



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**

**INITIAL EVALUATION AND
LEARNING PROGRAMME ACCREDITATION**

**MASTER OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION
IN DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION**

SEPTEMBER 2024

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Appendix HKCAAVQ Panel Membership

1. TERMS OF REFERENCE

- 1.1 Based on the Service Agreement (No.: AA994), 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, Vocational Training Council (THEi / the Institute / the Operator) to conduct a combined exercise of Initial Evaluation and Learning Programme Accreditation with the following Terms of Reference:
- (a) To conduct an accreditation test as provided for in the AAVQO to determine whether the Operator meets the stated objectives and is competent to operate learning programmes that meet the QF Level 6 standards and can be granted an Initial Evaluation Status at QF Level 6;
 - (b) To conduct an accreditation test as provided for in the AAVQO to determine whether Master of Business Administration in Digital Transformation [MBA(DT) / the Programme] of the Operator meets the stated objectives and QF standards and can be offered as an accredited programme; and
 - (c) To issue to the Operator an accreditation report setting out the results of the determination in relation to (a) and (b) by HKCAAVQ.

2. HKCAAVQ'S DETERMINATION

Initial Evaluation

- 2.1 HKCAAVQ has determined that, subject to the fulfilment of the condition(s) set out below, the Institute meets the stated objectives and is competent to operate learning programmes that meet the QF Level 6 standards, and can be granted an Initial Evaluation (IE) status at QF Level 6.
- 2.2 **Validity Period**
- 2.2.1 The validity period will, provided that the Operator fulfils the pre-condition to the commencement of the validity period set out in Para. 2.4, commence on the date specified below. Operators may apply to HKCAAVQ to vary the commencement date of the validity period. Applications will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

2.3 The determinations of the IE status are specified as follows:

Name of Operator	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	Technological and Higher Education Institute of Hong Kong (Chai Wan Campus), 133 Shing Tai Road, Chai Wan, Hong Kong Technological and Higher Education Institute of Hong Kong (Tsing Yi Campus), 20A Tsing Yi Road, Tsing Yi Island, New Territories, Hong Kong
Highest QF Level of programme(s) which the Operator can operate upon successful learning programme accreditation	Level 6
Start date of 2-year validity period of Initial Evaluation (IE) accreditation status	1 January 2025
Scope of IE Accreditation Status	For local programmes operating in Hong Kong

2.4 **Condition(s)**

2.4.1 Pre-condition(s)

2.4.1.1 The Operator is to (i) review the Institute's quality assurance system and ensure the approval processes for developing new programmes, including those pitched at QF Level 6, are clearly and comprehensively illustrated and can be implemented with consistency, and (ii) strengthen the implementation of the Institute's quality assurance system to ensure that the QA processes are executed in a rigorous manner with proper documentation and that the QA functions are exercised effectively throughout the processes.

The Operator is to submit the following to HKCAAVQ for the fulfilment of the above pre-condition **on or before 27 September 2024** (Para. 4.4.4):

- (a) a revised version of the programme development approval process as stipulated in the Institute's Quality Assurance Manual, explicitly stating but not limited to the sequence of actions and discussions, expected timeline, pertinent documents, responsible parties and approval authorities, and further considerations specific to QF Level 6 programmes (if any); and
- (b) evidence to substantiate that the revised version as required in (a) enables rigorous implementation with consistency for the development of new programmes at QF Level 6.

2.5 **Recommendation(s)**

HKCAAVQ also offers the following recommendations for continuous improvement of the Operator:

- 2.5.1 The Operator should (a) obtain a statement of financial undertaking by VTC and/or SHAPE to confirm their commitment to support the Institute financially and (b) develop contingency plan(s) in case of an unanticipated widening of financial deficit. (Para. 4.2.3)
- 2.5.2 The Operator should review the mechanism to ensure the teachers' capability to perform their designated roles in QF Level 6 programme(s). This includes but is not limited to their holistic and integrated understanding of the multidisciplinary contexts, and competence in developing learning and teaching materials, teaching methodology and assessments that meet the QF Level 6 standards. (Para. 4.3.5)

2.6 **Advice**

HKCAAVQ also offers the following advice for continuous improvement of the Operator:

- 2.6.1 The Operator should review its strategies in identifying the market demands to justify the decision of developing new academic programmes at QF Level 6, and such a decision is driven by more rigorous evidence-based market analysis conducted in a consistent manner. (Para. 4.1.7)
- 2.6.2 The Operator should review and strengthen the representation of industry members at the level of governance, including the Board of Governors and Institute Council. (Para. 4.1.7)

Learning Programme Accreditation

- 2.7 HKCAAVQ has determined that, subject to the fulfilment of the condition(s) set out below, the Programme meets the stated objectives and QF standards at Level 6, and can be offered as an accredited programme with a validity period of two years.

2.8 Validity Period

- 2.8.1 The validity period will, provided that the Operator fulfils all pre-conditions to the commencement of the validity period as set out in Para. 2.10.1, 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.
- 2.8.2 The maintenance of the accreditation status within the specified validity period is subject to the fulfilment of all requirements set out in Para. 2.10.2 by the specified deadline.

- 2.9 The determinations on the Programme are specified as follows:

Name of Operator	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
Name of Award Granting Body	Vocational Training Council 職業訓練局
Title of Learning Programme	Master of Business Administration in Digital Transformation 工商管理（數碼轉型）碩士
Title of Qualification(s) [Exit Award(s)]	Master of Business Administration in Digital Transformation 工商管理（數碼轉型）碩士
Primary Area of Study and Training	Business and Management
Sub-area (Primary Area of Study and Training)	General Business Management

Other Area of Study and Training	Computer Science and Information Technology
Sub-area (Other Area of Study and Training)	Computer Science and Information Technology
Industry	Not applicable
Branch	Not applicable
HKQF Level	Level 6
HKQF Credits	126
Mode(s) of Delivery and Programme Length	Full-time (1-year) Part-time (2-year)
Start Date of Validity Period	1 January 2025
End Date of Validity Period	31 December 2026
Number of Enrolment(s)	One enrolment per year No. of enrolments over the validity period: Full-time: 2 Part-time: 1
Maximum Number of New Students	Full-time (350 per year) Part-time (50 per year)
Specification of Competency Standards-based Programme	Not applicable
Specification of Generic (Foundation) Competencies-based Programme	Not applicable
Address of Teaching / Training Venue(s)	Technological and Higher Education Institute of Hong Kong (Chai Wan Campus), 133 Shing Tai Road, Chai Wan, Hong Kong

	Technological and Higher Education Institute of Hong Kong (Tsing Yi Campus), 20A Tsing Yi Road, Tsing Yi Island, New Territories, Hong Kong
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2.10 Condition(s)

2.10.1 Pre-condition(s)

2.10.1.1 The Operator is to review the qualifications and experience of the serving and prospective teachers to ensure the programme team is capable of delivering the Programme effectively. This includes:

- (a) academic leadership that demonstrates competence in integrating business and technology components in the curriculum, programme management and internal moderation;
- (b) sufficiency of knowledge and experience in terms of research and industry practice/exposure for the delivery of Common Core, Study Stream specific and Elective modules;
- (c) capability to develop learning and teaching materials and assessments in Chinese that meet the QF Level 6 standards;
- (d) capability to respond to diverse student needs in terms of teaching content and methodology, and provision of learner support; and
- (e) adequacy of representation in the Programme Board to incorporate the considerations for both business and technology aspects in the curriculum.

The Operator is to submit evidence including but not limited to the following to HKCAAVQ for the fulfilment of the above pre-condition **on or before 27 September 2024** (Para. 4.9.6.1):

- (a) the required qualifications and experience of teachers assigned to individual modules; and
- (b) a mapping table identifying the suitable teacher(s) (serving and/or prospective) for individual modules, with justifications.

- 2.10.1.2 The Operator is to ensure that there is sufficient manpower and effective deployment for conducting learning and teaching activities including tutorials and supervision of the Capstone Applied Business Project, in view of the maximum annual student intake.

The Operator is to submit evidence including but not limited to the following to HKCAAVQ to address the aforesaid needs for the fulfilment of the above pre-condition **on or before 27 September 2024** (Para. 4.9.6.2):

- (a) evidence showing satisfactory progress in teaching and administrative staff recruitment;
- (b) a staff recruitment plan regarding teaching and administrative manpower covering the 2-year validity period; and
- (c) a deployment plan to ensure each teaching staff, with or without any other teaching/non-teaching duties at the Institute, has sufficient capacity to fulfill his/her designated role(s) in the Programme.

2.10.2 Requirement(s)

- 2.10.2.1 The Operator is to have a mechanism in place to ensure the readiness of the programme team to adequately address the students' learning needs throughout the full programme period.

The Operator is to submit the following to HKCAAVQ for the fulfilment of the above requirement **on or before 31 July 2025** (Para. 4.9.6.3):

- (a) the latest teaching staff list including the rank and curriculum vitae of individual teachers and their assigned module(s) showing the sufficiency of qualified staff in the programme team; and
- (b) a contingency plan to explain the follow-up action(s) in case(s) of staff resignation, re-deployment of duties and/or other circumstances that affect the composition of the programme team.

- 2.10.2.2. The Operator is to ensure that QA functions are exercised effectively on the Programme and that the key considerations are sufficiently discussed, consulted, evaluated and documented, which include but are not limited to market needs, academic leadership and synergy, interdisciplinary collaboration, industry connections, teaching methodology and assessments and teaching arrangements in relevant QA processes. The Operator is to submit evidence to substantiate the aforesaid mechanism to HKCAAVQ for the fulfilment of the above requirement **on or before 31 July 2025**. (Para. 4.11.5)

2.11 Recommendation(s)

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

- 2.11.1 The Operator should continuously review and monitor the programme design and assess its effectiveness in terms of the achievement of the intended learning outcomes with respect to its POs and PILOs. (Para. 4.5.6)
- 2.11.2 The Operator should continuously review and monitor the composition of the student body and its potential impacts on learning experience, and assess its effectiveness in terms of the achievement of the intended learning outcomes. (Para. 4.6.8)
- 2.11.3 The Operator should continuously review and monitor the scope and depth of the curriculum to evaluate its effectiveness in facilitating students' achievement of the intended learning outcomes. (Para. 4.7.6)
- 2.11.4 The Operator should have a mechanism in place to ensure that the learning and teaching activities and assessments are responsive to industry trends, developed systematically through adequate discussions within the programme team and consultation with external advisors, and that they can meet the QF Level 6 standards. (Para. 4.8.6)
- 2.11.5 The Operator should take a proactive approach to assess the various training needs of teaching staff and offer the opportunities to strengthen their competence to deliver the Programme effectively. (Para. 4.9.6)
- 2.11.6 The Operator should assess the possibility to procure and apply more up-to-date educational resources to aid the delivery of relevant modules in the Programme, such as simulations and digital tools, business games and relevant software. (Para. 4.10.3)
- 2.11.7 The Operator should have a mechanism in place to ensure that the External Examiner(s) possess(es) a holistic understanding of the Programme across both Study Streams, irrespective of their expertise area(s) and role(s) in the designated Study Stream. (Para. 4.11.4)

- 2.12 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 The Technological and Higher Education Institute of Hong Kong ("THEi" or "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 by HKCAAVQ in September 2012. Currently, THEi operates 22 accredited bachelor degree programmes, 2 professional diploma meister programmes and 3 professional diploma programmes at QF Level 5; 1 professional diploma programme and 1 professional certificate programme at QF Level 4.
- 3.2 THEi commissioned HKCAAVQ to conduct this Initial Evaluation and Learning Programme Accreditation for Master of Business Administration in Digital Transformation ("MBA(DT)" or "the Programme"). HKCAAVQ formed an expert panel for this exercise (Panel Membership at the Appendix). 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 Operator and the Panel in conducting this exercise. A site visit took place at THEi's Chai Wan campus from 26 to 28 June 2024.

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.

Initial Evaluation

4.1 Organisational Governance and Management

The governing body of the Operator must have clearly defined and appropriate educational/training objectives, and must have implemented a management structure to realise those objectives, for the delivery of learning programme(s) that fall within the scope of the HKQF level(s) sought.

- 4.1.1 The Board of Governors (BOG) is the supreme governing body of the Institute, supported by the Institute Council (IC), Academic Board (AB), Executive Management Committee (EMC), Programme Board (PB) and a number of other committees. The BOG sets THEi's strategies, policies, resources and management plans, and ensures their effective implementation. The BOG also receives professional advice and industry inputs from the Higher Education Advisory Committee (HEAC) of the Vocational Training Council (VTC), such as the direction of and strategy for the development of degree programmes offered by THEi. The membership of the BOG includes individuals from the industry, academia and VTC Council. The terms of reference, composition and sample meeting minutes of BOG, IC and AB were provided for Panel's review.
- 4.1.2 From the *Accreditation Document*, the Panel was informed of the authorised roles of the senior management team, including the President, Vice President (Academic) and Vice President (Operation and Enterprise).
- 4.1.3 The Institute Council (IC) is the executive body of the Institute, chaired by the President and operates through the institutional and academic management framework. The IC is assisted by AB on the oversight of the academic aspects of the Institute, including academic programme management, review and development, and academic policies on teaching, learning and research. The EMC assists the IC on the oversight of operations of each academic department, School of General Education and Languages (SGEL) and professional and administrative units (PAU). The IC administers the property and manages the Institute's general affairs including financial oversight of the Institute budget, subject to the directions and financial control of the BOG.
- 4.1.4 Under the IC, the Academic Board (AB), chaired by the Vice President (Academic), is supported by the PB and SGEL Board (SGELB) on matters related to programme and curriculum development. The Quality Assurance Committee (QAC), Learning and Teaching Committee (LTC) and Research Committee (RC) support the AB in their respective domains to maintain the academic standard, enhance the effectiveness of learning and teaching, and strengthen research capability. The terms of reference and compositions of the PB, SGELB, QAC, LTC and RC were provided for Panel's review.

- 4.1.5 The Panel was informed that a designated committee is yet to be established to oversee and discuss matters regarding postgraduate education. MBA(DT), the first QF Level 6 programme proposed by the Institute, is set to be governed by the same team of boards and committees at the institutional level that regulate the offering of academic programmes at the lower QF levels. While the development of all academic programmes is governed by the Procedures for Programme Development, Approval and Revision, the design of QF Level 6 programmes is also set to comply with the Academic Policies and Regulations (AP&R) for Taught Postgraduate Programmes.
- 4.1.6 The Institute positioned itself with a vision to prepare “work-ready graduates to meet industry needs”. Based on the *Accreditation Document* and site visit discussions, the Panel noted that the Institute meets with industry experts and employers regularly to discuss and explore the market demands and the potential programmes to be developed. The Panel also noted that, prior to the proposal of MBA(DT), a survey was conducted in November 2023 to collect the views of the alumni of the VTC and THEi as well as the 4th year students of THEi regarding the launching of a Chinese MBA programme. The Panel considered that enhancing the robustness of the mechanism of analysing the market demands and more industry involvement at the governance level, on top of the aforesaid initiatives, would be beneficial to the positioning of new QF Level 6 programmes.
- 4.1.7 In view of the above observations, the Operator is **advised** to review its strategies in identifying the market demands to justify the decision of developing new academic programmes at QF Level 6, and such a decision is driven by more rigorous evidence-based market analysis conducted in a consistent manner. The Operator is also **advised** to review and strengthen the representation of industry members at the level of governance, including the Board of Governors and Institute Council.
- 4.1.8 The Panel observed that the Institute was approved by HKCAAVQ in October 2023 to change its management structure from Faculty-based to Department-based, with effect from January 2024. Following the approved change in management structure, the proposed MBA(DT) will be hosted by the Department of Hospitality and Business Management (DHBM).
- 4.1.9 In view of the above information and relevant documentary evidence provided by the Institute, the Panel formed the view that, in terms of governance and management, there is adequate institutional support to enable the Institute to operate QF Level 6 programmes.

4.2 Financial Viability and Resources Management

The Operator must have adequate financial and physical resources to achieve its educational/training objectives, with well-defined systems and processes to manage its finances to support the quality and effectiveness of its operation.

4.2.1 The Panel was informed of the following:

- (a) The BOG is responsible for overseeing the Institute's overall financial assets, formulating the *Financial Rules* for the Institute including the general framework of financial authorities and formulation of detailed financial guidelines and procedures.
- (b) The BOG is the approving body of the Institute's annual budget, its income and expenditure, and reserves the authority to determine the tuition fees of degree programmes and primary income of THEi on the recommendation of the IC, while the President is delegated the power to set other fees and charges of THEi including those for short courses.
- (c) The Head of the Finance Office (FO) regularly joins EMC meetings to meet with the senior personnel of THEi and the Deputy Executive Director of VTC to deliberate and make decisions or recommendations on financial and budgeting matters, and AB meetings on matters related to the allocation of resources regarding learning and teaching support.
- (d) Financial policies and procedures are set out in the *Financial Rules* of the Institute. According to the *Accreditation Document*, a review of the *Financial Rules* was conducted in 2020 and approved by the BOG in December 2020. To align with the change in management structure, a review of the *Financial Delegation Schedule* together with the *Accounting Manual* and *Procurement Manual* was completed and approved by the EMC in January 2024.
- (e) The Institute was financed by seed funding from the VTC for its initial establishment. The physical facilities for running THEi's programmes are leased on a fee-charging basis from the VTC. Recurrent expenditures, covering staff expenses and facilities, come mainly from the tuition fees. There are various funding sources to support applied research activities including those from the Research Grant Committee (RGC).

4.2.2 For this accreditation exercise, HKCAAVQ engaged a Financial Expert to review the information in relation to the financial viability of the Institute, including but not limited to (a) the audited financial statement of the Institute for the last financial year from April 2022 to March 2023, (b) financial estimates from 2023/24 to 2028/29 at the institutional level and programme level for

MBA(DT), (c) *Financial Rules, Accounting Manual, Procurement Manual and Financial Delegation Schedule* of the Institute and (d) extracts of the meetings of BOG, IC and EMC regarding the approval of financial statement, financial projection and the revised *Financial Rules*.

- 4.2.3 The Institute was financially supported by VTC and SHAPE to cover up the operating deficits including the forecasted deficit amounts for the subsequent years as disclosed in the financial estimates. From the *Response to Panel's Initial Comments*, the Operator shared its 5-year Institute Strategic Plan (ISP) approved by the BOG in March 2023. The ISP illustrates the Institute's immediate and long-term goals to maintain its financial viability and sustainability including the improvement of student enrolment to generate increased profits from tuition fees. In view of the Institute's current level of financial adequacy to achieve its educational objectives and possible deviations from the projected student enrolments, the Panel considered that THEi could improve the management of its financial situation by introducing two measures. The Panel **recommended** that the Operator should (a) obtain a statement of financial undertaking by VTC and/or SHAPE to confirm their commitment to support the Institute financially and (b) develop contingency plan(s) in case of an unanticipated widening of financial deficit.
- 4.2.4 The Institute provided information on its infrastructure and facilities including its utilisation records relevant to the achievement of its educational objectives. During the site visit, the Institute arranged for the Panel to take a campus tour to demonstrate its competence in supporting postgraduate education. The Panel noted that the Institute has a plan to invest in additional teaching resources for MBA(DT) and other prospective QF Level 6 programmes. With respect to the specific demand of MBA(DT), one recommendation was given to the Operator in the section of Learning Programme Accreditation, and details are provided in Para. 4.10.3.
- 4.2.5 In view of the above and notwithstanding the recommendation, the Panel considered that, in terms of this domain, the Operator generally has the capacity to operate QF Level 6 programmes.

4.3 Organisational Staffing

The Operator must be able to engage staff who are competent to manage its operations, to lead programme planning and development, and to support the delivery of learning programme(s) up to the claimed HKQF level(s).

- 4.3.1 The Institute provided the following information expounding its institutional staffing and staff development to support the delivery of QF Level 6 programmes:

- (a) a list of required qualifications for academic staff at different ranks and staffing plan specific to postgraduate education;
- (b) the processes for review of staffing needs, staff appointment and appraisal, implementation of staff development and research activities, and the mechanism in place to monitor the effectiveness of the processes; and
- (c) the *Staff Handbook*.

4.3.2 The Panel also noted the following arrangements of the Institute:

- (a) the President is authorised by the BOG to approve the detailed staffing regulations and procedures for academic and non-academic staff;
- (b) staffing provision of each programme is planned and reviewed, in parallel with the Academic Plan, first by the Programme Board then by the Academic Board; the Finance Office contributes to the estimation of the operational costs;
- (c) the Vice President (Academic), Department Heads and Programme Leaders are the prime drivers and organisers of staff development programmes, and the Centre for Learning and Teaching (CLT) of the VTC supports the Institute's staff development through offering the Teaching Induction Programme (TIP) for new academic staff;
- (d) staff taking up a professional development and/or consultancy project are eligible to receive financial subsidies or teaching relief based on the Institute's policy; and
- (e) The Staff-Student Ratio (SSR) for QF Level 6 programmes is set at 1:20, and the teaching load in terms of class contact hours of academic staff approximates 3, 6, 9 and 15 hours per week at the rank of Professor, Associate Professor, Assistant Professor and Lecturer respectively; the teaching load of individual staff may be adjusted subject to his/her other assigned responsibilities such as project supervision and research/consultancy involvement.

4.3.3 Regarding teaching staff appointment for the delivery of postgraduate programmes, the Panel noted that the minimum requirement, in addition to teaching experience, is normally a recognised doctoral degree. Candidates without a doctoral degree but possessing a high professional standing with demonstrated achievements in scholarship and/or professional practice as

well as research in the relevant field, will also be considered on a case-by-case basis.

- 4.3.4 Through the site visit discussions, the Panel noted that the Institute has a plan to recruit more teachers with strong expertise in designated disciplines and to develop a multidisciplinary outlook for its prospective QF Level 6 programmes. Based on the provided information, however, the Panel considered that the Institute should make continuous improvement to strengthen teachers' overall competence in curriculum development to meet the QF Level 6 standards and their multidisciplinary understanding of the programme(s) concerned.
- 4.3.5 In view of the above observations, the Panel **recommended** that the Operator should review the mechanism to ensure the teachers' capability to perform their designated roles in QF Level 6 programme(s). This includes but is not limited to their holistic and integrated understanding of the multidisciplinary contexts, and competence in developing learning and teaching materials, teaching methodology and assessments that meet the QF Level 6 standards.
- 4.3.6 In view of the above and notwithstanding the recommendation, the Panel formed the view that, in terms of this domain, the Operator has the general capacity to operate QF Level 6 programmes.

4.4 Organisational Quality Assurance

The Operator must have an internal quality assurance system that can support effective management and monitoring of the quality of its learning programme(s) in delivering learning outcomes that align with the GLDs of the HKQF, to meet its educational/training objectives.

- 4.4.1 The Institute provided the following information to illustrate its institutional quality assurance system in support of the management and monitoring of the quality of QF Level 6 programmes:
- (a) *Quality Assurance Manual* updated in March 2024 depicting the Institute's quality assurance mechanisms and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) in line with the change in management structure (with effect from January 2024);
 - (b) *Academic Policies and Regulations* for QF Level 6 Taught Postgraduate Programmes;
 - (c) *Procedures for Programme Development, Approval and Revision for THEi Award-bearing Programmes* (to be in force from the academic year 2024/25);

- (d) processes contributing to the development, design and approval of programmes;
- (e) institutional organisational chart showing the roles and reporting relationships of the responsible parties at different levels in terms of quality assurance and enhancement; and
- (f) arrangements for collecting stakeholders' feedback including students, graduates, External Examiners, Departmental Advisory Committees, graduate employers and industrial partners.

4.4.2 The Panel observed the following arrangements:

- (a) an Annual Programme Review is conducted for each programme in the form of the *Annual Programme Review and Improvement (APRI) Report*, prepared by the respective programme teams and examined by the Quality Assurance Committee (QAC) which provides further recommendations prior to seeking final approval from the Academic Board (AB);
- (b) a Periodic Programme Review (PPR) is conducted one year before the expiry of the programme's validity period, which involves a Panel that evaluates the standard and outcomes of the programme concerned and analyses the feedback collected from students and external stakeholders. The findings and recommendations of the Panel are then submitted to the AB for approval prior to reporting to the IC;
- (c) the Departmental Advisory Committee, consisting of external members from employers, trade associations and professional institutions, regularly advises the Department concerned on its strategic and curriculum development and matters related to the establishment of industrial partnerships; and
- (d) stakeholder inputs are regularly collected for continuous enhancement at the institutional and programme levels. Student feedback is collected through the Student Feedback Questionnaire (SFQ) and Staff-Student Consultative Committee Meetings. Surveys are conducted to measure employers' satisfaction with graduate performance and to identify areas in need of improvement. The views and suggestions of the External Examiners on the programme quality are solicited through External Examiner Reports and meetings of the Assessment Boards of the Institute.

- 4.4.3 Based on the information provided in the *Accreditation Document, Response to the Panel's Initial Comments* and site visit discussions, the Panel formed the view that there are key documentations with records of discussions indicating deliberations on the Institute's academic regulations, strategies and plans related to its proposed development of postgraduate education, associated research strategy, staffing and staff development plan.
- 4.4.4 Nevertheless, the Operator has yet to demonstrate the rigor expected in the implementation of the development and approval process for new programmes at QF Level 6. On the contrary, deficiencies were identified in the development of MBA(DT) (see Para. 4.11.5). The Panel considered that the issue was attributed to, among others, inadequate guidance provided in the Quality Assurance Manual in assuring consistency and clarity in implementation. The Panel therefore stipulated a condition (pre-condition) as follows:

Pre-condition

The Operator is to (i) review the Institute's quality assurance system and ensure the approval processes for developing new programmes, including those pitched at QF Level 6, are clearly and comprehensively illustrated and can be implemented with consistency, and (ii) strengthen the implementation of the Institute's quality assurance system to ensure that the QA processes are executed in a rigorous manner with proper documentation and that the QA functions are exercised effectively throughout the processes.

The Operator is to submit the following to HKCAAVQ for the fulfilment of the above pre-condition **on or before 27 September 2024**:

- (a) a revised version of the programme development approval process as stipulated in the Institute's Quality Assurance Manual, explicitly stating but not limited to the sequence of actions and discussions, expected timeline, pertinent documents, responsible parties and approval authorities, and further considerations specific to QF Level 6 programmes (if any); and
- (b) evidence to substantiate that the revised version as required in (a) enables rigorous implementation with consistency for the development of new programmes at QF Level 6.

Learning Programme Accreditation

4.5 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.

4.5.1 Master of Business Administration in Digital Transformation [“MBA(DT)” or “the Programme”] is a professionally-oriented taught postgraduate programme offered in both one-year full-time and two-year part-time modes. The Programme is delivered in Chinese and adopts Putonghua as its medium of instruction (MOI), intended to develop students’ capability for a professional career in the Greater Bay Area upon graduation. Students are admitted to one of the two Study Streams in the Programme, namely “Digital Business and Leadership (DBL)” and “Digital Technology and Innovation (DTI)”.

4.5.2 The Programme Objectives (POs) of MBA(DT) are as follows:

PO1: Enhance students’ comprehensive understanding regarding the transformative influence of major frontier technologies on businesses and their broader implications on social and economic environment
增進學員對主要尖端技術如何改變企業及其對社會和經濟環境影響之全面理解

PO2: Strengthen students’ competence in discharging key roles and exercising autonomy in the management of digital transformation and frontier technologies
增強學員於數碼轉型和尖端技術管理中擔任關鍵角色及行使自主權之能力

PO3: Strengthen students’ competitive edge in the digitalisation or digital transformation landscape
增強學員在數碼化或數碼轉型環境中之競爭優勢

PO4: Foster the advancement of students’ managerial and digital skill sets to effectively lead digital transformation initiatives and manage digital business processes
提升學員之管理和數碼技能以有效地帶領數碼轉型計劃及管理數碼業務流程

PO5: Foster students’ new thinking in offering practical insights for business organisations to lead and thrive in the digital era

促進學員之新思維為商業機構在數碼時代引領和發展提供實用見解

4.5.3 The overarching Programme Intended Learning Outcomes (PILOs) and the study stream specific PILOs of the Programme are as follows:

Upon completion of the Programme, students will be able to:

Overarching PILOs

PILO1: Formulate and critically evaluate comprehensive digital framework for an organisation as the blueprint for transformation

制定及批判地評估商業機構之整體數碼框架並作為轉型藍圖

PILO2: Integrate a digital culture into an organisation and leverage the latest technologies for business intelligence and analytics

融入數碼文化於商業機構內並結合最新科技於商業情報及分析中

PILO3: Utilise advanced and specialised skills in digital technologies for seamless integration into business processes

採用先進及專業數碼技術並流暢地整合於業務流程中

PILO4: Apply intelligent automation to improve business process efficiency and effectiveness

應用智能自動化技術提高商業流程效率

Study Stream specific PILOs

A. Digital Business and Leadership

PILO5A: Critically interpret and review macro trends and offer insights of their impact on business organisations

批判地闡釋及回顧宏觀趨勢並提供其對商業組織影響的見解

PILO6A: Formulate and evaluate long-term strategic plan that effectively adapts to a changing business environment and digital ecosystem

規劃及評估長期策略以有效地適應不斷變化之商業環境及數碼生態系統

PILO7A: Analyse the competitive landscape to create a sustainable market position and gain a competitive advantage
分析競爭格局以創造可持續之市場地位及增強競爭優勢

B. Digital Technology and Innovation

PILO5B: Identify, evaluate and apply the tools and techniques of innovation management within a variety of business scenarios
識別、評估及應用各種業務狀況中之創新管理工具和技術

PILO6B: Communicate and integrate multi-disciplinary expertise related to digital innovation
溝通和整合與數碼創新相關並涉及多門學科之專業知識

PILO7B: Formulate and implement start-up plans for technology-based businesses
制定及執行以科技為本的行業之初創計劃書

4.5.4 To demonstrate the alignment of the learning outcomes to meet the standards at the claimed QF level, the Panel was provided the following information:

- (a) Module Syllabi containing the descriptions and content of the Common Core, Study Stream specific and Elective modules, Module Learning Outcomes (MLOs), pedagogical and assessment methods, and texts and references;
- (b) mapping of the POs and PILOs;
- (c) mapping of the PILOs and modules;
- (d) mapping of the modules and Generic Level Descriptors (GLDs) at QF Level 6;
- (e) sample learning and teaching materials, assessments and associated rubrics from the Common Core, Study Stream specific and Elective modules; and
- (f) supporting letters from industry professionals.

4.5.5 To demonstrate the potential demand for the Programme, the Institute shared with the Panel its analyses on the (a) distinctive features of the Programme, (b) a comparison between the Programme and similar programmes offered by other local institutions and (c) potential student demand for the Programme.

- 4.5.6 In general, the Panel considered that the POs and PILOs have included the important aspects of MBA and Digital Transformation, and mechanisms are in place to measure their effectiveness including evaluations of student performance. However, in view of the programme length and the wide spectrum of knowledge areas to be addressed, the Panel **recommended** that the Operator should continuously review and monitor the programme design and assess its effectiveness in terms of the achievement of the intended learning outcomes with respect to its POs and PILOs.
- 4.5.7 In view of the above and notwithstanding the recommendation, the Panel formed the view that the objectives and intended learning outcomes of the Programme generally meet the claimed QF standard and have been developed to respond to the educational needs.

4.6 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.

- 4.6.1 The Programme complies with the Student Admission Policies and Regulations and the General Entrance Requirements (GER) of the Institute laid down in its Academic Policies and Regulations (AP&R) for Taught Postgraduate Programmes. In addition, students should also meet the programme-specific minimum admission requirements to be considered eligible for entry to the Programme.
- 4.6.2 The GER specific to taught postgraduate programmes [for those using Chinese as MOI including MBA(DT)] are as follows:
- (a) A bachelor's degree from a recognised institution or a qualification at QF Level 5 or equivalent; and
 - (b) For Chinese programmes, applicants whose entrance qualification is obtained from an institution where the medium of instruction is NOT Chinese should also fulfil the following minimum Chinese proficiency requirement:
 - (i) Chinese Language in the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education (HKDSE) at Level 3; OR
 - (ii) Other public examination results which prove equivalent level of Chinese proficiency.

- 4.6.3 The programme-specific minimum admission requirements for the Programme are as follows:

Standard Entry Route

Academic Qualification (Local or Non-local)

- (i) Recognised bachelor's degree in Business Administration or IT or Technology related fields (or equivalent); OR
- (ii) Recognised bachelor's degree with at least 3 years of relevant supervisory/managerial working experience;

AND

Language Requirement (Putonghua)

- (i) Mother tongue/language is Putonghua; OR
- (ii) Received a bachelor's degree or above of which the MOI was Putonghua; OR
- (iii) Have at least three years of working experience in Mainland China or other Putonghua speaking countries or regions (Singapore, Taiwan etc); OR
- (iv) Have achieved at least Grade B, Level 3 in the Putonghua Shuiping Ceshi awarded by the State Language Commission (SLC); OR
- (v) Demonstrate the Putonghua speaking competence through assessments in an interview.

Non-standard Entry Route

To be approved by the Vice-President (Academic) on a case-by-case basis

- 4.6.4 The proposed maximum annual intake of MBA(DT) is 350 full-time and 50 part-time students per year.

- 4.6.5 Candidates may be invited to attend an admission interview if the Operator considers that further clarification and evidence are needed to assess their suitability, such as the need to verify the candidates' work experience or Putonghua speaking ability. For non-standard entry admission, the Panel observed that the approval decision of the Vice President (Academic) is supported by the Department Head and Programme Leader through a standard protocol in the vetting process.
- 4.6.6 In line with the Government's policy on the yearly quota of non-standard admission for programmes accredited under the Qualifications Framework, for degree programmes operating in the 2023/24 academic year and onwards, the maximum number of non-standard admission (including mature students) should be capped, at a maximum of 15% on a programme basis and 10% on an institutional basis of the actual number of new students of the year. The cap applies on a programme basis and does not incur any differences in the year of study of the new entrants.
- 4.6.7 The Panel noted that the Institute accepts candidates with prior supervisory/management experience but without relevant academic backgrounds in business/IT for standard entry to the Programme. The Operator reiterated that the nature of MBA generally emphasises the contribution of prior work experience in the business sector and this approach was commonly adopted by other similar local programmes. Remedial measures will be taken to address the diverse needs of students from different backgrounds, for example, business-related elements are taught at an appropriate pace and students with limited IT knowledge are offered a self-learning package to equip themselves with key IT concepts prior to the programme commencement.
- 4.6.8 While the aforesaid efforts are noted, the Panel considered that, given the flexible admission approach, the Operator should strengthen its measures to manage students' varying expectations. The Panel **recommended** that the Operator should continuously review and monitor the composition of the student body and its potential impacts on learning experience, and assess its effectiveness in terms of the achievement of the intended learning outcomes.
- 4.6.9 In view of the above and notwithstanding the recommendation, the Panel formed the view that the student admission process and requirements are generally appropriate.

4.7 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.

- 4.7.1 MBA(DT) comprises a total of 16 three-credit Modules including six Common Core Modules, three Study Stream Modules for DBL, three Study Stream Modules for DTI, and four Elective Modules. To graduate, each student is required to complete a total of ten Modules, including all Common Core Modules, all Study Stream Modules under the student's opted Study Stream, and one Elective Module, totalling 126 QF credits.
- 4.7.2 The Capstone Applied Business Project (a Common Core Module) requires students to conduct group-based applied research to resolve a selected business issue involving digital transformation processes, and an industry partner is to be engaged.
- 4.7.3 While the Programme is hosted by the Department of Hospitality and Business Management (DHBM) of the Institute, the delivery of modules is shared among the teachers from DHBM and Department of Digital Innovation and Technology (DDIT).

Type	Offering Department	Name of Module	CP
Common Core Module	DHBM	Managerial Accounting and Finance 管理會計與財務	3
	DHBM	Managerial Economics 管理經濟學	3
	DDIT	Digital Business Strategy and Transformation 數碼業務策略及轉型	3
	DDIT	Digital Business Process and Operations 數碼業務流程及營運	3
	DHBM	Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) and Business Sustainability 企業永續發展與經營	3
	DHBM/DDIT	Capstone Applied Business Project (應用商業總整專案)	3
Study Stream Module (DBL)	DDIT	Digital Marketing 數碼行銷	3
	DHBM	Global Business Environment 環球商業環境	3

	DHBM	Leadership and Strategy 領導與商業策略	3
Study Stream Module (DTI)	DDIT	Management of Digital Innovation 數碼創新管理	3
	DDIT	Cyber Security in Business 商業網絡安全	3
	DHBM	Strategic Innovation and Entrepreneurship 策略性創新與創業精神	3
*Elective Module	DDIT	Business Intelligence and Analytics 商業情報及分析	3
	DHBM	Ethics in a Digital World 數碼世界的道德規範	3
	DHBM	Cyber Law 網絡法	3
	DHBM	Organisational and Human Resources Management 機構與人力資源管理	3

*Choose one only

4.7.4 To demonstrate that there is reasonable coverage of business administration and digital transformation elements in each Study Stream, the Operator provided further justifications in the *Response to Panel's Initial Comments*, summarised below:

- (a) the strategic management principles are covered in Leadership and Strategy module (under DBL) and Strategic Innovation and Entrepreneurship module (under DTI) respectively;
- (b) for both Study Streams, students are exposed to industry updates through guest lectures delivered by industry professionals, company visits and study tours to get familiarised with the real-world digital transformation processes in the business contexts; and
- (c) key topics such as artificial intelligence, python programming, change management, business re-engineering, no-code and low code, and entrepreneurship are incorporated with varying depths across the relevant Common Core Modules and Study Stream Modules of DBL and DTI.

4.7.5 Based on the written information and site visit discussions, the Panel had the following observations:

- (a) important areas relevant to business administration and digital transformation have been included; however, the designated study

duration (one-year full-time and two-year part-time) is relatively short with respect to the scope of coverage, potentially leading to a packed teaching schedule to maintain the depth of understanding at the QF Level 6 standards; the aforesaid situation could be most challenging to students with limited prior knowledge/experience in the relevant discipline; and

(b) the adoption of two Study Streams is intended to enable students' specialised study; however, given the study duration, students may not have sufficient time to establish a strong foundation in the generic areas; common business topics such as human resources and cyber laws are placed in the elective category, implying some students may not acquire those knowledge areas comprehensively upon graduation.

- 4.7.6 In view of the above observations, the Panel **recommended** that the Operator should continuously review and monitor the scope and depth of the curriculum to evaluate its effectiveness in facilitating students' achievement of the intended learning outcomes.
- 4.7.7 To address a number of issues pertinent to the delivery of the programme content, the Panel stipulated a recommendation in the domain of Learning, Teaching and Assessment, and three conditions and one recommendation in the domain of Programme Leadership and Staffing. Details are provided in Para. 4.8.6 and Para. 4.9.6 respectively.
- 4.7.8 In consideration of the above and notwithstanding the recommendation, the Panel formed the view that the structure and content of the Programme are generally acceptable.

4.8 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.

- 4.8.1 The delivery of MBA(DT) follows an outcome-based approach. A range of learning and teaching activities are employed including lectures, tutorials, project-based learning and guest lectures. The Operator provided to the Panel the Module Syllabi which included information on the pedagogical and assessment methods. The MOI of the Programme is Putonghua.
- 4.8.2 Shared classes may be arranged for full-time and part-time students in some of the modules. The Operator shared with the Panel a sample class timetable to illustrate the weekly teaching arrangement for both full-time and part-time students. The Panel was also provided samples of learning and teaching

materials, assessment tasks and associated assessment criteria / rubrics of the modules selected from the Common Core, Study Stream and Elective categories respectively.

- 4.8.3 The Programme is governed by THEi's Academic Policies and Regulations (AP&R) for Taught Postgraduate Programmes. AP&R delineate the general policies and guidelines for assessments including the role and responsibilities of the parties involved, assessment criteria and grade descriptors, moderation and grade review mechanism, graduation requirements and handling of academic misconduct.
- 4.8.4 A variety of assessment methods are employed in the Programme including assignment, project report, presentation and examination. The choice of assessment methods is subject to the nature of the module, module content and MLOs. For example, written assignment is adopted for the Leadership and Strategy module to assess the application of analytical techniques, while verbal presentation is used in the Capstone Applied Business Project module to assess communication skills. The Operator highlighted its emphasis on the evaluation of students' progressive development and minimal reliance on final assessments. The Panel noted that assessments are subject to internal moderation by the programme team and external moderation by the External Examiners.
- 4.8.5 The Panel observed the Operator's effort in its pedagogy to enrich students' learning experience. The existing pool of internship providers in partnership with the Institute established for other programmes is an important source of support for the Capstone Applied Business Project. Nevertheless, based on the sample learning and teaching and assessment materials presented for review, the Panel considered that the contents are generally descriptive and/or prescriptive, which should be further improved to integrate the real-life business and technological contexts in order to strengthen students' higher order thinking. Given the large student size, it is also potentially challenging for teachers to provide sufficient guidance in the Capstone Applied Business Project and evaluate students' performance effectively.
- 4.8.6 In view of the above observations, the Panel **recommended** that the Operator should have a mechanism in place to ensure that the learning and teaching activities and assessments are responsive to industry trends, developed systematically through adequate discussions within the programme team and consultation with external advisors, and that they can meet the QF Level 6 standards.
- 4.8.7 In consideration of the above and notwithstanding the recommendation, the Panel considered that the Programme's learning and teaching activities and assessments are generally acceptable.

4.9 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.

4.9.1 The required qualifications of academic staff at different ranks are as follows:

Full-time academic staff

Academic Department Head	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• normally a recognised doctoral degree and/or high professional standing with demonstrated achievements in scholarship and/or professional practice, as well as research in the relevant field;• rich experience in programme and curriculum development, as well as learning and teaching practice;• good understanding of the higher education environment;• strong management, interpersonal and social skills; and• high proficiency in English and preferably in Chinese, including Putonghua.
Professor	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• a recognised doctoral degree and/or high professional standing with demonstrated achievements in scholarship and/or professional practice, as well as research in the relevant field;• rich experience in programme and curriculum development, as well as learning and teaching practice;• good understanding of the higher education environment;• strong management, interpersonal and social skills; and• high proficiency in English and preferably in Chinese, including Putonghua.

Associate Professor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • normally a recognised doctoral degree and/or professional standing with achievements in scholarship and/or professional practice and research in the relevant field; • experience in curriculum design and development, learning and teaching practice at tertiary level; • understanding of the higher education environment; • good management, interpersonal skills; and • high proficiency in English and preferably in Chinese, including Putonghua.
Assistant Professor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • preferably a recognised doctoral degree and/or professional qualifications, as well as teaching experience at tertiary level, and research or practical industry experience in the relevant field; • good interpersonal and social skills; and • high proficiency in English and preferably in Chinese, including Putonghua.
Lecturer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a recognised master's degree, and preferably with teaching experience at tertiary level and/or experience in professional practice in the relevant field; • good interpersonal and social skills; and • high proficiency in English and preferably in Chinese, including Putonghua.

Part-time academic staff

Lecturer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a minimum of a recognised Master's degree and/or equivalent professional qualifications; • at least 4 years' relevant teaching experience at tertiary / degree level or relevant working experience; and • preferably with research experience, experience in dissertation / project supervision and in providing advice and coaching in academic writing.
Assistant Lecturer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a recognised relevant degree and preferably with higher qualifications; • at least 2 years' relevant teaching experience at tertiary / degree level or relevant working experience; and • preferably with research experience, and experience in dissertation / project supervision and providing advice and coaching in academic writing.

4.9.2 The Institute provided the following to the Panel:

- (a) profiles of the assigned and potential members from the existing teaching staff pool to join the programme team, including a list of relevant research and scholarly contributions;
- (b) staff recruitment plan showing the timeline for new appointments to be completed by October 2024 and curriculum vitae of the potential candidates;
- (c) information on the academic leadership, monitoring and responsibilities of the academic staff;
- (d) the *Staff Handbook*; and
- (e) a tentative allocation plan showing the teaching assignment for individual modules on the basis of teachers' area(s) of expertise and experience.

4.9.3 The Panel noted that the Programme follows the Staff-to-Student Ratio (SSR) set by the Institute for QF Level 6 programmes at 1:20. A Programme Leader is appointed to manage the Programme's day-to-day operation, quality assurance and improvement, and to provide academic and organisational leadership. Module Convenors are appointed to support the Programme Leader in the delivery of individual modules and ensure that the assessments are appropriately assessed and moderated.

4.9.4 The Institute organises staff development activities on pedagogies and applied research to enhance teaching effectiveness. A meeting will be held by the programme team on an annual basis to discuss and identify staff development needs and align teachers' varying expectations. The Panel was provided with the staff development plan for the Programme including the activities to be implemented by August 2025, covering the areas of industry/professional updates, pedagogical training, research skills and staff induction.

4.9.5 The Panel was given to understand that most serving and potential teachers are doctoral degree holders. However, after studying the written information and discussing with the relevant stakeholders at the site visit, the Panel considered that there is insufficient evidence to demonstrate the readiness of the programme team, in terms of their overall qualifications and experience, to deliver the Programme that meets the QF Level 6 standards. The Panel's observations are summarised as follows:

- (a) The Programme Leader comes from an accounting background with limited experience in digital transformation and information technology.

While MBA(DT) is hosted by DHBM, there is heavy reliance on the DDIT Department to develop curriculum contents related to digital transformation. However, DDIT member(s) have minimal representation in the Programme Board to oversee the technology-related modules with a decisive role. The programme leadership's capability to (i) provide strategic directions of the Programme, (ii) integrate the business and technology contexts of the curriculum and (iii) coordinate the two offering Departments for curriculum development and assessment moderation is yet to be proven.

- (b) Among the serving teachers proposed to join the programme team, the Panel was given to understand that they have teaching duties in other programmes and do not contribute their full teaching load to the Programme. No members appear to have the multidisciplinary expertise in the business and technology environments and only two members (out of six) had academic qualification(s) relevant to MBA.
- (c) The presented Chinese version of the learning and teaching materials and assessment tasks are generally descriptive and/or prescriptive. The teachers have yet to demonstrate how the materials can be used to facilitate students' higher order thinking at QF Level 6.
- (d) While the tutorials and Capstone Applied Business Project are group-based, and in view of the proposed maximum number of students that may come from varying backgrounds, support from a large number of teachers is needed to ensure adequate coordination, supervision and support. Considering the unpredictability of potential candidates and observed limitations of the serving teachers as aforesaid, the programme team has yet to prove its capability to meet the manpower demands for the tutorials and Capstone Applied Business Project.

4.9.6 In view of the above observations, the Panel **recommended** that the Operator should take a proactive approach to assess the various training needs of teaching staff and offer the opportunities to strengthen their competence to deliver the Programme effectively. The Panel also stipulated three conditions (two pre-conditions and one requirement) as follows:

Pre-conditions

4.9.6.1 The Operator is to review the qualifications and experience of the serving and prospective teachers to ensure the programme team is capable of delivering the Programme effectively. This includes:

- (a) academic leadership that demonstrates competence in integrating business and technology components in the curriculum, programme management and internal moderation;

- (b) sufficiency of knowledge and experience in terms of research and industry practice/exposure for the delivery of Common Core, Study Stream specific and Elective modules;
- (c) capability to develop learning and teaching materials and assessments in Chinese that meet the QF Level 6 standards;
- (d) capability to respond to diverse student needs in terms of teaching content and methodology, and provision of learner support; and
- (e) adequacy of representation in the Programme Board to incorporate the considerations for both business and technology aspects in the curriculum.

The Operator is to submit evidence including but not limited to the following to HKCAAVQ for the fulfilment of the above pre-condition **on or before 27 September 2024**:

- (a) the required qualifications and experience of teachers assigned to individual modules; and
- (b) a mapping table identifying the suitable teacher(s) (serving and/or prospective) for individual modules, with justifications.

4.9.6.2 The Operator is to ensure that there is sufficient manpower and effective deployment for conducting learning and teaching activities including tutorials and supervision of the Capstone Applied Business Project, in view of the maximum annual student intake.

The Operator is to submit evidence including but not limited to the following to HKCAAVQ to address the aforesaid needs for the fulfilment of the above pre-condition **on or before 27 September 2024**:

- (a) evidence showing satisfactory progress in teaching and administrative staff recruitment;
- (b) a staff recruitment plan regarding teaching and administrative manpower covering the 2-year validity period; and
- (c) a deployment plan to ensure each teaching staff, with or without any other teaching/non-teaching duties at the Institute, has sufficient capacity to fulfill his/her designated role(s) in the Programme.

Requirement

- 4.9.6.3 The Operator is to have a mechanism in place to ensure the readiness of the programme team to adequately address the students' learning needs throughout the full programme period.

The Operator is to submit the following to HKCAAVQ for the fulfilment of the above requirement **on or before 31 July 2025**:

- (a) the latest teaching staff list including the rank and curriculum vitae of individual teachers and their assigned module(s) showing the sufficiency of qualified staff in the programme team; and
- (b) a contingency plan to explain the follow-up action(s) in case(s) of staff resignation, re-deployment of duties and/or other circumstances that affect the composition of the programme team.

4.10 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.

- 4.10.1 As stated in Para. 4.2 for this accreditation exercise, HKCAAVQ engaged a Financial Expert to review the financial information and documents submitted by the Institute on its financial viability. Relevant information on the financial resources for the Programme is also delineated in Para. 4.2.2.
- 4.10.2 In terms of physical resources, the Institute provided the Panel information relevant to the delivery of the Programme including the campus facilities. During the site visit, the Institute arranged for the Panel to take a campus tour. The Panel was also provided with a summary of the library holdings, subscriptions and e-resources relevant to the Programme including journal subscriptions and electronic databases. The Panel observed that the Institute has established means to assist students including the provision of language support by the Learning Commons and counselling by the Student Development Office.
- 4.10.3 While the Programme places a high emphasis on the role of technology, the Panel observed that the technical resources used for the delivery of relevant modules, such as Digital Marketing, should be further strengthened. The Panel **recommended** that the Operator should assess the possibility to procure and apply more up-to-date educational resources to aid the delivery of relevant

modules in the Programme, such as simulations and digital tools, business games and relevant software.

- 4.10.4 In consideration of the above information and site visit discussions, and notwithstanding the recommendation, the Panel formed the view that the provision of learning, teaching and enabling resources is generally appropriate.

4.11 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.

- 4.11.1 The following documents on the Institute's programme approval, review and quality assurance processes for the Programme were provided to the Panel for review:

- (a) the Institute's updated Quality Assurance Manual;
- (b) extracts of meeting minutes of the relevant Boards/Committees recording the deliberation, decision and approval processes for the development of MBA(DT);
- (c) a copy of the Student Feedback Questionnaire (SFQ) displaying the full list of questions for evaluation of individual modules; and
- (d) profiles of the two potential External Examiners.

- 4.11.2 Upon reviewing the above documents, the Panel noted that there are stipulated internal procedures to guide and monitor the review, approval and quality assurance of the Programme. The Operator had also considered the inputs from the Initial Evaluation and Internal Validation Panel (IEIVP) and developed action plans prior to commissioning HKCAAVQ for this accreditation exercise.

- 4.11.3 The Panel was given to understand that stakeholder inputs will be regularly collected for continuous enhancement of the Programme. Student feedback is collected through the Student Feedback Questionnaire (SFQ) and Staff-Student Consultative Committee Meetings. Surveys are conducted to measure employers' level of satisfaction with graduate performance and to identify areas in need of improvement. The views and suggestions of the External

Examiners on the programme quality are solicited through External Examiner Reports and meetings of the Assessment Boards of the Institute.

- 4.11.4 Through discussions with the two potential External Examiners (EEs), to be appointed for the Programme upon completion of this accreditation exercise, the Panel observed that a mechanism is in place for the programme team to solicit the views and advice from EEs on a regular basis. Each EE oversees the modules of his/her designated Study Stream but it is not fully clear how the two EEs work together to oversee the Common Core and Elective Modules and monitor the quality of the Programme as a whole. The Panel therefore **recommended** that the Operator should have a mechanism in place to ensure that the External Examiner(s) possess(es) a holistic understanding of the Programme across both Study Streams, irrespective of their expertise area(s) and role(s) in the designated Study Stream.
- 4.11.5 Despite the consultation meetings held by the Institute with industry representatives to discuss the market demand in the last quarter of 2023 and presentation of approval papers to demonstrate the completion of each key stage of the programme development procedure, there were insufficient records to evidence the internal discussions/deliberations and external consultations done throughout the stages. During the site visit, the Operator explained that informal discussions were held but not officially documented. The Panel was also informed that the Vice President (Academic) and Vice President (Operation and Enterprise) were the approving bodies for the final version of the programme proposal to be submitted to HKCAAVQ. However, the aforesaid role is not explicitly stated in the process and it is uncertain how the two Vice Presidents share the role. It is also not clear how the AB approved version of the proposal is converted to the final version at the latest stage. The Panel therefore stipulated the following condition (requirement):

Requirement

The Operator is to ensure that QA functions are exercised effectively on the Programme and that the key considerations are sufficiently discussed, consulted, evaluated and documented, which include but are not limited to market needs, academic leadership and synergy, interdisciplinary collaboration, industry connections, teaching methodology and assessments and teaching arrangements in relevant QA processes. The Operator is to submit evidence to substantiate the aforesaid mechanism to HKCAAVQ for the fulfilment of the above requirement **on or before 31 July 2025**.

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.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.hkqf.gov.hk>.

5.3 Qualifications Register

- 5.3.1 Qualifications accredited by HKCAAVQ are eligible for entry into the Qualifications Register ("QR") at <https://www.hkqr.gov.hk> for recognition under the QF. The Operator should apply separately to have their quality-assured qualifications entered into the QR.
- 5.3.2 Only learners who commence the study of the named accredited learning programme during the validity period and who have graduated with the named qualification listed in the QR will be considered to have acquired a qualification recognised under the QF.

Ref: 72/54/01
5 September 2024
JoH/CQ/ELi/WC/as

Appendix

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

**Initial Evaluation and
Learning Programme Accreditation for
Master of Business Administration in Digital Transformation**

26 – 28 June 2024

Panel Membership

Initial Evaluation

Panel Chair

Professor Christopher John AULD
Chair
Academic Board
Sydney Institute of Business and
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***Panel Secretary**

Ms Winnie CHOY
Registrar
Academic Accreditation and Assessment
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Dr KO Chi Keung, Anthony
Advisor
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Hong Kong Metropolitan University
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Financial Expert

Dr LAU Kin Chun

Financial Controller
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Learning Programme Accreditation

Master of Business Administration in Digital Transformation

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

