the view that, overall, the University has demonstrated that the processes for programme approval, development and review remained effective, and that the strategic planning at institutional and programme area levels are linked and continue to contribute towards the realisation of its educational 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 The following standing committees under the SMC oversee the resource planning, in the areas of human, financial, physical and information resources at institutional and programme levels.

- (a) The Resources Allocation Committee (RAC), co-chaired by the Provost and Vice-President (Research and Development) and the Vice-President (Organisational Development), makes recommendations on all resource allocation policies and budgeting matters.
- (b) The Campus Facilities Management Committee (CFMC), chaired by the Associate Vice-President (Development and Campus Services), decides on matters relating to the management, operations, repair and maintenance of campus facilities, such as teaching and learning facilities, and student facilities and services.
- (c) The IT Advisory Committee (ITAC), chaired by Provost and Vice-President (Academic and Research), advises on the needs, directions, and strategies of providing IT equipment, facilities, services, and training in the University.
- (d) The Advisory Committee on Campus Development and Habitat (ACCDH), co-chaired by a Governor and an expert in architectural / construction / building and real estate or related disciplines, advises on strategic directions on potential lands acquisition and makes initial recommendations for the BoGs' consideration.

4.4.2 The Library and Learning Resources Advisory Committee (LLRAC) includes representatives from all Departments/Schools and student representatives. The LLRAC's chief function is to advise the development and use of the library resources, services and facilities and to provide a formal channel for academic staff, students, collaborating units or centre representatives and librarians to work closely together.

4.4.3 The University informed the Panel that they have reviewed the current position, challenges and opportunities arising from goals set forth under the University Strategic Focus Area on Innovative Teaching, Learning and Research. The Library's Strategic Plan for fulfilling the library's key role in contributing to the academic success for students. Since 2021, the Library has subscribed 150 databases and provides access to over 135,000 e-journal titles and 555,000 e-books titles. The physical collections have also grown moderately, covering over 75,000 volumes of print books, 13,000 volumes of multi-media collections, as well as 340 active printed periodical titles. Initiatives such as the introduction of Evidence Based Acquisitions model also broaden full-text access to quality e-resources beyond

the Library Collection. The University realised that strengthening the provision of electronic resources should be their prime goal, particularly for supporting new programmes and enhancing e-Learning. An Open Educational Resources (OER) platform has also created access to open-source materials. In the accreditation documents, the University also introduced to the Panel a range of library services, such as

- (a) the EZproxy, which enables access to the electronic collections by users from anywhere off-campus; and
- (b) the Personal Librarian Services for connecting each First-Year student with a designated Learning Support Librarian.

4.4.4 The Panel reviewed the following information/ data regarding the library services provided to the students of the BA-ENG programme:

- (a) Information on BA-ENG First-year student user rates of the kinds of library services and the effectiveness of the “Personal Librarian Services” since the PAA exercise of the programme area.
- (b) Statistical evidence about the use of various library resources by BA-ENG students from AY2013/14 to AY2022/23.
- (c) Library holdings and planned acquisitions relevant to the BA-ENG programme and the two newly proposed programmes to be launched under the approved programme area.

4.4.5 HSUHK tabled a list of the campus facilities and Equipment/ IT Facilities and the corresponding descriptions and purposes of usage for the Panel to review. The University also informed the Panel that feedback/ requests from users on the quality and adequacy of learning, teaching and enabling resources are collected twice every semester by the Department through personal tutors assigned to individual students and by the Registry through the online the module evaluation. The Department Quality Assurance Committee and the School Staff-student Consultative Committee will inform the faculty and the relevant party, including the English Language Centre for BA-ENG programme, to make plans for resources and facilities in response to students’ feedback.

4.4.6 During the on-site tour of the Library and the English Learning Centre, the University demonstrated the provision of learning and teaching facilities and services for the approved programme area.

4.4.7 Regarding student support services, the Student Affairs Office (SAO) coordinates all student support services and co-curricular activities which can be categorised in the following areas:

- (a) Career Planning and Development;
- (b) Exchange and Incoming Students Services;
- (c) Personal Growth and Counselling;
- (d) Physical Education;
- (e) Student Development and Campus Life;
- (f) Student Finance and Resources; and
- (g) Residential Colleges Unit.

4.4.8 To strengthen the consultation services for students, HSUHK has also set up two consultative committees under the Academic Board (AB). They are the Student Affairs Committee (SAC), which oversees the organisation of student activities, and the University Staff-Student Consultative Committee (USSCC), which oversees students' academic matters.

4.4.9 For the work on "Career Planning and Development", the SAO provided career services to bridge the needs of the students and employers through soliciting internship and job opportunities for students, organising career talks and recruitment fairs, providing relevant training and resources to enhance students' knowledge of the employment market. The Career Mentorship Programme available would match students with industry executives who act as mentors for the students on real-life work experience. The alumni from different sectors are also engaged to assist students in career preparation and referral of opportunities.

4.4.10 As for career development support, the University also allocated resources to prepare students for employment. They responded to students' needs for more career planning and development services, which were channelled through the School Staff-Student Consultative Committee meetings.

4.4.11 The University informed the Panel that from January 2019 to December 2020, the Quality Enhancement Support Scheme (QESS) fund under the Self-financing Post-secondary Education Fund of the Hong Kong SAR Government had sponsored HSUHK for a project on *Integrating Service Learning into Classroom Learning*, the DoE was one of the beneficiary departments. The purpose of the project was to introduce service-learning which also complements the current curriculum so that the students can develop sustainable

and inclusive values for business and society at large. The project was welcomed by the students and the departments.

- 4.4.12 Based on the above information and the positive experience gained from the QESS project, the Panel **ADVISED** the University to have continuous enhancement of the Career Planning and Development services for those studying in the programme/ future programme(s) under the approved programme, namely the BA-ENG programme for the time being.
- 4.4.13 The financial information was provided for to the Panel Chair for review, including the Income and Expenditure for Bachelor of Arts in English (Honours) from the Year 2018/19 to 2022/23 and the Projection of Income and Expenditure for Bachelor of Arts in English (Honours) for the year from 2023/24 to 2027/28. The template for the annual budget proposal of the academic department was also provided along with elaborations on how individuals would proceed with the annual budget exercise, such as earmarking items related to programme validation and module/ programme examination to check and ensure adequate funding will be reserved for conducting the relevant activities and proposing new expenditure items to support new initiatives of the department.
- 4.4.14 In consideration of the above information and the discussion with various stakeholders, the Panel formed the view that the University has in place mechanisms for effective management and deployment of resources and services, such as institutional resource allocation policies and financial budgets, to continue to meet its educational 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 With respect to the development, approval, monitoring and reviewing of the development and performance of the programme under the approved programme area, the University provided a range of documents to demonstrate the operation of its QA system in the approved programme area during the validity period, including:

- (a) HSUHK Quality Assurance Manual.
- (b) Relevant minutes or their extracts of the following Board and Committee meetings during the validity period showing deliberations and/ or decisions regarding the development and management related to the Programme Area of English Language and English Literature:
 - Academic Board
 - Academic Planning and Development Committee
 - Resources Allocation Committee
 - School Executive Committee
 - School Board
 - Department Executive Committee
 - Department Board
 - Department Quality Assurance Committee
 - Department Examination and Assessment Committee
 - Programme Advisory Committee
 - Programme Committee
 - Department Staff-Student Consultative Committee
 - Global Exchange Committee
- (c) Reports/ findings of the following:
 - Report of the Independent Review Panel for Periodic Institutional Review for the Programme Area of English Language and English Literature
 - Annual Programme Reports (BA-ENG) AY2019/20 to AY2021/22
 - Report on the KPIs for AY2018/19 to AY2020/21
 - Reports on the Student Learning Experience Survey (2018/19 to 2021/22, with the 2019/20 survey on online teaching and learning due to pandemic) by the University Teaching and Learning Quality Committee
 - Reports on Graduate Employment Survey (2018 to 2021)
 - Reports of External Examiner (Programme) and External Examiner (Programmes) and the follow-up actions taken during the validity period;
 - Full reports of all the Graduate Exit Survey of the BA-ENG programme
 - Full reports of all the Alumni Survey of the BA-ENG programme.

- (d) The following performance indicators of the programme under the approved programme area were monitored during the validity period:
- Student admission (no. of applicants, offers made, student enrolled and Year 1 attrition rate)
 - Median Admission Score
 - Total number of students
 - Mean GPA and honours classification
 - Mean of module effectiveness and teaching effectiveness for core modules
 - Feedback and recommendations from students, teachers, external examiners, programme consultant/ advisor, employers and other stakeholders
 - Other performance indicators (e.g. professional recognition, student achievement, distinguished accomplishment)
 - Sharing of good practices in programme and teaching quality and student support
 - Graduate employment

4.5.2 Having reviewed the above documents and discussed them with internal and external stakeholders of the Programme, the Panel had the following observations:

- (a) The quality assurance procedures for ensuring the quality and standards of the University's learning programme at HKQF level 5 in the approved Programme Area of English Language and English Literature are complied with and conducted on an ongoing basis.
- (b) There were records showing that sufficient formal and informal channels are available for obtaining feedback from different stakeholders internally and externally and regularly.
- (c) The University has taken remedial/ follow-up actions in response to the feedback and recommendations received from internal and external stakeholders.
- (d) The University has robust quality assurance mechanisms in place to continuously monitor and review the development and performance of its programme under the approved programme area so as to ensure that it is aligning with the University's educational/ training objectives.

- (e) In the meeting with various stakeholders during the site visit, the Panel observed that representatives met with were mostly conversant with the University's QA mechanism and procedures that are relevant to their roles and duties and have also been able to supplement the Panel with information showing that decisions made had been based on the deliberation of data and other details. However, the information recorded in the meeting or related documents was considerably scarce and these documents did not record comprehensively the analysis, interpretation or reflection of the relevant activities that demonstrate, for example, how the University had conducted self-evaluation for identification of their own strengths and weaknesses, and for continuous improvement. The Panel therefore **RECOMMENDED** that the University should review and consider how information presented in records and documents such as meeting minutes, annual reports and KPI reports, could be enriched with further background and self-contained information, such as the analysis, interpretation and reflection, for clearer records of the deliberation process. (Paragraph 2.5.1)

4.5.3 The Panel met with the student and graduate representatives of the BA-ENG programme and observed that although they were well aware that they could provide feedback through the formal channel of the Feedback on Modules and Teaching Survey, they have very little knowledge of the Department-level and the University-level Staff-Student Consultative Committees as the other formal feedback channel, where student representatives are involved to consider issues of concerns to students, and to make recommendations to the AB with regard to the effectiveness of the Personal Tutor System. For the improvement and enhancement of the programme(s) offered/ to be offered under the approved programme area, the Panel **ADVISED** the University to identify better ways to promote to the students all available formal channels for providing feedback on the quality of their learning experience.

4.5.4 In consideration of the above information and the discussion with various stakeholders, the Panel considered that the University had in general demonstrated a comprehensive and effective quality assurance system for ensuring the quality and standards of its learning programmes under the programme area, aligning with its educational 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 stated 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, can 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 <https://www.hkqr.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.

Ref: 56/39/01

XX January 2024

JoH/AnC/DnL/VT/vt/as

The Hang Seng University of Hong Kong

**Periodic Institutional Review for
English Language and English Literature**

27 - 29 September 2023

Panel Membership

Panel Chair

Professor Joan Ann COOPER
Emeritus Professor
TEQSA Commissioner
AUSTRALIA

Panel Secretary

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

Panel Members

Dr KI Wing Chi Magdalen
Associate Professor
Department of English Language and
Literature
Hong Kong Baptist University
HONG KONG

Professor LEUNG Wai Lin Winnie
Former Professor of English
The Hong Kong Polytechnic University
HONG KONG

Professor LUKE Kang Kwong
Chair Professor of Linguistics
School of Humanities
Nanyang Technological University
SINGAPORE

