



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

ACCREDITATION REPORT

**TECHNOLOGICAL AND HIGHER EDUCATION
INSTITUTE OF HONG KONG,
VOCATIONAL TRAINING COUNCIL**

**PROGRAMME AREA ACCREDITATION IN
SPORTS AND RECREATION MANAGEMENT**

JANUARY 2025

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Appendix HKCAAVQ Panel Membership

1. TERMS OF REFERENCE

1.1 Based on the Service Agreement (No.: AA1001), the Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications (HKCAAVQ), in the capacity of the Accreditation Authority as provided for under the Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications Ordinance (AAVQO) (Cap. 592), was commissioned by Technological and Higher Education Institute of Hong Kong (THEi), Vocational Training Council (VTC) to conduct a Programme Area Accreditation (PAA) exercise with the following Terms of Reference:

- (a) To conduct an accreditation test as provided for in the AAVQO to determine whether THEi (“the Operator”) can be granted the Programme Area Accreditation status for the Programme Area (with specifications under Para. 1.2) 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 PAA

Area of Study and Training	Sub-area	Programme Area	QF Level
Services	Recreation, Leisure and Sports Management	Sports and Recreation Management	5

2. HKCAAVQ’S DETERMINATION

2.1 HKCAAVQ has determined that Technological and Higher Education Institute of Hong Kong (THEi / the Operator / the Institute), VTC can be granted the PAA status for the programme area (PA) of Sports and Recreation Management (SRM) at QF Level 5 under the Area of Study and Training “Services” with a validity period of 5 years.

2.2 The Operator granted the PAA status is considered as meeting the HKCAAVQ accreditation standards of Institutional Domains and Programme Area Domains of the PAA. The Operator has the

institutional competencies to develop programmes meeting its strategic objectives. The Operator has robust and internal processes to ensure the development and operation of learning programmes under the approved programme areas are aligned and managed in accordance with its institutional development plan, and that 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. The Operator 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 PAA status are specified as follows:

Name of Operator 營辦者名稱	Technological and Higher Education Institute of Hong Kong, Vocational Training Council 職業訓練局 - 香港高等教育科技學院
Address of Operator 營辦者地址	(1) Technological and Higher Education Institute of Hong Kong (Chai Wan Campus) 133 Shing Tai Road, Chai Wan, Hong Kong (2) Technological and Higher Education Institute of Hong Kong (Tsing Yi Campus) 20A Tsing Yi Road, Tsing Yi Island, New Territories, Hong Kong
Name of Award Granting Body 資歷頒授者名稱	Vocational Training Council 職業訓練局
Area of Study and Training 學習及培訓範疇	Services
Sub-area 子範疇	Recreation, Leisure and Sports Management

Programme Area and Scope of Programme Area 學科範圍	<u>Sports and Recreation Management</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Studies and training in theories and practices of sports and recreation management which include sports performance and coaching, sports science, strength and conditioning, sports therapy, injury management, rehabilitative / recovery, sports / recreation event management / marketing and operation of sports / recreation facilities and services, for the purpose of sports / recreation management.
QF Level 資歷架構級別	Level 5
Start Date of Validity Period 有效期的開始日期	1 September 2025
End Date of Validity Period 有效期的終止日期	31 August 2030
Address of Teaching / Training Venue(s) 授課地址	Technological and Higher Education Institute of Hong Kong (Chai Wan Campus) 133 Shing Tai Road, Chai Wan, Hong Kong

2.5 Recommendations

HKCAAVQ offers the following recommendations for the continuous improvement of the Operator and the programme area.

- 2.5.1 The Operator is recommended to regularly review its governance structure and committee composition to align with each stage of institutional development while ensuring that the development of the Institute and its learning programmes continue to be informed by relevant industry expertise in a timely manner. (Para. 4.1.8)
- 2.5.2 The Operator is recommended to follow through with the existing mechanism to review its financial position and projection on an annual basis to ensure that its learning programmes under the programme area will continue to be financially supported with adequate and appropriate resources, including but not limited to up-

to-date software subscriptions in relation to sports performance analysis. (Para. 4.3.5)

2.5.3 The Operator is recommended to keep under review the overall volume of assessments and the range of the teaching material of its learning programmes under the programme area for continuous enhancement. (Para. 4.6.4)

2.5.4 The Operator is recommended to follow through the existing mechanism to regularly review the staffing of its learning programmes under the programme area to ensure that the teaching expertise is adequate in support of the curriculum which aligns with the latest industry development, particularly in the field of sports performance analysis. (Para. 4.7.3)

2.6 HKCAAVQ will subsequently satisfy itself on whether the Operator remains competent to achieve the relevant objectives as claimed by the Operator by reference to, amongst other things, the Operator's fulfilment of any conditions and compliance with any restrictions stipulated in this Accreditation Report. For the avoidance of doubt, maintenance of accreditation status is subject to the fulfilment of any condition and compliance with any restriction stipulated in this Accreditation Report.

3. INTRODUCTION

3.1 Technological and Higher Education Institute of Hong Kong (THEi / the Operator / the Institute) was established in 2011 as a member institution of the Vocational Training Council (VTC). THEi mainly operates local self-financed bachelor degree programmes and was granted Institutional Review status at QF Level 5 by HKCAAVQ in September 2012. The Institute is currently operating a total of 30 HKCAAVQ-accredited programmes, including 23 Bachelor's degree programmes, six Professional Diploma programmes and one Professional Certificate programme. Recently, the Institute was granted Initial Evaluation status at QF Level 6 and approved to operate a HKCAAVQ-accredited Master's degree programme starting from 2025.

3.2 The Institute is seeking PAA status for the programme area (PA) of Sports and Recreation Management (SRM) at QF Level 5 based on the track record of its operation of two QF Level 5 programmes,

namely, Bachelor of Social Sciences (Honours) in Sports and Recreation Management (BSocSc(SRM)) and Bachelor of Social Sciences (Honours) in Sports Coaching (BSocSc(SC)).

- 3.3 The Institute commissioned HKCAAVQ to conduct this PAA exercise for the proposed PA of SRM at QF Level 5 hosted by its Department of Sport and Recreation. HKCAAVQ formed an expert Panel for this accreditation exercise (Panel Membership in Appendix). A site visit took place on 16-18 October 2024. HKCAAVQ's *Manual for the Four-stage Quality Assurance Process under the Hong Kong Qualifications Framework (Version 1.2, November 2020)* was the guiding document for the Institute and the Panel in conducting this exercise.

4. PANEL'S DELIBERATIONS

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

Institutional Domains

4.1 Organisational Governance and Management

The Operator must have a governing body that defines the Operator's vision and mission and establishes educational/training objectives aligned with the vision and mission. The governing body has set a clear and explicit direction for development based on the Operator's values and characteristics, and has implemented a management system which is fit-for-purpose and effective in meeting the educational/training objectives.

- 4.1.1 The Panel was provided with information on the governance and institutional management structure of the Institute, including the Terms of Reference (ToR) and compositions of various boards and committees. The Panel noted that THEi was established as a member institution of VTC which is a statutory body by virtue of the VTC Ordinance (Cap. 1130).
- 4.1.2 In respect of institutional governance, the Panel noted the following:

- (a) The Board of Governors (BOG) is the supreme governing body responsible for setting out THEi's strategies, policies, resources and management plans, and ensuring that these are implemented effectively. The Institute Council (IC) is the executive body administering and managing THEi's daily operations subject to the directions of the BOG. The power and duties of the BOG and the IC are delineated in the Memorandum and Articles of Association of the Institute and the ToR of the BOG and the IC; and
- (b) The membership of the BOG and the IC includes representatives from VTC, persons with expertise in tertiary education, and relevant professional / community or business sectors. The IC also consists of elected members including staff members elected from among the full-time academic staff of the Institute and full-time student representative nominated by the Students' Union.

During the site visit, the Panel met with the representatives from the BOG and the IC to discuss the roles of VTC members towards THEi's institutional governance, strategic planning, financial control and resource management. The Panel noted THEi's direction in seeking the University of Applied Sciences (UAS) title and exchanged views with regard to the significance of academic independence of THEi, including but not limited to the composition of committees, to establish THEi as an independent institution academically as in line with the planned institutional academic development.

- 4.1.3 Regarding the institute management, the Panel noted the establishment of the Executive Management Committee (EMC) and the Academic Board (AB) under the IC. The EMC oversees the operations of each academic department, the School of General Education and Languages (SGEL) and the Professional and Administrative Units (PAUs) while the AB is providing support to the IC on learning programmes management, review and development as well as THEi's academic policies on learning, teaching and applied research. A number of committees, including but not limited to the Quality Assurance Committee (QAC), the Learning and Teaching Committee (LTC) and the Research Committee (RC), were established under the AB contributing to the maintenance of academic standards, enhancement of learning, teaching and research capability within THEi. The Panel shared with the representatives of THEi and VTC that it would be beneficial for THEi to formally indicate how independence between members of THEi and VTC is to be maintained in the composition of the above

committees as in line with THEi's planned development towards becoming a UAS.

- 4.1.4 The Panel also noted that THEi receives professional advice and industry inputs on the direction and strategic development of THEi from VTC's Higher Education Advisory Committee (HEAC). The Panel further explored with the representatives of the Institute at the site visit the engagement of industry practitioners in relation to the PA of SRM within THEi's governance and management, as well as the development of its learning programmes under the PA. The Institute confirmed that both the Institute and its learning programmes are being supported by strategies which are continuously informed by relevant expertise.
- 4.1.5 The roles of the BOG, the IC, the AB, the HEAC and other committees are delineated in respective ToR and compositions while the roles and responsibilities of the key management personnel within the institute management structure, including the President, the Vice President (Academic), the Vice President (Operation and Enterprise), the Associate Vice President (Academic) and Heads of the PAUs, are defined in the accreditation documents. The Panel reviewed the roles and responsibilities of the key management personnel and discussed with the institute management representatives at the site visit their roles in the daily operations and management of institute affairs, as well as their involvement in maintaining the quality of educational services and realising the Institute's strategic objectives.
- 4.1.6 The Panel noted that the President is currently serving as the Chairman of the RC, while the Vice President (Academic) acts as the Chairman of the AB. Given that the RC reports to the AB, the Panel discussed with the institute management representatives the potential operational challenges which might arise from the current arrangement. While the Panel noted that the Institute is at the initial stage of developing its research capability, the Institute concurred that check and balance shall continue to be ensured to avoid any potential confusion and overlapping in decision making. The Institute elaborated its review mechanism with the Panel and assured that independence between each committee / board is to be maintained with a view of highlighting the proper segregation of duties between each committee / board as in line with the institutional development.
- 4.1.7 From the accreditation documents, *Response to Panel's Initial Comments*, and discussions with representatives of the Institute's governance and management boards / committees during the site

visit, the Panel noted evidence of continuing monitoring and review of governance and management to enhance the effectiveness and quality. For example, the Institute undertook a comprehensive review in 2023 which resulted in replacing three faculties with six specialised departments, each with a focus on reinforcing its academic niche.

- 4.1.8 In connection with the discussions and observations in Paras. 4.1.4, 4.1.6, 4.1.7, 4.2.3 and 4.3.6, the Operator is **recommended** to regularly review its governance structure and committee composition to align with each stage of institutional development while ensuring that the development of the Institute and its learning programmes continue to be informed by relevant industry expertise in a timely manner.
- 4.1.9 Notwithstanding the above recommendation, the Panel was of the view that the Institute has a governing body that defines the Institute's vision and mission and establishes educational/training objectives aligned with the vision and mission. The governing body has set a clear and explicit direction for development based on the Institute's values and characteristics, and has implemented a management system which is fit-for-purpose and effective in meeting the educational/training objectives.

4.2 **Strategic Planning and Development**

The Operator must have formal processes at organisational level for developing its strategic plan, which are effective in driving achievement of educational/training objectives. The strategic plan should focus on the analyses, decisions and actions needed to sustain and enhance the operation of its learning programmes.

- 4.2.1 The Institute's strategic planning is conducted at five-year intervals. An environmental scan is performed in the development of strategic initiatives for its 5-year Institute Strategic Plan (ISP), with annual reviews of the ISP. The Panel was provided with information of the environmental scan conducted in AY2022/23, the latest ISP formulated in July 2023 covering the period from AY2023/24 to AY2027/28, and the Operational Plan for AY2024/25, along with relevant approval records and the AY2023/24 Progress Report on the ISP.
- 4.2.2 In the context of planning the current ISP, the present situation of the Institute was reviewed, along with an analysis of the education environment in Hong Kong, Mainland China and overseas. The

Panel noted that the environmental scan encompassed both internal and external factors contributing to the development of strategic initiatives for the ISP. Internally, THEi considered the directions outlined in VTC's Strategic Plan, the relationship and synergy with other member institutions of VTC, and the supports provided by the VTC, and its own strengths and areas for improvement to ensure alignment with the overall goals and education objectives of the Institute. Externally, factors such as the education environment in Hong Kong, Mainland China and overseas, the economic environment, various initiatives and schemes of the HKSAR Government, and developments of industries and technology were taken into consideration by THEi to identify opportunities and threats, ensuring that its strategic initiatives are relevant and responsive to the changing external environment.

- 4.2.3 The Panel also noted that, during the strategic planning process, the Institute involved major internal and external stakeholders to gather their views on the Institute and its strategic development. The Institute held strategic and operational planning retreats and various staff forums for senior management and all staff members. To obtain inputs from external stakeholders, the Institute gathered feedback and advice at the institutional level through the HEAC and the IC. At the departmental level, the Departmental Advisory Committees (DACs) provided the framework for collection of feedback and advice from practitioners pertaining to a specific PA and industry. The Institute also utilised other channels, such as meetings with External Examiners/potential and existing employers, to solicit external stakeholders' views. The Panel discussed with the representatives of the Institute at the site visit the possibility of including more industry expertise in closer relation to the PA at the institutional level and emphasised the importance of such incorporation for continuous improvement of the learning programmes under the PA with informed and relevant strategies. Together with the discussions and observations stated in Section 4.1, the Panel's recommendation is stipulated in Para. 4.1.8.
- 4.2.4 For the implementation and review of the ISP, each academic department and the SGEL prepare the Departmental Annual Programme Review and Improvement (DAPRI) Report and School Annual Module Review and Improvement (SAMRI) Report with advice from the respective DAC. The reports are examined and reviewed by the Programme Board (PB)/SGEL Board (SGELB), the QAC and eventually the AB, facilitating the Institute in prioritising targets in its ISP, monitoring the implementation, and ensuring that departmental strategic planning and implementation are in line with

the ISP and the associated operational plan. Together with other reports from the PAUs, a consolidated annual progress report is compiled, ensuring that all staff members of the Institute are engaged in the annual review of the ISP.

- 4.2.5 The Panel noted that a set of Risk Management Policy and Procedure is in place for implementation across the Institute to identify, manage and mitigate potential risks. A Risk Register is also prepared to provide a summary of the current risks identified by the Institute, and its impacts on the achievement of the strategic goals and operational priorities. The Risk Register is reviewed and updated at least four times each year, with progress made in implementing mitigating actions presented to the EMC. The Risk Register is also reviewed and approved by the IC and the BOG on an annual basis.
- 4.2.6 Overall, the Panel considered that the Institute has formal processes in place for developing its strategic plan, which is driven by its educational/training objectives and focuses on analyses, decisions and actions needed to sustain and enhance the operation of its learning programmes.

4.3 **Financial Management and Viability**

The Operator must have an established financial management approach which is effective in ensuring the Operator's short-term and long-term viability to sustain its operation in alignment with the current strategic plan, and enables it to meet its educational/training objectives.

- 4.3.1 The Institute has in place a set of Financial Rules which was formulated and approved by the BOG since the Institute's incorporation. The purpose of the Financial Rules is to provide a general framework of financial authorities and the basis for the formulation of detailed financial and procurement guidelines and procedures. The Panel was provided with the documentation on the latest *Financial Rules* with effect from April 2021, as well as the latest *Accounting Manual*, *Procurement Manual* and *Financial Delegation Schedule* with effect from January 2024 in the accreditation submission. During the site visit, the representatives of the Institute shared examples of how the *Financial Delegation Schedule* outlined the authorities and responsibilities of key personnel at various levels of the Institute in financial planning and control and facilitated them in making financial/budgetary decisions and exercising financial control. The financial policies and procedures, including the manuals,

are subject to review from time to time. The Panel noted that the last review of the *Financial Rules* was conducted in 2020, while the latest review of the *Accounting Manual*, *Procurement Manual* and *Financial Delegation Schedule* had been completed in January 2024.

- 4.3.2 For all fiscal or financial management matters of the Institute, the final authority rests with the BOG, while the IC and the President manage and regulate the financial matters according to the policies established by the BOG through the EMC and the Finance Office (FO). For example, Annual Plan is prepared in each financial year setting out the strategic direction and estimated income and expenditure for the Institute to be approved by the BOG on the recommendation of the IC. While the President is delegated the power within the framework of the *Financial Rules* to develop financial guidelines and procedures for daily operation and set the fees and charges of the Institute, the authority for determining tuition fees of degree's programmes is reserved for the BOG on the recommendation of the IC. Annual financial statements of the Institute, including records of income from research grants and donations, are also approved by the BOG on the recommendation of the IC.
- 4.3.3 The FO, in the meantime, upholds the budgetary and control system of the Institute, assists the President in formulating and executing financial planning and analysis, and aids academic departments, the SGEL and other PAUs in budgetary control and resource utilisation. The Head of FO regularly attends meetings of the EMC and the AB to deliberate and make decisions and/or recommendations on financial and budgeting matters as well as to guarantee that resources are promptly allocated and managed to support learning and teaching activities. During the site visit, representatives of the Institute shared with the Panel that the ISP and academic plans inform the financial planning of the Institute with planned student numbers. The resource allocation exercise will commence when the financial estimate is endorsed by the IC and approved by the BOG. The consolidated requests for resources will be evaluated by the EMC and the FO will relay the allocation result to the budget holder accordingly. New requests may be raised to seek approval during the year in accordance with the budgetary control guidelines.
- 4.3.4 The Financial Expert (FE) appointed by HKCAAVQ for this PAA exercise reviewed the following financial information presented by the Institute in the accreditation documents, including:

- (a) Annual Report of the Institute together with the audited financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2023;
- (b) Financial Estimates of the Institute and the PA of SRM for the financial year from 2023/24 to 2028/29; and
- (c) Key Financial Information of the Institute and the PA of SRM for the financial year from 2019/20 to 2023/24.

It is noted that the Institute, currently in a financial deficit position, has received a loan from VTC and has also been taking steps and measures to improve the overall sustainability, as indicated in its ISP. For example, a new master's degree programme has been developed and is scheduled to launch in 2025. Meanwhile, surpluses have been recorded in the past five years for the programmes under the PA of SRM. The FE opined that the Institute generally has adequate financial resources to support its programmes under the proposed PA on a continuing basis.

- 4.3.5 The Panel discussed with representatives of the Institute the observations regarding the frequency of the student withdrawals from the programme under the proposed PA and noted that the projected income had already been informed by the overall student withdrawal pattern. During the site visit, the Panel also discussed with representatives of the Institute and the programme team of the PA the standing procedures for resource allocation stated in Para. 4.3.3 with regard to the provision of resources to students of the programmes under SRM, including software subscriptions in relation to sports performance analysis. Together with the discussions and observations in Para. 4.8.3, the Operator is **recommended** to follow through with the existing mechanism to review its financial position and projection on an annual basis to ensure that its learning programmes under the PA will continue to be financially supported with adequate and appropriate resources, including but not limited to up-to-date software subscriptions in relation to sports performance analysis.
- 4.3.6 In addition to the loan from VTC mentioned in Para. 4.3.4, the Panel observed that THEi currently handles quotations for the procurement processes, while VTC arranges public tenders. The Panel discussed with the representatives of the Institute, including senior management, the levels of operational independency between THEi and VTC as well as the way forward to establish THEi as an independent institution as indicated in its planned institutional development. Together with the discussions and observations in

Section 4.1 and Para. 4.2.3, the Panel's recommendation is hence put forward in Para. 4.1.8.

- 4.3.7 On the Institute's financial management approach, the Panel concluded that policies and procedures are generally in place to ensure short-term and long-term viability and sustainability of the Institute's operation in alignment with its strategic plan and educational/training objectives.

4.4 **Organisational Quality Assurance and Enhancement**

The Operator must have established an effective internal quality assurance system with well-defined policies and procedures in place to determine and monitor the quality and standards of its learning programmes, and to ensure alignment with its educational/training objectives and the stated HKQF level(s).

- 4.4.1 The Institute has a quality assurance (QA) system in place to ensure both organisational performance and academic standards as follows:

- (a) Regarding organisational performance, regular periodic reviews of the PAUs are conducted every six years. A consolidated review report is submitted to the EMC, which conducts a comparative analysis of the review outcomes for different PAUs to ensure the delivery of quality learning and teaching, applied research/consultancy and services. The first 6-Year Periodic Review was conducted for the PAUs covering the period from AY2012/13 to AY2017/18. A Review Committee was formed to assess the performance of the PAUs. The Panel was provided with the Review Committee Report, along with the Progress Report on Improvement Action Implementation, which was reviewed by the EMC and approved by the IC in 2021.
- (b) On academic standards, the QA system covers the governance structures at the Institute and Department/School levels, as well as four stages of the Plan-Implement-Review-Improve (PIRI) model. Details of the Institute's QA system delineated in the QA Manual, which outlines the framework, underlying principles, policies, mechanisms, processes, and procedures supporting QA and academic standards at the Institute, was provided to the Panel for review.

- 4.4.2 The Panel noted the following in relation to the committee structure in place for the academic QA system:

- (a) At the governance and management level, the Institute, as a member institution of VTC with qualifications awarded by VTC, receives advice from VTC's Vocational Education and Training Academic Board (VETAB) and Quality Enhancement Steering Committee (QESC) on matters related to learning programme development and QA. VTC's guiding principles for academic management and QA are equally applicable to THEi. In this regard, the QAC is set up under the AB, which assists the IC in overseeing all academic matters including QA, and is advised by VTC QESC in the formulation and implementation of THEi's QA system. The QAC is responsible for ensuring the quality of the Institute's programmes, advising the AB on the development, review and refinement of QA policies and procedures, and providing guidance to academic units on the QA aspects of the policies and procedures for programme planning, development, modification, monitoring and review.
- (b) At the academic department/school level, the PB and the SGELB are responsible for overseeing and ensuring the performance, quality and standards of learning programmes and General Education curriculum, as well as the implementation of the QA mechanism. Both boards regularly report QA matters to the QAC, which monitors and advises the QA aspects, and holistically reviews and monitors the implementation of QA across departments and SGEL.

The Panel was provided with the ToRs, compositions and memberships, and extracts of meeting minutes of the above-mentioned boards and committees. During the site visit, the Panel met with internal and external members of those boards and committees, where applicable, to discuss their roles and responsibilities in decision-making and/or providing advice on QA matters for the Institute and the PA of SRM.

- 4.4.3 The Panel reviewed the Institute's latest Procedures for Programme Development, Approval and Revision for Award-bearing Programmes at QF Levels 4-6, which delineated details of its 4-stage approach, namely (i) Programme Proposal, (ii) Programme Validation, (iii) Programme Approval, and (iv) Programme Accreditation. For degree programmes, programme development commences with the submission of a Programme Concept Proposal (PCP), which requires in-principal approval from the President. An Initial Programme Proposal (IPP) is next prepared for in-principle approval by the AB and then presented to the VTC's VETAB for

advice and endorsement. Subsequently, the Learning Programme Accreditation Document 1 (LPAD1) is prepared for review by the PB and an Internal Validation Panel (IVP) which comprises internal and external members. After reviewing the LPAD1 and meeting with the respective programme team, the IVP prepares a report, which is then discussed and approved by the AB. Finally, the Learning Programme Accreditation Document 2 (LPAD2) is submitted for external accreditation.

4.4.4 On programme management and review, the Panel noted the following:

- (a) Each programme is managed by a Programme Leader who provides academic and organisational leadership for the programme, including but not limited to daily operation, management, QA, continuous development and enhancement of the programme. The programme's quality, as indicated by student evaluations, enrolment and completion rates as well as graduate outcomes will be reported by the Programme Leader to the Vice President (Academic).
- (b) The Institute conducts programme reviews on both an annual and periodic basis. For the annual programme review exercise, the APRI reports of each learning programme are reviewed and consolidated by respective Department Committees into DAPRI/SAMRI reports, which are then presented to the PB/SGELB. The DAPRI/SAMRI with proposed improvement actions will then be reviewed by the QAC, which examines and consolidates programme performance at the institutional level, along with its recommendations for areas of improvement, and finally presented to the AB.
- (c) For the Periodic Programme Review (PPR), which is conducted around one year before the programme validity expires, a PPR Panel is set up to evaluate the standard and outcomes of the programme, analyse the feedback from external stakeholders and students on the programme, and review the currency of the curriculum. The findings and recommendations of the PPR Panel are discussed and approved at the AB before reporting to the IC. During the meetings with representatives of the Institute, the Panel highlighted an observation from the PPR Report provided in the accreditation submission, noting that accreditation(s) from professional bodies are vital for the BSocSc(SC) programme. The Institute concurred that professional recognitions, which are important for the programme's continuous enhancement and

beneficial to the marketing of the programme, will be sought in accordance with the stages of the planned development.

- (d) The Panel reviewed the track record of the implementation of programme management and review mechanism and made observations regarding the engagement of industry practitioners in relation to SRM for continuous improvement of its learning programmes under the PA. The Panel also noted the student withdrawal pattern as well as the provision of up-to-date relevant resources to students of the programmes under the PA. Based on the discussions and observations stated in previous sections, recommendations from the Panel are provided in Paras. 4.1.8 and 4.3.5 respectively.

- 4.4.5 Having considered information on the Institute's internal QA system and the relevant policies and procedures, the Panel formed the view that the Institute has in place an effective system to determine and monitor the quality and standards of its learning programmes.

Programme Area Domains

4.5 Programme Area Development and Management

The Operator must substantiate the proposed programme area by its track record of operation of HKQF-recognised learning programmes in relevant discipline or industry areas, in alignment with organisational objectives and planned resources.

- 4.5.1 The Panel was given to understand that to realise the Institute's strategic directions, namely "Enhancing Applied Degree Provision" and "Development towards becoming a UAS", as well as to further leverage the government's direction to promote sports within the community, enhance and provide sports and recreation facilities, and position Hong Kong as a hub for major international sporting events, the Institute has selected SRM to undergo its first PAA.
- 4.5.2 To substantiate the proposed PA of SRM, the Institute provided information on the track record of its operation of two learning programmes at QF Level 5, namely BSocSc(SRM) and BSocSc(SC), which are currently hosted by the Department of Sport and Recreation. The BSocSc(SRM) programme was first accredited in 2012 and subsequently re-accredited in 2017 and 2022, with the latest validity period until the end of August 2028. The BSocSc(SC) programme, originally one of the specialisations from the

BSocSc(SRM) programme, was accredited as a standalone learning programme in 2024 with a validity period until the end of August 2030. The Institute presented the mappings of Programme Objectives, Programme Learning Outcomes (PLOs) and the respective Generic Level Descriptors for both programmes. The Institute also provided the Panel with information on the follow-up actions taken and/or to be taken together with their progress with regard to the recommendations from the recent learning programme accreditation for BSocSc(SC) and re-accreditation for BSocSc(SRM). The Panel noted that the Institute's above-mentioned track record of operating accredited programmes in the PA of SRM has met HKCAAVQ's eligibility criteria for applying for PAA status at QF Level 5.

- 4.5.3 In addition to the BSocSc(SRM) and BSocSc(SC) programmes, the Panel noted that the Institute proposed to develop six new programmes respectively pitched at QF Level 4 and 5 under the PA of SRM as follows:

QF Level 5:

BSocSc (Hons) in Sports Management

BSocSc (Hons) in Sports Therapy

BSocSc (Hons) in Sports Events and Marketing

QF Level 4:

Professional Diploma in Sports Coaching

Professional Diploma in Sports Management

Professional Diploma in Sports Therapy

From the accreditation documents and at the meetings with representatives of internal and external stakeholders of the Institute and the PA, the Panel observed that the majority of the proposed new programmes are originally the specialisations from the BSocSc(SRM) programme, and relevant modules have been offered in the existing programme. In respect of the planned new degree programme in sports events and marketing, the Panel was also given to understand the market demand, the programme planning and development, the expertise of current teaching staff of the Institute, as well as the inter-disciplinary approach to ensure that appropriate and adequate expertise are engaged in teaching.

- 4.5.4 Regarding the development of new programme(s) and new medium(s) of instruction of the programmes under the PA, HKCAAVQ informed the Institute that while an Operator with PAA status may develop and operate learning programmes within the approved scope of the PA at the specified QF level or below within

the validity period without undertaking HKCAAVQ's Learning Programme (Re-)Accreditation, such programme(s) and the medium of instruction(s) should have been specified in the academic plan with details when the Operator underwent the PAA process. Prior approval from HKCAAVQ should be sought before implementing the corresponding substantial change(s) to an approved PA, including changes to the academic plan.

- 4.5.5 The Panel considered that the scope statement the Institute proposed for the PA of SRM as stated below is commensurate with the existing and proposed new programmes under the PA:

Studies and training in theories and practices of sports and recreation management which include sports performance and coaching, sports science, strength and conditioning, sports therapy, injury management, rehabilitative / recovery, sports / recreation event management / marketing and operation of sports / recreation facilities and services, for the purpose of sports / recreation management.

- 4.5.6 From the accreditation documents and during the meetings with representatives of internal and external stakeholders of the programmes under the PA, the Panel noted that the Institute has considered the performance of the programmes under SRM, along with relevant industry feedback, in the planning and development of the PA. For example, the Institute provided the employment rate and employers' satisfaction level on graduates' work performance at workplace in the past years. Industry consultative meetings were also conducted with key industry stakeholders to collect advice on the manpower needs and requirements of the industry.

- 4.5.7 In consideration of the above, the vision and mission of the Institute and the planned resources, the Panel is of the view that the Institute had a track record of operation in the PA of SRM at QF Level 5, which aligns with its organisational objectives and planned resources.

4.6 **Learning, Teaching and Assessment**

The Operator must have developed and implemented effective policies for the development of learner-centred strategies for achievement of learning outcomes through alignment of educational/training objectives, learning experiences, assessment, and learning support.

- 4.6.1 All learning programmes of the Institute are developed based on the outcome-based learning and teaching approach. The various academic, teaching, learning, assessment policies, and procedures are outlined in the respective *Academic Policies and Regulations for QF Level 6 Taught Postgraduate Programmes/Degree Programmes/Non-degree Programmes at QF Levels 4 to 5*, as well as in the *Student Handbook*, which is provided to all students at the beginning of each academic year. The Panel was also provided with the syllabi of the modules in the BSocSc(SRM) and BSocSc(SC) programmes, and noted among others, information on the module aims and module learning outcomes (MLOs), teaching and learning strategies, assessment strategies and mapping of the assessments against the MLOs.
- 4.6.2 The Panel was given to understand that the learning and teaching strategies for programmes under the PA primarily include lectures, tutorials, laboratory and practical training. Depending on the nature and intended learning outcomes of different modules, students are also engaged in learning activities such as guest lectures, seminars, site/industry visits, and work-integrated learning (WIL). All bachelor's degree programmes in the Institute, including the existing and planned ones under SRM, feature the mandatory WIL module(s). The WIL module(s) offer students opportunities to apply the acquired knowledge and skills into practice in real-life settings through engagement in industry attachment, and help them sharpen their communication skills, and develop the ability to work independently and collaboratively. The Panel noted that the WIL module had been converted from a non-credit-bearing to a credit-bearing module since AY2022/23 in a staged approach.
- 4.6.3 In terms of assessment, the Panel noted that a variety of assessment strategies, which include assignment/report, skill/practical test, written test, presentation, project and written examination, are adopted for the programmes under the PA. The Panel noted from the Summary of Feedback on the Assessments Received for BSocSc(SRM), which includes results of Student Feedback Questionnaire (SFQ) and extracts of comments from the External Examiners, that the comments on the assessments were positive in general. For the WIL module, the pass-fail-based assessments have been revised to graded assessments which are now included in the calculation of Grade Point Average (GPA).
- 4.6.4 The Panel was given to understand that the Institute proactively reviews and enhances the learning, teaching and assessment of the programmes. For example, enhancement has been made to the

institutional-wide WIL framework to further strengthen the implementation of the WIL modules which are now credit-bearing. During meetings with representatives of the Institute, including teaching staff, current students and graduates of the programmes, the Panel discussed the possible impact to students' learning experience and academic performance in connection with the series of changes in the WIL modules lately, in particular, the updates in assessment strategies. The Institute ensured that continued review and enhancement of WIL modules will be followed according to the standing mechanism. On the other hand, the Panel explored with the programme team the scope of the content in the teaching materials of the programmes under SRM in relation to the latest market and technology trends as well as exchanged views on the possible enhancement for continuous improvement. Having considered the recent changes in the assessment of WIL modules and the forthcoming technological development in the industry, the Operator is **recommended** to keep under review the overall volume of assessments and the range of the teaching material of its learning programmes under the programme area for continuous enhancement.

4.6.5 From the accreditation document and during the meetings with representatives of the Institute, the Panel was also given the understanding that the LTC developed guidelines on the application of generative AI technology which have been approved by the AB to ensure permissible, appropriate and responsible application of such in assessments.

4.6.6 Notwithstanding the aforementioned recommendation, the Panel considered that the Institute has in place policies for the development of learner-centred strategies for achievement of learning outcomes, through alignment of educational/training objectives, learning experiences, assessment, and learning support.

4.7 **Staffing and Staff Development**

The Operator must have a suitably qualified and competent workforce which is capable to develop and deliver learning programmes in the proposed programme area, and can ensure sustainable development of the proposed programme area.

4.7.1 On staffing, the Panel was provided with the following information:

- (a) Required qualifications for each rank of academic staff in the Institute;
- (b) *Staff Handbook*;
- (c) Profiles of staff teaching the modules under the PA of SRM in AY2023/24 including their academic and professional qualifications, work experience in teaching and the industry, teaching and research expertise, current modules taught; and
- (d) Current and planned staffing for the current and planned programmes under SRM.

4.7.2 From the *Response to Panel's Initial Comments*, the Panel was provided with further information on the overall workload allocation framework for academic staff, the full-time/part-time teaching staff ratio, the academic leadership for the proposed new programmes under the PA, the performance review mechanisms, and the staff recruitment and retention strategy in place. The general staff-student ratio under SRM is 1:20. The Panel was given to understand that expectation on the staff is communicated among the staff and is being met in accordance with the established mechanisms.

4.7.3 During the site visit, the Panel discussed with representatives of the Institute on the expertise of teaching staff under SRM in the areas of sports coaching and particularly sports performance analysis. The Institute concurred that scholars from abroad may be invited to contribute further while assuring the Panel that the current teaching team possesses adequate and appropriate expertise in the subject matter as in line with the module objectives and MLOs. In light of this, the Operator is **recommended** to follow through the existing mechanism to regularly review the staffing of its learning programmes under the PA to ensure that the teaching expertise is adequate in support of the curriculum which aligns with the latest industry development, particularly in the field of sports performance analysis.

4.7.4 On staff development, the Panel was provided with lists of staff development activities, publications, research and consultancy projects of staff teaching modules under the PA of SRM from AY2019/20 to AY2023/24, together with the planned staff development/consultancy/research activities of the staff under SRM for the coming three academic years. From the *Response to Panel's Initial Comments*, the Institute added that an Institute-wide standing sponsorship is available for each academic staff to pursue staff

development activities in their relevant disciplines. The staff members are required to return an evaluation form to assess the perceived effectiveness and contribution to their discipline for all budget-approved staff development activities.

- 4.7.5 To promote research initiatives at the Institute and pave the way for securing substantial external funding, a Seed Grant Scheme which supports preliminary research projects conducted by the Institute's staff has been set up as an internal competitive research fund. A Teaching Relief Fund has also been established as financial aid for employing part-time lecturers to enable academic staff engaged as the Principal Investigators of research projects to allocate sufficient time for quality research to fulfil the requirements and deliverables committed to the funding authority. Apart from funding support, the Institute's Research Office provides assistance to academic staff in preparation for high quality research proposals and manuscripts for publication while junior academic staff are encouraged to consult their supervisors or senior academic staff in pursuing academic research as well.
- 4.7.6 Overall, the Panel formed the view that the Institute has a suitably qualified and competent workforce capable of developing and delivering learning programmes in the PA and can ensure its sustainable development.

4.8 Programme Area Resources and Services

The Operator must have implemented a well-managed approach to its provision of learning, teaching and enabling resources which aligns with the current and planned development of the proposed programme area.

- 4.8.1 While the financial planning and resource allocation at programme and PA levels along with the Panel's observations are discussed in Section 4.3, the Panel also reviewed the general and specialised learning resources and support services for students of the programmes under SRM.
- 4.8.2 The Panel reviewed relevant information in the accreditation documents regarding general learning resources and student support services, including but not limited to the library, IT services, counselling services, language and other learning enhancement support. During the site visit, the Panel met with representatives from various responsible units, including the Learning Commons and

Digital Innovation, Student Development Office, and Centre for Learning Enhancement, who shared how their units ensure the quality and relevancy of their services, which are made available and accessible to students under SRM.

- 4.8.3 In addition to the information of specialised facilities and equipment together with their projected utilisation rate under SRM from AY2023/24 to AY2028/29, the Panel was introduced the latest facilities, equipment and software available for learning and teaching of the programmes under the PA during the campus tour at the site visit. The Panel highlighted, with representatives of the teaching staff under SRM, the significance of providing students with the most contemporary software/equipment, including but not limited to those used for sport performance analysis. The Panel noted the mechanism is in place for the programme team to keep updating the programmes by monitoring developments in the sports industry and acquiring adequate and appropriate equipment and software as stated in Para. 4.3.3. From the meetings with representatives of the Institute, the Panel was also given to understand that the Institute supports the provision of specialised learning, teaching and enabling resources in alignment with the development of the proposed PA according to the established resource allocation mechanism. In this regard, the Panel's recommendation is stipulated in Para. 4.3.5 for the continuous improvement of the programmes under the PA.
- 4.8.4 The programme team under SRM has also been organising extra-curricular learning activities for students to enrich their learning experience and exposure to the industry/professional practices. The Panel was provided with lists of talks/seminars by guest speakers about industry trend/development and visits to industry organisations organised for students of the BSocSc(SRM) programme from AY2019/20 to AY2023/24. The Panel also discussed with representatives of the Institute the varied needs of students under SRM which may arise from the distinctive study mode and diverse academic backgrounds. Representatives of current students and graduates of different specialisations under the BSocSc(SRM) programme shared with the Panel their positive learning experience with adequate support received from the programme team and the Institute.
- 4.8.5 In consideration of the above, the Panel concluded that the Institute has a well-managed approach to its provision of learning, teaching and enabling resources to support the programme area.

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 the programme area 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 (<https://www.elegislation.gov.hk>) for the appeal rules. Details of the appeal procedure are contained in section 13 of the AAVQO and can be accessed from the QF website at <https://www.hkgf.gov.hk>.

5.3 **Qualifications Register**

- 5.3.1 The PAA status as defined by the approved programme area(s) will enable the Operator 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 QR 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.

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8 January 2025

JoH/CQ/PsL/jof

**Technological and Higher Education Institute of Hong Kong (THEi),
Vocational Training Council**

Programme Area Accreditation in Sports and Recreation Management

16 – 18 October 2024

Panel Membership

Panel Chair

Professor Paul GRIFFITHS

Educational Consultant
Former Dean
University of Brighton
UNITED KINGDOM

Panel Secretary

Ms Psyche LIU

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

Panel Members

Professor CHIA Yong Hwa Michael

Professor, Former Head (Physical
Education & Sports Science) and
Former Dean (Academic)
National Institute of Education
Nanyang Technological University
SINGAPORE

Professor LUI Hon Kwong

Professor and Former Associate Vice
President
Department of Marketing and International
Business
Lingnan University
HONG KONG

Professor SIU Ming Fai Parco

Professor, Head of Division of Kinesiology
and Assistant Dean (Well-being)
LKS Faculty of Medicine
School of Public Health
The University of Hong Kong
HONG KONG

Professor Kirsten SPENCER

Associate Professor and Head
Department of Coaching and Youth Sport
Development
School of Sport and Recreation
Auckland University of Technology
NEW ZEALAND

Financial Expert

Mr MA Wai Pong Spencer

Chief Consulting Officer
Stonehenge Consulting Limited
HONG KONG

