



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

ACCREDITATION REPORT

CARITAS INSTITUTE OF HIGHER EDUCATION

LEARNING PROGRAMME ACCREDITATION

MASTER IN NURSING AND ALLIED HEALTH

JULY 2023

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1. TERMS OF REFERENCE

1.1 Based on the Service Agreement (No.: AA847), 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 Caritas Institute of Higher Education (the Operator) to conduct a learning programme accreditation (LPA) with the following Terms of Reference:

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

2. HKCAAVQ'S DETERMINATION

2.1 HKCAAVQ has determined that, the Master in Nursing and Allied Health (MNAH) meets the stated objectives and QF standard at Level 6 and can be offered as an accredited programme with a validity period of three years.

2.2 Validity Period

2.2.1 The validity period will commence on the date specified below. Operators may apply to HKCAAVQ to vary the commencement date of the validity period. Applications will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

2.3 The determinations on the Programme are specified as follows:

Name of Operator	Caritas Institute of Higher Education 明愛專上學院
Name of Award Granting Body	Caritas Institute of Higher Education 明愛專上學院
Title of Learning Programme	Master in Nursing and Allied Health 護理及專職醫療碩士
Title of Qualification(s) [Exit Award(s)]	Master in Nursing and Allied Health 護理及專職醫療碩士
Primary Area of Study and Training	Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences
Sub-area (Primary Area of Study and Training)	Nursing
Other Area of Study and Training	Not applicable
Sub-area (Other Area of Study and Training)	Not applicable
HKQF Level	Level 6
HKQF Credits	135
Mode(s) of Delivery and Programme Length	Part-time (PT) 24 months
Intermediate Exit Award	Title of Qualification: Postgraduate Certificate in Nursing and Allied Health 護理及專職醫療深造證書 QF Level: Level 6 QF Credits: 54

	Programme Length (for PGCertNAH award): 18 months Title of Qualification: Postgraduate Diploma in Nursing and Allied Health 護理及專職醫療深造文憑 QF Level: Level 6 QF Credits: 81 Programme Length (for PGDipNAH award): 18 months
Start Date of Validity Period	1 January 2024
End Date of Validity Period	31 December 2026
Number of Enrolment(s)	Part-time (PT), Year 1 Entry: One enrolment per academic year
Maximum Number of New Students	Part-time: 40 per year
Address of Teaching / Training Venue(s)	2 Chui Ling Lane, Tseung Kwan O, New Territories

2.4 Recommendation

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

- 2.4.1 The Operator should state clearly in the promotional materials to prospective and current students that the Programme has yet to be recognised by Professional Statutory Regulatory Body (PSRB) and students are to apply for the relevant PSRB in their own capacity upon graduation. (Paragraph 4.2.6)

- 2.4.2 The Operator should review the course titles periodically to ensure consistency across modules and marking schemes. (Paragraph 4.3.3)
- 2.4.3 The Operator should review the rubrics to ensure a common understanding of the attainment standards across the teaching team. (Paragraph 4.4.3)
- 2.4.4 The Operator should consider having a range of assignments other than just the research proposal. For example, a critical review of the literature in the form of scoping, narrative, integrative or systematic reviews, the secondary analysis of data or an evaluation of a service which they are providing could be included to enhance students' learning experience. (Paragraph 4.4.7)
- 2.4.5 The Operator should consider engaging a wider spectrum of medical experts to support, offer advice and share their expertise with the students. (Paragraph 4.4.8)
- 2.4.6 The Operator should consider a structured system for staff recruitment, retention, training and development to keep up with the needs and development of the inter-disciplinary nature of the Programme. (Paragraph 4.5.5)
- 2.5 HKCAAVQ will subsequently satisfy itself on 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 the fulfilment of any condition and compliance with any restriction stipulated in this Accreditation Report.

3. INTRODUCTION

- 3.1 Caritas Institute of Higher Education (CIHE) (formerly known as Caritas Francis Hsu College) operates under the auspices of Caritas – Hong Kong, a non-profit charitable organisation in Hong Kong offering a wide range of services in medical, social work and community services, in addition to education services. CIHE has been registered as a Post-Secondary College under the Post

Secondary Colleges Ordinance (Cap. 320) since 2001. In 2010, CIHE underwent its second Institutional Review and acquired the accreditation status for offering degree-level programmes. CIHE's first bachelor's degree programme at QF Level 5 was launched in 2011. In the 2022/23 academic year, CIHE offers one master degree programme at QF level 6, 12 bachelor degree programmes at QF level 5 and four higher diploma programmes at QF level 4.

3.2 HKCAAVQ formed an expert Panel (Panel Membership noted in Appendix 1) for this re-accreditation exercise. In view of the outbreak of the Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), the site visit was conducted in the form of video-conference from 20-21 April 2023 to reduce social contact. HKCAAVQ's Manual for the Four-stage Quality Assurance Process under the Hong Kong Qualifications Framework was the guiding document for the Operator and the Panel in conducting this exercise.

3.3 In consideration of the Operator's track record established from previous accreditation exercises, and in accordance with HKCAAVQ's Differentiation Approach, the information on the following aspects of the Master in Nursing and Allied Health programme was not required in the main submission:

Domain of Competence	Information Not Required
LPA-6 Learning, Teaching and Enabling Resources / Services	Institute-wide student support services are not required.

4. PANEL'S DELIBERATIONS

The following presents the Panel's deliberations on a range of issues pertinent to its major findings. For aspects of the accreditation standards where no observations are made they are considered to be appropriately addressed by the Operator.

4.1 Programme Objectives and Learning Outcomes

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

- 4.1.1 The Master in Nursing and Allied Health (MNAH) programme is hosted by the School of Health Sciences. The current programme aims to develop advanced practitioners and clinical leaders in the healthcare profession by providing advanced theoretical knowledge and competency-based skills necessary to enhance healthcare professionals to work effectively and efficiently in challenging and rapidly changing healthcare settings. The Programme Objectives (POs) and Programme Intended Learning Outcomes (PILOs) are proposed as follows:

Programme Objectives (POs)

PO1	To educate students with in-depth and advanced knowledge and skills to become advanced practitioners and clinical leaders in the healthcare system;
PO2	To provide students with updated evidence-based knowledge and skills to practice advanced critical thinking and decision-making in preventive-curative healthcare, health advice and evidence-based interventions to effectively manage clients and family members;
PO3	To develop students with the ability to integrate and critically analyze professional and specialized knowledge and skills to conduct advanced assessment, planning, implementation and evaluation of the best strategies when delivering healthcare to individuals, families and communities; and
PO4	To enhance and enable effective interpersonal communication skills to be applied in different health care contexts.

Programme Intended Learning Outcomes (PILOs)

Upon completion of the Programme (MNAH), students should be able to:

PLO1	To analyze practice-based knowledge and skills and demonstrate how to appraise the updated knowledge and evidence to inform practice;
PLO2	To apply the updated knowledge and skills required to make decisions, solve problems, facilitate preventive-curative healthcare, and provide health advice and evidence-based intervention for effective management of clients and families in the healthcare settings;
PLO3	To synthesize knowledge and skills to assess, plan,

	implement and evaluate the best strategies to promote advanced practice in the delivery of health care for individuals, families and communities; and
PLO4	To demonstrate effective working relationship and teamwork in the performance of advanced practice in a given health care setting.

Students may choose to exit the Nursing and Allied Health programme with two intermediate exit awards, namely Postgraduate Certificate in Nursing and Allied Health (PGCertNAH) and Postgraduate Diploma in Nursing and Allied Health (PGDipNAH).

4.1.2 The Operator provided the following information to demonstrate the Programme's attainment of the PLOs at Level 6 of the Hong Kong Qualifications Framework (QF):

- (a) Mapping of PILOs against:
 - (i) POs;
 - (ii) courses; and
 - (iii) the Generic Level Descriptors (GLDs) at QF level 6
- (b) syllabi of all courses of the MNAH Programme, with information such as course descriptions, Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs), course content, Teaching & Learning Activities (TLAs), pedagogical methods, Assessment Tasks (ATs), Mapping of CILOs, TLAs and ATs, and reading lists and references;
- (c) sample teaching materials, sample assessments and the associated assessment rubrics/criteria from selected courses of the Programme, at QF Level 6.

4.1.3 In relation to addressing the community and industry needs of the MNAH Programme, the prospective employers' representatives whom the Panel met expressed the view on the distinctiveness and innovativeness of the Programme which would allow students to enhance their potential for career advancement, not only to the leadership roles but also gain exposures on other allied health professions and as a whole, acquire a comprehensive overview of the health science perspective.

4.1.4 From the review of the information provided and the discussions with the representatives from relevant stakeholders during the site visit, the Panel considered that the MNAH programme is able to facilitate

the employment and education pathways of its graduates as stated in the Graduate Profile in **Appendix II**.

- 4.1.5 In consideration of the information above and the discussions with various stakeholders, the Panel formed the view that the Programme has achieved the POs and PILOs as a whole and has met the QF standard at Level 6. The Programme is in general fit for the purposes of meeting the education and industry needs.

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 From the accreditation documents and the responses provided by the Operator, the proposed minimum admission requirements of the programme involve the completion of a number of undergraduate programmes with professional recognition, including Nursing, Physiotherapy, other Allied Health programmes and related Health Sciences degrees. To be qualified for the admission to the MNAH Programme, applicants must fulfil one of the following entrance requirements:

- (a) Have obtained a Bachelor's Degree in Nursing from a recognized institution that is pitched at HKQF Level 5 and be a registered nurse; OR
- (b) Have obtained a Bachelor's Degree in Physiotherapy from a recognized institution that is pitched at HKQF Level 5 and registered as a physiotherapist; OR
- (c) Have obtained a Bachelor's Degree for Allied Health from a recognized institution that is pitched at HKQF Level 5 and registered as an allied health care professional; OR
- (d) Have obtained a Bachelor's Degree in Health Sciences from a recognized institution that is pitched at HKQF Level 5; OR
- (e) Hold an equivalent non-local qualification as recognized by CIHE and attaining an appropriate level of English language proficiency requirements as stipulated by CIHE. #

#For students who are entering via admission route (e), additional details on admission requirements are as follows:

Applicants should have obtained an equivalent degree from a recognized overseas Higher Education Institute or University.

With reference to another taught Postgraduate degree of our Institute, applicants for taught Postgraduate programme must meet the following English language proficiency requirements if their bachelor's degrees or equivalent qualifications did not adopt English as the medium of instruction:

- English Language Subject of the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education Examination (HKDSE) - Level 3; or*
- English Language Subject of National College Entrance Examinations (NCEE) - score 100; or*
- TOEFL - score 525 (paper-based) or 196 (computer-based) or 70 (internet-based); or*
- IELTS (academic) - overall band score of 6; or*
- College English Test (CET6) of Mainland China - score 430*

Interviews will also be conducted to assess applicants' English proficiency, personal manner, reasoning ability, maturity, motivation, previous achievements and critical thinking and the selection of students will be based on applicants' overall performance.

- 4.2.2 The Operator proposed the maximum number of new students per year as 40 part-time students per year with a 5% planned attrition rate. The proposed maximum number of new students is as follows from AY 2023/24 onwards:

	2023/24	2024/25	2025-26
Year 1	40	40	40
Year 2	0	38	38
Total	40	78	78

The proposed maximum number of yearly student intake has taken into account the expected popularity of the Programme and the resources of the Operator in terms of staffing and facilities. The Panel considered the proposed maximum student numbers appropriate.

- 4.2.3 During the site visit, the Programme Team shared with the Panel that the programme design was based on the current market needs, with the research data provided in the accreditation documents supporting the current market needs. The Programme Team indicated that the current CIHE nursing students had expressed their interest in the Programme as well.
- 4.2.4 During the site visit, the Programme Team shared with the Panel that the admission selection process considers students from all health-related backgrounds, regardless of their academic backgrounds. The Operator places a high value on positive learning attitudes and considers a cohort with a balanced intake across disciplines and academic backgrounds while the strengths and weaknesses of each applicant are being taken into account.
- 4.2.5 The Panel noted that the Operator has marketing plans in place for student recruitment. During the site visit, the Operator indicated the targeted students are, for the time being, nurses and physiotherapists. To diversify the student pool and further develop the Programme in the future, the Panel **advised** that the Operator should take an active approach in marketing promotions and the student recruitment process and closely monitor the ongoing needs of the market to try and ensure a good balance among the multi-disciplines.
- 4.2.6 The Panel noted from the Operator's response and confirmed with the Operator during the site visit that there is no need for the Operator to apply for recognition from the relevant PSRB and students are to apply in their own capacity upon completing the Programme. The Panel **recommended** that the Operator should state clearly in the promotional materials to prospective and current students that the Programme has yet to be recognised by PSRB and students are to apply for the relevant PSRB in their own capacity upon graduation.
- 4.2.7 The Panel noted from the accreditation documents and response to Initial Comments that the Programme Leader is responsible for chairing the interview with candidates on a one-on-one basis. To ensure a balance in workload distribution and effectiveness during the admission process, the Panel **advised** that the Operator should consider adjusting its interview admissions process to be undertaken by more academic staff than just the Programme Leader depending on the number of applicants.

4.2.8 In line with HKCAAVQ's policy on the yearly quota of non-standard admission for its accredited programmes, the maximum number of non-standard admission (including mature students) for degree programmes should be capped, on a programme basis, at a maximum of 5% of the actual number of new students of the year. The cap is applied in line with the general expectation on self-financed degree-awarding institutions in safeguarding teaching and learning quality and thereby upholding the credibility and recognition of the qualifications. Responding to the Initial Comment on the non-standard admission quota, the Operator confirmed that its programmes will abide by the prevailing policy and cap the non-standard admission quota accordingly.

4.2.9 In consideration of the above information and the discussions with the representatives of relevant internal and external stakeholders, the Panel considered that the minimum admission requirements are clearly outlined for staff and prospective students. The minimum admission requirements and the student selection process are appropriate for the recruitment of students with the necessary skills and knowledge to undertake the Programme.

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 MNAH Programme is a two-year part-time degree programme. To be eligible for graduation and the award, students are required to obtain a GPA of at least 2.0 (out of 4.0) in all the courses completed, and pass 30 credits including those of the four 3-credit core courses, the 6-credit core courses (Final Project) and any four 3-credit elective courses.

4.3.2 For the intermediate exit awards:

(a) Postgraduate Certificate in Nursing and Allied Health (PGCertNAH), students are required to obtain a GPA of at least 2.0 (out of 4.0) in all the courses completed, and pass 12 credits including those of the four 3-credit core courses (excluding the 6-credit core course of Final Project).

- (b) Postgraduate Diploma in Nursing and Allied Health (PGDipNAH), students are required to obtain a GPA of at least 2.0 (out of 4.0) in all the courses completed, and pass 18 credits including those of the four 3-credit core courses, and two 3-credit elective courses.

The Exit Awards and Requirements for Each Award are listed below:

Exit Award	Requirements for the Award	Normative Programme Length
Postgraduate Certificate in Nursing and Allied Health (PGCertNAH) 護理及專職醫療深造證書	▪ Having passed the four 3-credit core courses ▪ Having obtained a GPA of at least 2.0 (out of 4.0) in these four courses	12 credits 40% completed 18 months
Postgraduate Diploma in Nursing and Allied Health (PGDipNAH) 護理及專職醫療深造文憑	▪ Having passed the four 3-credit core courses AND any two 3-credit elective courses ▪ Having obtained a GPA of at least 2.0 (out of 4.0) in these six courses	18 credits 60% completed 18 months
Master in Nursing and Allied Health (MNAH) 護理及專職醫療碩士	▪ Having passed the four 3-credit core courses, the 6-credit core course (Final Project) AND any four 3-credit elective courses ▪ Having obtained a GPA of at least 2.0 (out of 4.0) in all the courses studied by the student	30 credits 100% completed 24 months

- 4.3.3 While reviewing the accreditation documents and responses to Initial Comments, the Panel noticed that some of the course titles had been

changed but the changes were not reflected in other documents such as the marking schemes. To avoid any confusion, the Panel **recommended** that the Operator should review the document process periodically to ensure consistency across modules and marking schemes.

- 4.3.4 The Programme comprises two main curriculum components, Core Courses and Elective Courses. The Panel reviewed the Programme Structure and formed the opinion that the curriculum is appropriate to prepare students in order to stay abreast of evolving knowledge in the allied health industry. The majority of the learning contents, in terms of QF credits, in the Programme are pitched at QF Level 6. The detailed programme structure is tabulated as follows:

Courses			Credits
Year 1			
Semester 1	Core 1	Health Services Management	3
	Core 2	Leadership and Innovation in Health	3
Semester 2	Core 3	Practice-based Research Methods	3
	Core 4	Integrative Health Assessment	3
Semester 3	Elective 1	Elective Courses	3
	Elective 2		3
Year 2			
Semester 1	Elective 3	Elective courses	3
	Elective 4		3
Semester 2 & 3	Core 5	Final Project (Choose one)	
		A. Research Project Proposal	6
		B. Clinical/Service Project Proposal	
Total 9 Courses			30

The Elective Courses and Specialism are listed as follows:

Specialism Elective Courses (3 Credits)		NCHK Specialism
1	Community & Primary Health Care	Community & Primary Health
2	Women's Health	
3	Cardio-Respiratory Critical Care	Critical Care
4	Neuro-Renal-GI Critical Care	
5	Fundamentals of Teaching,	Research and

	Curriculum and Assessment	Education <i>(research is in the core course)</i> Gerontology
6	Health Professions Education in Practice	
7	Aging & Long-term Care	
8	End-of-Life Care for Old People	
General Clinical Electives (3 Credits)		
9	Infection Prevention & Control	
10	Cardiovascular & Respiratory Healthcare	
11	Contemporary Palliative Care in Practice	

4.3.5 During the site visit, the external stakeholders commented that after reviewing the sample examination scripts and associated rubrics, and sample teaching and learning materials, they considered that the design of the Programme is on par with similar programmes and are satisfied with its development. The Programme fits the market needs and allows students to demonstrate their knowledge thoroughly.

4.3.6 Notwithstanding the recommendation above, having considered the above information and discussions with the Operator, the Panel held the view that the structure and contents of the Programme are appropriate and would enable students to achieve the stated learning outcomes and meet the Programme Objectives.

4.4 Learning, Teaching and Assessment

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

4.4.1 The Programme employs a range of teaching and learning activities, such as lectures, tutorials, blended learning, web-based learning, problem-based learning, group assessments, visits, research proposal, guest lectures and workshops. The Operator provided to the Panel the Courses Syllabi of all courses which include the summary information of each course such as course description, course intended learning outcomes, content, pedagogical methods and assessment methods. The Panel noted that the medium of instruction of the Programme is English. The Programme intends to create an interactive culture for shared professional learning among disciplines in a relatively small class, which enables students to build

co-working and mutually respected relationships. While the planned class size is normally 40 students for the Programme, an estimation of 6-9 students are expected per specialism.

4.4.2 In the accreditation documents and response to Panel's Initial Comments, the Operator provided the Panel with samples of teaching and learning materials, assessment tasks (covering formative and summative assessments, where applicable), and associated assessment criteria/rubrics, of the following modules to demonstrate the academic standard of the Programme and the education pedagogies adopted:

- Practice-based Research Methods
- Health Professions Education in Practice
- Aging & Long-term Care
- Infection Prevention & Control
- Research Project Proposal

4.4.3 While reviewing the assessments, the Panel observed that some rubrics use a 1-10 point scale for grading, while others use the A-F grading system. To ensure consistency in the marking process and facilitate clear communication between faculty members and students, the Panel **recommended** that the Operator should review the rubrics to ensure a common understanding of the attainment standards across the teaching team.

4.4.4 The Panel noted the high demand among registered nurses at the moment and registered physiotherapists to follow. The Programme Team shared that there will be no emphasis made on specific streams and will utilise the multi-disciplinary approach while teachers with specialism will be assigned to teach specific subjects. Under the multi-disciplinary approach, students will also work on reflective reports to identify problems/issues and provide their insights to demonstrate their understanding.

4.4.5 In response to the Initial Comments, the Operator ensured that for students who are less proficient in specific topics, ample guidance and training would be provided by teachers, and advisors from the academic team would also be assigned to meet with the students during their first and second semesters. Students can also utilise the Language Centre and Information Technology Services Centre provided by the Operator. During the site visit, the Teaching Team also shared that they would pair up students with different strengths and weaknesses to facilitate each other's learning.

4.4.6 With the Programme's being a part-time degree, the Operator indicated in the accreditation documents and confirmed during the site visit, that a hybrid learning arrangement would be utilised to facilitate the studies of the full-time working students and maintain flexibility for the Programme. The Operator indicated that the online mode of teaching and learning in the Programme are as follows:

- 20.81% is for online lectures
- 7.33% is for online (hybrid) student meetings in Final Project
- 28.14% is the total online teaching arrangement in the Programme

4.4.7 The Panel noted that the research proposal is a core course for the Programme which requires students to identify a researchable topic, a client group and a setting for their investigation. While the research proposal is an essential component of the Programme, providing a range of assessment options can be beneficial for students with diverse learning styles and preferences, which allow them to demonstrate their knowledge and skills in different ways.

To enhance the Programme's inclusivity and promote student engagement, the Panel **recommended** that the Operator should consider having a range of assignments other than just the research proposal. For example, a critical review of the literature in the form of scoping, narrative, integrative or systematic reviews, the secondary analysis of data or an evaluation of a service which they are providing could be included to enhance students' learning experience.

4.4.8 The Panel noted the Operator's intention to admit diverse groups of health professionals. During the site visit, the Operator recognised the importance of the community engagement in the Programme, with hopes that it will enable health professionals to gain insights from each other's perspectives. To achieve the goals of maximising the students' learning experience, the Panel **advised** that the Operator should review the teaching methods regularly to maximise the exposure of students' learning experience especially the engagement in the community. The Panel also **recommended** that the Operator should consider engaging a wider spectrum of medical experts to support, offer advice and share their expertise with the students to provide a holistic and sustainable experience during their studies.

4.4.9 In terms of assessments, a range of methods will be adopted in the Programme, including assignments, individual or group projects,

workshops, etc. The Panel noted that the External Examiner (EE) will be provided with the assessment tasks/papers and marked student assessments to review the validity and reliability of assessments, students' attainment of intended learning outcomes, and the consistency of marking. The EE's feedback and suggestions for improvements will be documented on the External Examiner Moderation Form and considered by relevant committees under the internal quality assurance process of the Operator.

- 4.4.10 The Panel reviewed the samples of the marked assessments of the Programme and considered that they demonstrated relevant academic standards pitched at QF Level 6.
- 4.4.11 In consideration of the information above and the discussions with various stakeholders, the Panel formed the view that the learning, teaching and assessment activities designed for the Programme are appropriate in delivering the Programme content and assessing students' attainment of the intended learning outcomes.

4.5 Programme Leadership and Staffing

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

- 4.5.1 The Panel noted that the management of the Programme is shared among the Dean, Associate Dean, Programme Leaders, and Course Coordinators. The Programme Leader is the academic leader of the Programme, who is responsible for the Programme's day-to-day operation, quality assurance and improvement, and answers to the Dean and Associate Dean (Education and Quality) of the School for its quality, as indicated by student evaluations, enrolment and completion rates and graduate outcomes. The Programme Leader will also be responsible for ensuring the currency and relevance of the programme curriculum in meeting professional and community needs. The Programme Leader provides academic and programme leadership for the delivery of the Programme.
- 4.5.2 The Operator provided the following information on the programme leadership and staffing resources for the Programme:

- (a) academic and professional qualifications, research outputs and/or activities, scholarly activities, areas of expertise and/or relevant work experience of existing teaching staff;
- (b) current academic staff for the MNAH Programme (as of November 2022);
- (c) current academic staff in the school/department (as of November 2022);
- (d) staff recruitment plan projected with 40 student intake for AY 2023/24 – 2025/26, showing the numbers of the teaching staff and support staff to support the delivery of the Programme; and
- (e) staff development and scholarly activities

4.5.3 The Panel was provided with the teaching staff profile for delivering postgraduate programmes and was informed that along with the newly-hired Professors, Professor of Practice and Associate Professor, there are a total of 20 staff members who would be able to teach the courses in the MNAH Programme. The Operator indicated that the mentioned staff possess specialised knowledge and expertise that substantiate their teaching and contribute to the community, primary health, gerontology, and infection control courses. These existing teaching staff with expertise will be able to support newly joined staff in adapting to the teaching environment. Therefore, the Panel formed the view that the current academic expertise of staff would be sufficient to support the Programme. The overview of existing staff for the MNAH Programme as of November 2022 is as follows:

Overview of Existing Staff for the MNAH Programme

Position	Number of Staff	Highest Qualification Obtained
Professor	5	With Doctoral Degree
Professor of Practice	3	
Associate Professor	2	
Associate Professor of Practice	5	
Assistant Professor	4	
Senior Lecturer	1	With Master's Degree

Based on an estimated 40 new part-time students being admitted to the Programme every academic year, the projected number of academic staff is based on a full-time equivalent staff-student ratio of 1:20.

- 4.5.4 During the site visit, the Operator shared their vision and plans for the future development of the Programme and the CIHE with the Panel. To keep up with the Operator's strategic growth, the Panel **advised** that the Operator should provide ample time and support to staff for research and development. This will enable them to expand their expertise and develop their skillset in alignment with the rapidly evolving market needs.
- 4.5.5 While considering that the Programme specifically focuses on multi-disciplinary health professionals, adequate qualified staff is essential for the development of the Programme as the currency and relevance of the Programme should be maintained. With the high turnover rate specifically in the health professional industry in Hong Kong, the Panel **recommended** that the Operator to consider a structured system for staff recruitment, retention, training and development to keep up with the needs and development of the inter-disciplinary nature of the Programme.
- 4.5.6 In terms of staff development, the Operator provided the Panel with the summary of information on the staff development activities and the staff development plan for the upcoming three years. Teaching Staff are entitled to apply for financial subsidies, study leaves, and time off for professional examinations or attending conferences. External journal editorship and review/support for the publication of journals are provided by the Operator.
- 4.5.7 Teaching staff who met with the Panel shared with the Panel that they were given in-house training and other staff development opportunities, such as workshops, seminars, conferences, and sharing sessions to enhance the quality of teaching and the currency of their knowledge.
- 4.5.8 Having considered the above information and discussion with the Programme Leader and teaching staff on the management and delivery of the Programme, the Panel was of the view that the provision of staff is generally appropriate for the effective delivery of the Programme. Staff development activities are considered adequate in ensuring that staff are kept up to date for quality programme delivery.

4.6 Learning, Teaching and Enabling Resources/Services

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

4.6.1 The Accreditation Document and the responses to the Initial Comments provided the following information:

- (a) major facilities for the Programme;
- (b) programme-specific laboratories;
- (c) the projected utilisation rate of the relevant physical facilities from AY 2022/23 to 2026/27;
- (d) programme-specific library resources, e-database and e-resources; and
- (e) resources and services in place to support students

During the site visit, the Operator also provided video presentations of the facilities and library resources specific to the Programme.

4.6.2 The Panel considered that the facilities are well-equipped for the launch of the Programme. There are equipment and facilities purposely built to support both undergraduate and postgraduate studies, including the two Life Sciences Laboratories, the 16 Nursing Laboratories equipped with beds and Sims to provide a hands-on learning environment to support students' learning and training, the Virtual Reality Cave Learning System, and the Physiotherapy Laboratories. The Operator will continue to carefully examine the resource requirements for its learning programme and determine the extent to which it needs to equip. While the existing undergraduate programmes may share resources with the MNAH Programme, the Panel noted that postgraduate studies are planned to be conducted in the evenings depending on the actual needs. This will ensure a balanced allocation of resources among programmes. The Programme Team expressed satisfaction with the current facilities provided by the Operator.

4.6.3 The Panel noted that the provision of learning resources and facilities for the Programme is based on the approved maximum yearly intake, the School's annual programme plan and the actual number of

enrolments. CIHE and Faculty management, the Faculty and the Programme Team ensured that they would closely monitor the financial position while the quality of students' learning experience will always be sustained with adequate physical and staffing resources.

4.6.4 On financial resources, the Panel was provided with the financial projection and sensitivity analysis of the Programme from AY 2023/24 to 2025/26. Based on the financial information provided, the Panel considered that the operation of the Programme is being adequately supported in terms of financial resources and considered it is sufficient to support the Programme.

4.6.5 In consideration of the above information and the discussions with the representatives from the senior management, Programme Team, financial representative, and relevant external stakeholders, the Panel considered that the learning, teaching and enabling resources are generally appropriate and sufficient for the delivery of the Programme.

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

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

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

- (a) Quality assurance and enhancement mechanism in programme development, approval, management and review;
- (b) Mechanism of collection and follow-up of stakeholders' feedback;
- (c) Extracts of meeting minutes of the MNAH Programme Committee, Staff at the Health Sciences Management Team and School Board, External Advisor, Advisory Committee, Quality Assurance Committee (Academic) and Academic

Board in relation to the discussion and approval of the Programme;

- (d) Institutional Student Handbook for Post-graduate Degree Programmes;
- (e) External Examiner Appointment Criteria and potential candidates in the pipeline;
- (f) External advisors' comments on the Programme and the Operator's follow-up actions in response to the comments and suggestions received from the external advisors;

4.7.2 The Panel was given to understand that the Operator collects feedback from external inputs in developing the Programme by going through its internal quality assurance involving relevant boards and committees such as Academic Board (AB), Quality Assurance Committee (Academic) (QAC-A), School Management Team, School Board (SB), Programme/Course Committee, Programme Planning Committee (PPC), and Internal Programme Validation Panel (IPVP).

4.7.3 Under the Quality Assurance System of CIHE, the learning and teaching of the Programme will be reviewed continuously by the Operator, and the feedback will be/continues to be obtained from different parties/mediums, such as professional bodies, statistics/scores/analysis from performance indicators and relevant surveys, student feedback, staff feedback, external advisors and examiners, and current and potential employers.

4.7.4 During the site visit, the Panel reasserted with the external stakeholders on how the Operator collected and responded to their feedback. The stakeholders also discussed with the Panel the relevance of the Programme in meeting industry needs.

4.7.5 Having reviewed the above information, the Panel observed that the development and performance of the Programme have been monitored and reviewed in accordance with established quality assurance processes.

4.7.6 On the basis of the above information, the Panel concluded that the quality assurance system and relevant processes of the Operator are considered appropriate in monitoring and reviewing the development and performance of the Programme on an on-going basis.

5. IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING THIS ACCREDITATION REPORT

5.1 Variation and withdrawal of this Accreditation Report

5.1.1 This Accreditation Report is issued pursuant to section 5 of the AAVQO, and contains HKCAAVQ's substantive determination regarding the accreditation, including the validity period as well as any conditions and restrictions subject to which the determination is to have effect.

5.1.2 HKCAAVQ may subsequently decide to vary or withdraw this Accreditation Report if it is satisfied that any of the grounds set out in section 5 (2) of the AAVQO apply. This includes where HKCAAVQ is satisfied that the Operator is no longer competent to achieve the relevant objectives and/or the Programme no longer meets the standard to achieve the relevant objectives as claimed by the Operator (whether by reference to the Operator's failure to fulfil any conditions and/or comply with any restrictions stipulated in this Accreditation Report or otherwise) or where at any time during the validity period there has/have been substantial change(s) introduced by the Operator after HKCAAVQ has issued the accreditation report(s) to the Operator and which has/have not been approved by HKCAAVQ. Please refer to the '*Guidance Notes on Substantial Change to Accreditation Status*' in seeking approval for proposed changes. These Guidance Notes can be downloaded from the HKCAAVQ website.

5.1.3 If HKCAAVQ decides to vary or withdraw this Accreditation Report, it will give the Operator notice of such variation or withdrawal pursuant to section 5(4) of the AAVQO.

5.1.4 The accreditation status of Operator and/or Programme will lapse immediately upon the expiry of the validity period or upon the issuance of a notice of withdrawal of this Accreditation Report.

5.2 Appeals

5.2.1 If the Operator is aggrieved by the determination made in this Accreditation Report, then pursuant to Part 3 of the AAVQO the Operator has a right of appeal to the Appeal Board. Any appeal must be lodged within 30 days of the receipt of this Accreditation Report.

- 5.2.2 If the Operator is aggrieved by a decision to vary or withdraw this Accreditation Report, then pursuant to Part 3 of the AAVQO the Operator has a right of appeal to the Appeal Board. Any appeal must be lodged within 30 days of the receipt of the Notice of Withdrawal.
- 5.2.3 The Operator should be aware that a notice of variation or withdrawal of this Accreditation Report is not itself an accreditation report and the right to appeal against HKCAAVQ's substantive determination regarding accreditation arises only from this Accreditation Report.
- 5.2.4 Please refer to Cap. 592A (<http://www.legislation.gov.hk>) for the appeal rules. Details of the appeal procedure are contained in section 13 of the AAVQO and can be accessed from the QF website at <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 <https://www.hkqr.gov.hk> for recognition under the QF. The Operator should apply separately to have their quality-assured qualifications entered into the QR.
- 5.3.2 Only learners who commence the study of the named accredited learning programme during the validity period and who have graduated with the named qualification listed in the QR will be considered to have acquired a qualification recognised under the QF.

Ref: 49/33/01

3 August 2023

JoH/AnC/PrL/amc

Caritas Institute of Higher Education
Learning Programme Accreditation for
Master in Nursing and Allied Health

20 - 21 April 2023

Panel Membership

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

Appendix 2

**Graduate Profile of
Master in Nursing and Allied Health**

Qualification Title	Master in Nursing and Allied Health 護理及專職醫療碩士
Qualification Type	Master Degree
QF Level	6
Primary Area of Study and Training	Medicine, Dentistry and Health Service
Sub-area (Primary Area of Study and Training)	Nursing
Other Area of Study and Training	Not Applicable
Sub-area (Other Area of Study and Training)	Not Applicable
Programme Objectives	1. To educate students with in-depth and advanced knowledge and skills to become advanced practitioners and clinical leaders in the healthcare system. 2. To provide students with updated evidence-based knowledge and skills to practice advanced critical thinking and decision-making in preventive-curative healthcare, health advice and evidence-based interventions to effectively manage clients and family members. 3. To develop students with the ability to integrate and critically analyze professional and specialized knowledge and skills to conduct advanced assessment, planning, implementation and evaluation of the best strategies when delivering healthcare to individuals, families and communities. 4. To enhance and enable effective interpersonal communication skills to be applied in different health care contexts.

Programme Intended Learning Outcomes	1. To analyze practice-based knowledge and skills and demonstrate how to appraise the updated knowledge and evidence to inform practice. 2. To apply the updated knowledge and skills required to make decisions, solve problems, facilitate preventive-curative healthcare, and provide health advice and evidence-based intervention for effective management of clients and families in the healthcare settings. 3. To synthesize knowledge and skills to assess, plan, implement and evaluate the best strategies to promote advanced practice in the delivery of health care for individuals, families and communities. 4. To demonstrate effective working relationship and teamwork in the performance of advanced practice in a given health care setting.
Education Pathways	Graduates of the Programme are expected to be eligible for pursuing: • Other postgraduate programmes, including doctorate degree. • Specialty and advanced clinical training courses to become clinical specialists.
Employment Pathways	Graduates of the Programme are expected to be able to work as: • Advanced Practice Nurse (APN) in the public, private and NGO sectors. • Physiotherapist I (PTI) in the public, private and NGO sectors. • Manager and Senior Supervisors in healthcare delivery and managerial settings. • A career in academia in teaching and/ or research in post-secondary colleges and tertiary institutions.
Minimum Admission Requirements	General Entrance Requirement: • Have obtained a Bachelor's Degree in Nursing from a recognized institution that is pitched at HKQF Level 5 and be a registered nurse; OR • Have obtained a Bachelor's Degree in Physiotherapy from a recognized institution that is pitched at HKQF Level 5 and registered as a physiotherapist; OR • Have obtained a Bachelor's Degree for Allied Health from a recognized institution that is pitched at HKQF Level 5 and registered as an allied health care professional; OR • Have obtained a Bachelor's Degree in Health Sciences from a recognized institution that is pitched at HKQF Level 5; OR

	Hold an equivalent non-local qualification as recognized by CIHE and attaining an appropriate level of English language proficiency requirements as stipulated by CIHE.
Operator	Caritas Institute of Higher Education 明愛專上學院

