



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

ACCREDITATION REPORT

SAINT FRANCIS UNIVERSITY

LEARNING PROGRAMME ACCREDITATION

MASTER OF ARTS IN ETHICS AND RELIGION

&

**BACHELOR OF SCIENCE (HONOURS) IN
PHARMACEUTICAL STUDIES**

MAY 2026

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1. TERMS OF REFERENCE

1.1 Based on the Service Agreement (No.: AA1145), 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 Saint Francis University to conduct a Learning Programme Accreditation exercise with the following Terms of Reference:

- (a) To conduct an accreditation test as provided for in the AAVQO to determine whether the Programmes of Saint Francis University (the Operator) (with specifications below) meet the stated objectives and QF standards and can be offered as accredited programmes; and
- (b) To issue to the Operator an accreditation report setting out the results of the determination in relation to (a) by HKCAAVQ.

Specifications of the Programmes seeking accreditation status

Programme title (English and Chinese)	Award title on exit (English and Chinese)	Mode of study	Programme length	Streams NOT leading to distinctive awards, if any	Claimed QF level
Master of Arts in Ethics and Religion 倫理及宗教文學碩士	Master of Arts in Ethics and Religion 倫理及宗教文學碩士	Part-time	2 years	N/A	6
	^Postgraduate Certificate in Ethics and Religion 倫理及宗教深造證書	Part-time	1 years	N/A	6
	^Postgraduate Diploma in Ethics and Religion 倫理及宗教深造文憑	Part-time	1.5 years	N/A	6

^ Intermediate Exit Award

Programme title (English and Chinese)	Award title on exit (English and Chinese)	Mode of study	Programme length	Streams NOT leading to distinctive awards, if any	Claimed QF level
Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Pharmaceutical Studies 藥學(榮譽)理學士	Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Pharmaceutical Studies 藥學(榮譽)理學士	Part-time	3 years	1. Clinical 2. Community	5

2. HKCAAVQ'S DETERMINATION

2.1 HKCAAVQ has determined that, the Master of Arts in Ethics and Religion programme, subject to the fulfilment of the condition set out below, and the Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Pharmaceutical Studies programme meet the stated objectives and Hong Kong Qualifications Framework (HKQF) standard at Levels 6 and 5 respectively. Subject to the approval by the Secretary for Education, the Programmes can be offered as accredited programmes with a validity period of 3 years for the Master of Arts in Ethics and Religion programme and 4 years for the Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Pharmaceutical Studies programme.

2.2 In order for the validity period to take effect, Saint Francis University must be registered as a Post Secondary College under the Post Secondary Colleges Ordinance (Cap. 320) and it must comply with any restrictions stipulated in the Institutional Review (IR) Report. The authority for registration under Cap. 320 rests with the Permanent Secretary for Education who may take into account of the outcome of the IR Report and other considerations as deemed necessary.

2.3 Validity Period

2.3.1 The validity period will commence on the dates 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.

2.3.2 The maintenance of the accreditation status within the specified validity period is, where applicable, subject to the fulfilment of the requirement set out in paragraph 2.5.1 by the specified deadline.

2.4 The determinations on the Programmes are specified as follows:

Name of Operator	Saint Francis University 聖方濟各大學	
Name of Award Granting Body	Saint Francis University 聖方濟各大學	
Title of Learning Programme	Master of Arts in Ethics and Religion 倫理及宗教文學碩士	Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Pharmaceutical Studies 藥學(榮譽)理學士
Title of Qualification [Exit Award]	Master of Arts in Ethics and Religion 倫理及宗教文學碩士	Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Pharmaceutical Studies 藥學(榮譽)理學士
Primary Area of Study and Training	Humanities	Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences
Sub-area (Primary Area of Study and Training)	Humanities	Pharmacy
Other Area of Study and Training	Not applicable	
Sub-area (Other Area of Study and Training)	Not applicable	
QF Level	6	5
QF Credits	108	270
Mode(s) of Delivery and Programme Length	Part-time 2 Years	Part-time 3 Years

Intermediate Exit Awards	<u>Title of Qualification:</u> Postgraduate Certificate in Ethics and Religion 倫理及宗教深造證書 <u>QF Level:</u> 6 <u>QF Credits:</u> 54 <u>Attainment:</u> Passing two core courses, MAER511 & MAER512, and any other two courses, and obtaining a Grade Point Average of at least 2.0 (out of 4.0) in these four courses.		Not applicable
	<u>Title of Qualification:</u> Postgraduate Diploma in Ethics and Religion 倫理及宗教深造文憑 <u>QF Level:</u> 6 <u>QF Credits:</u> 81 <u>Attainment:</u> Passing two core courses, MAER511 & MAER512, and any other four courses, and obtaining a Grade Point Average of at least 2.0 (out of 4.0) in these six courses		
Start Date of Validity Period	1 September 2026		
End Date of Validity Period	31 August 2029	31 August 2030	
Number of Enrolment	One enrolment per year		

Maximum Number of New Students	20	40
Specification of Competency Standards-based Programme	☐ Yes ☒ No	
Address of Teaching / Training Venue	2 Chui Ling Lane, Tseung Kwan O, New Territories	

2.5 Condition

For MAER Programme

2.5.1 Requirement

The Operator is to strengthen the academic leadership and staffing of the Programme by expanding the full-time teaching team with two or three additional staff members subject to recruitment. This would include senior research active academic staff with the relevant experience and expertise aligned to the final programme content, to (i) secure a dedicated core team, and (ii) provide more input and support for the strategic leadership, management and effective delivery of the Programme.

The Operator is to submit evidence of the arrangements made to strengthen the academic leadership and staffing of the Programme to HKCAAVQ on the fulfilment of the above requirement **on or before 31 July 2027**. (paragraph 4.5.8)

2.6 Recommendations

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

For MAER Programme

- 2.6.1 The Operator should keep the programme title and market needs under review as the Programme continues to evolve and develop, to

ensure it is aligned with the needs of potential students and ensure its competitiveness and sustainability. (paragraph 4.1.4)

- 2.6.2 The Operator should develop explicit Intended Learning Outcomes for the Postgraduate Certificate and Postgraduate Diploma and ensure proper mapping and alignment of the two intermediate exit awards with the outcome standards at HKQF Level 6. (paragraph 4.1.7)
- 2.6.3 The Operator should review the mapping to accurately reflect the alignment between each course and the relevant descriptors at the appropriate HKQF Level. (paragraph 4.1.8)
- 2.6.4 The Operator should keep the curriculum under regular review and consider maintaining an appropriate balance between religion and philosophy in the curriculum. (paragraph 4.3.4)
- 2.6.5 The Operator should adjust the course content, either within the course *Ethics and Religion in Buddhism, Daoism, and Confucianism* or in another appropriate course, to ensure that religious Daoism is adequately covered and that the Programme's stated objectives are achieved. (paragraph 4.3.5)
- 2.6.6 The Operator should consider offering a dissertation or research project as an optional pathway to support a wider range of student interests and future goals. (paragraph 4.3.8)
- 2.6.7 The Operator should actively encourage and support the adoption of innovative teaching practices by providing incentives, resources and professional development opportunities for staff in order to enrich the learning experience of students and maintain currency with contemporary educational practices. (paragraph 4.4.4)
- 2.6.8 The Operator should regularly review and update the GenAI policy and academic integrity policies in general to provide clear guidance on the ethical and appropriate use of AI in academic work. (paragraph 4.4.5)
- 2.6.9 The Operator should provide targeted staff training and development particularly in areas where staff expertise might be limited, and develop mechanisms for regular and structured collaboration of the teaching team, such as through mentoring, team teaching, theme teaching and seminars, to promote a holistic and coordinated approach to programme planning and delivery. (paragraph 4.5.9)

For BScPS Programme

- 2.6.10 The Operator should keep the programme title under review as the Programme and the healthcare landscape continue to evolve and develop to ensure that the programme title clearly reflects the objectives and core contents of the Programme. (paragraph 4.1.13)
- 2.6.11 The Operator should ascertain whether graduates of the BScPS programme without a relevant sub-degree would be eligible for job postings at private hospitals in Hong Kong and, if not, inform prospective students accordingly in the programme booklet / leaflet and on the website. The Operator should also manage students' expectations and provide guidance on their choice of study stream and career pathways to ensure that students understand the distinctiveness of the Programme and are clear about the opportunities available to them upon graduation. (paragraph 4.1.14)
- 2.6.12 The Operator should review and consider enriching the curriculum by providing students with more training in communication, coaching, supervisory and people management skills to develop their competences in performing their translational and leadership roles effectively. (paragraph 4.3.18)
- 2.6.13 The Operator should consider implementing a comprehensive Objective Structured Clinical Examination-like (OSCE-like) exercise across the courses to assess students' holistic competencies in a broad range of skills prior to their workplace attachments. (paragraph 4.3.19)
- 2.6.14 The Operator should actively develop and advance the research skills of teaching staff, by fostering a research culture, providing training and incentives to encourage staff and student research, organising collective seminars and inviting academics and guest speakers to share their research, and also establish collaborative partnerships and networks for undertaking research. (paragraph 4.5.11)
- 2.6.15 The Operator should consider implementing a Teacher-Practitioner model to enhance the integration of academic instruction with 'real-world' professional standards and ensure that all teaching is aligned with current industry practice and expertise. (paragraph 4.5.12)
- 2.6.16 The Operator should consider establishing strategic partnerships with public healthcare providers, Non-Governmental Organisations and community pharmacies to build a professional network and to

align to sector-wide developments especially in pharmacy, and across the healthcare sector as a whole, to ensure that the Programme remains relevant, high quality, and aligned with sector and future development needs. (paragraph 4.7.6)

- 2.7 HKCAAVQ will subsequently satisfy itself on whether the Operator remains competent to achieve the relevant objectives and the Programmes continue 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 conditions and compliance with any restrictions stipulated in this Accreditation Report. During the validity period, HKCAAVQ may request the Operator to provide evidence, such as admission related information, to demonstrate that the Operator and the Programmes continue to comply with the determinations and meet the relevant accreditation standards.

3. INTRODUCTION

- 3.1 Saint Francis University (the Operator/the University/SFU) was established in 1985 as Caritas Francis Hsu College and was approved by the government to provide post-secondary education in 1990. In 2001, it acquired registration status under the Post Secondary Colleges Ordinance (Cap. 320) to operate sub-degree programmes. In 2011, it acquired degree-conferring status and changed its name to Caritas Institute of Higher Education (CIHE). In January 2024, CIHE acquired private university title and was renamed Saint Francis University.
- 3.2 In May 2025, the Operator applied to HKCAAVQ for integrating Caritas Bianchi College of Careers (CBCC), a sister institution, into the University as an academic unit through three processes, including a Learning Programme Accreditation (LPA) to accredit nine CBCC programmes so that they could be operated under the University.
- 3.3 As of November 2025, the Operator offers 18 sub-degree programmes, 4 professional diploma/diploma programmes, 15 bachelor's degree programmes, 1 postgraduate diploma programme, and two master's degree programmes listed on the Qualifications Register. It has attained Programme Area Accreditation (PAA) status

at HKQF Level 5 in four programme areas, including (i) General Business Administration, (ii) Social Work, (iii) Information and Communication Technology, and (iv) Nursing and Health Care Studies.

- 3.4 The Operator commissioned HKCAAVQ to conduct an LPA for its new Master of Arts in Ethics and Religion (MAER) programme at HKQF Level 6 and Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Pharmaceutical Studies (BScPS) programme at HKQF Level 5. HKCAAVQ formed an expert panel (Panel Membership in Appendix 1) for the accreditation exercise and the site visit was conducted on 11 to 13 March 2026. HKCAAVQ's *Manual for the Four-stage Quality Assurance Process under the Hong Kong Qualifications Framework (Version 1.3, 1 April 2025)* was the guiding document for the Operator and the Panel in conducting this exercise.
- 3.5 In view of the track record of the Operator established through previous accreditation exercises, information on the following aspects of the Programmes was not required in accordance with HKCAAVQ's Differentiation Approach to Accreditation:

Domain of Competence	Information NOT required
LPA-3 Programme Structure and Content	<u>For the BScPS programme:</u> Details of General Education (GE) courses are NOT required. However, programme specific information on this domain of competence, including the full course list with GE courses, is required.
LPA-6 Learning, Teaching and Enabling Resources/ Services	<u>For both programmes:</u> Information on institute-wide student support services is not required, except for support to Mainland students if they are a targeted group of the programme.

4. PANEL'S DELIBERATIONS

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

be appropriately addressed by the Operator.

4.1 Programme Objectives and Learning Outcomes

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

For MAER Programme

- 4.1.1 The MAER programme is a two-year part-time programme hosted by the Ip Ying To Lee Yu Yee School of Humanities and Languages (SHL) and pitched at HKQF Level 6. The Programme Objectives (POs) and Programme Intended Learning Outcomes (PILOs) are as follows:

POs

The objectives of the Programme are to:	
PO1	Develop a comprehensive understanding of ethics and religion;
PO2	Promote interdisciplinary knowledge;
PO3	Enhance ethical decision-making skills;
PO4	Cultivate a whole-person approach to ethics in personal and professional life;
PO5	Encourage global ethical perspectives; and
PO6	Encourage students for advanced research and professional practice.

PILOs

Upon completion of the Programme, students should be able to:	
PILO1	Critically analyse and interpret philosophical and ethical texts, demonstrating a thorough understanding of the principles and theories discussed;
PILO2	Apply ethical reasoning to real-world scenarios, particularly in bioethics, environmental ethics, and AI ethics;
PILO3	Integrate ethical principles with religious studies, appreciating the interplay between different ethical and religious traditions; and
PILO4	Demonstrate a global perspective on ethics and

	spirituality, understanding and respecting diverse cultural and religious viewpoints.
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- 4.1.2 The Panel was given to understand that the MAER programme was developed in alignment with SHL's strategic objectives of cross-disciplinary collaboration within the humanities discipline to add diversity and flexibility to SHL's programme portfolio and with SHL's strategic plan to develop graduates with strong analytical and ethical reasoning abilities.
- 4.1.3 Regarding the programme title and objectives, the Panel received different feedback and opinions on the description of the Programme from the various stakeholders the Panel met with during the site visit. The Panel noted that there appeared to be a broad consensus that ethics, philosophy and spirituality were the key intersecting ideas although from an academic perspective, "religion" might be a more appropriate reference for the programme title. The Operator described the Programme as a trial/experimental programme that was foundational in nature with opportunities for further expansion. The Panel opined that if the Programme was considered as a "foundational master's degree" programme, it was essential that its foundations and the academic core were clear before the Programme would be considered scalable and capable of providing insights to the University's other schools working with different aspects of ethics, religion and integrity. (For further discussion on the programme title, please refer to paragraph 4.3.4.)
- 4.1.4 The Panel also observed that the Operator relied heavily on the market surveys to understand the community needs in the programme planning stage. The Panel was, however, of the view that the survey targets, consisting of SFU and Holy Spirit Seminary College graduates and students, SFU staff and employers from the education, church and social welfare sectors, constituted a rather limited demographic. However, the Panel noted that the potential employers and External Advisors were very supportive of the Programme. During the site visit, they suggested that there was a need and a rationale predominantly driven by government initiatives to advance the skills, knowledge and understanding of secondary school teachers in ethics and religion, and thus this offered a market opportunity for the Programme. The Panel, however, opined that the initial market for the Programme appeared to be drawn from longstanding friends of SFU, such as SFU graduates and staff and Catholic schools in Hong Kong, rather than as a result of advertising and marketing. Furthermore, the Panel also opined that when the

Programme was marketed, the programme title might require further reflection for the reasons as stated in paragraph 4.1.3. The Panel, therefore, made the following recommendation:

Recommendation

The Operator should keep the programme title and market needs under review as the Programme continues to evolve and develop, to ensure it is aligned with the needs of potential students and ensure its competitiveness and sustainability.

- 4.1.5 The Panel noted in the Main Document that the POs were followed by explanatory notes that included terms that students might find elusive or difficult to understand, especially when they were read together with the course titles which contained similar terms with subtle distinctions. In their *Response to Initial Comments* and during the site visit, the Operator clarified the differences and explained the use of terms in the programme documents, like “religion”, “religions”, “religious philosophies”, “philosophy of religion”, “ethics in religion”, “religious ethics”, “interdisciplinary”, and so on. The Panel opined that from a learner’s perspective, understanding the POs was essential for setting expectations and taking ownership of one’s learning. The Panel, therefore, **advised** the Operator to ensure that both prospective and enrolled students have a clear view of the POs and how the Programme would help them understand religious traditions and moral values.
- 4.1.6 The MAER programme offers intermediate exit awards of a Postgraduate Certificate (PgC) in Ethics and Religion and a Postgraduate Diploma (PgD) in Ethics and Religion. The Operator shared with the Panel during the site visit that there were not a separate set of Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs) for the intermediate awards as they were not recruiting students into the PgC and PgD but were, rather, providing an exit point for students who could not complete the MAER programme due to unforeseen circumstances. The Operator explained that students exiting with the intermediate awards should have completed courses with Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs) fulfilling the PILOs of the MAER programme though there might be different scenarios in terms of the choice of courses. The Operator also confirmed that there would be return mechanisms for PgC and PgD graduates to resume their study of the MAER programme.
- 4.1.7 The Panel, however, opined that the current approach, which presumed that mapping at the master’s degree level would extend

automatically to the PgC and PgD, was inadequate. In particular, given the much lighter study volume for attaining the PgC, there was no formal assurance that the PgC route would achieve the same outcome standards at HKQF Level 6. The Panel, therefore, made the following recommendation:

Recommendation

The Operator should develop explicit ILOs for the PgC and PgD and ensure proper mapping and alignment of the two intermediate exit awards with the outcome standards at HKQF Level 6.

- 4.1.8 The Panel observed that in the mapping of each course to the HKQF Level 6 descriptors, all courses were indicated as fulfilling the HKQF Level 6 descriptor related to the use of numerical and graphical data to set and achieve goals, and two courses were indicated as fulfilling all the HKQF Level 6 descriptors. The Panel considered that for a programme about ethics and religion, it was unlikely that all courses would employ the use of numerical and graphical data. The Panel also reminded the Operator that it was not necessary for a single course or even the entire programme to fulfil every descriptor at the relevant HKQF Level. It might be more realistic and precise to demonstrate more differentiation in the mapping. The Panel, therefore, made the following recommendation:

Recommendation

The Operator should review the mapping to accurately reflect the alignment between each course and the relevant descriptors at the appropriate HKQF Level.

- 4.1.9 The Panel was also provided the following information and documents regarding the POs and PILOs of the MAER programme for review:

- (a) Description notes of the POs;
- (b) Results of three market surveys on the demand for the Programme;
- (c) Benchmarking results of the Programme against local and overseas universities;
- (d) Mapping of the PILOs against the POs;

- (e) Mapping of the courses against the PILOs;
- (f) Mapping of the courses against the Generic Level Descriptors at HKQF Level 6; and
- (g) Promotion plan for the Programme.

4.1.10 In consideration of the above, the Panel concluded that the MAER programme has POs that meet community, education and industry needs and PILOs that meet the HKQF standard at Level 6, and the Programme is in general fit for purpose.

For BScPS Programme

4.1.11 The BScPS programme is a three-year part-time top-up programme hosted by the S.K. Yee School of Health Sciences (SHS) and pitched at HKQF Level 5. The Programme Objectives (POs) and Programme Intended Learning Outcomes (PILOs) are as follows:

POs

The objectives of the Programme are to:	
PO1	Develop skilled practice in patient-centred pharmaceutical care, integrating knowledge of medicines and individual patient information to provide safe, effective, and tailored dispensing services;
PO2	Foster professional practice grounded in ethical principles, effective communication, and societal awareness, ensuring collaborative, equitable, and accountable dispensing services; and
PO3	Cultivate a forward-looking and adaptive approach to the profession, leveraging technology and a commitment to lifelong learning to advance practice.

PILOs

Upon completion of the Programme, students should be able to:	
PILO1	Analyse and assess the therapeutic appropriateness, potential interactions, and contraindications of prescribed medications, applying clinical pharmacology and patient-specific factors to support safe and rational dispensing;
PILO2	Uphold ethical principles and professional accountability in the dispensing interactions, while addressing societal

	issues such as access to medicines and health equity;
PILO3	Communicate effectively and collaboratively with patients, families, and healthcare professionals to provide patient-centred counselling, resolve medication-related issues, and enhance the quality and safety of pharmaceutical care;
PILO4	Integrate digital health tools and automation systems into daily practice to optimise patient safety, enhance the quality of care, and improve operational efficiency; and
PILO5	Develop a commitment to lifelong learning and reflective practice to enable ongoing personal growth and professional advancement.

4.1.12 According to the Operator, the BScPS programme is designed exclusively for higher diploma graduates in dispensing and currently practicing dispensers across various settings, such as hospitals, clinics, and community pharmacies, to enable them to meet the new and evolving roles arising from Hong Kong's transition to a primary-care-focused healthcare system. The Programme offers two streams of studies, namely, the Clinical Stream, which focuses on hospital advanced clinical practice, and the Community Stream, which emphasises primary care, lifestyle medicine and chronic disease management.

4.1.13 While agreeing that the POs listed above were the basic goals of pharmaceutical education, the Panel was concerned that the programme title might not draw a clear enough distinction between the training of dispensers and pharmacists or distinguish the BScPS programme from other programmes in pharmaceutical science. The Operator explained that the term "pharmaceutical studies" was intended to be a general term meaning the study about drugs. The External Advisors and potential employers shared with the Panel during the site visit that the BScPS programme aimed to train a "new species" related to health care and pharmacy to fill the gap formed as a result of the government's initiative to launch the Community Pharmacy Programme. The External Stakeholders shared that they were looking for a new layer of health/pharmacy-related professionals who could share the workload of the pharmacists, communicate well with the public on disease prevention and proper use of drugs, and contribute to the safe implementation of pharmacy automation. The External Stakeholders also noted that while there was an urgency to train up this new layer of people in the industry, there remained a lot of uncertainties about this impending change, including the role of these people as far as training was concerned.

The Panel agreed that the BScPS programme might take time to develop given the evolving healthcare landscape and reminded the Operator that they might have to consider a change of programme title if necessary. The Panel, therefore, made the following recommendation:

Recommendation

The Operator should keep the programme title under review as the Programme and the healthcare landscape continue to evolve and develop to ensure that the programme title clearly reflects the objectives and core contents of the Programme.

- 4.1.14 The Operator acknowledged that the BScPS qualification alone could not fulfil the employment requirement for dispensers at the Hospital Authority (HA) as applicants for the post were required to hold a recognised sub-degree in dispensing-related studies or a bachelor's degree in pharmacy recognised by the Pharmacy and Poisons Board of Hong Kong for registration. The Operator undertook to state this fact in the programme booklet / leaflet and on the University's programme website. The Operator was not certain about whether the same applied to most, if not all, private hospitals in Hong Kong as well, although the Panel believed that most private hospitals followed the practice of HA. The Panel was also concerned that students from feeder programmes not related to dispensing studies should be properly and adequately informed that the "Clinical Stream" of the Programme aimed to prepare students for roles in hospital settings that they might not be eligible for. The Panel, therefore, made the following recommendation:

Recommendation

The Operator should ascertain whether graduates of the BScPS programme without a relevant sub-degree would be eligible for job postings at private hospitals in Hong Kong and, if not, inform prospective students accordingly in the programme booklet / leaflet and on the website. The Operator should also manage students' expectations and provide guidance on their choice of study stream and career pathways to ensure that students understand the distinctiveness of the Programme and are clear about the opportunities available to them upon graduation.

- 4.1.15 The Operator shared with the Panel that the programme design has not taken future professional licensure into consideration. Given the existing diverse appointment criteria and academic qualification

requirements of dispensers working in different settings, the Operator was of the view that professional licensure appeared to be remote. The Panel observed that the Operator was quite reactive rather than proactive with government policies. In view of the ongoing development in community pharmacy and pharmacy automation, the Panel, therefore, **advised** the Operator to take the strategic initiative to ensure that the sector provides opportunities for their graduates by negotiating with the HA and relevant government departments and licensure authorities to enable graduates to practise their knowledge and skills at the HA and for licensure arrangements.

4.1.16 The Panel was also provided the following information and documents regarding the POs and PILOs of the BScPS programme for review:

- (a) Results of a market survey on the demand for the Programme;
- (b) Benchmarking results of the Programme against local tertiary institutions;
- (c) Mapping of the PILOs against the POs;
- (d) Mapping of PILOs against SFU Graduate Attributes;
- (e) Mapping of the courses against the PILOs;
- (f) Mapping of the PILOs against the Generic Level Descriptors at HKQF Level 5; and
- (g) Articulation pathways at SHS.

4.1.17 In consideration of the above, the Panel concluded that the BScPS programme has POs that meet community, education and industry needs and PILOs that meet the HKQF standard at Level 5, and the Programme is in general fit for purpose.

4.2 **Learner Admission and Selection**

The minimum admission requirements of the learning programme must be clearly outlined for staff and prospective learners. These requirements and the learner selection processes must be effective for recruitment of learners with the necessary skills and knowledge to undertake the programme.

For MAER Programme

- 4.2.1 The minimum admission requirements of the MAER programme are as follows:

Applicants should have obtained:

- a recognised bachelor's degree with honours from a recognised local or overseas institution; OR
- an equivalent qualification.

Note:

Applicants must meet the English language proficiency requirements if their bachelor's degrees or equivalent qualifications did not adopt English as the medium of instruction.

English Language proficiency requirements:

National College Entrance Examinations (NCEE)

- A score of 100 in NCEE.

HKDSE

- Level 3 in English Language.

IELTS #

- An overall score of 6.

TOEFL #

- A score of 80 in iBT.

OR

Equivalent qualifications

- Other equivalent qualifications will also be considered on a case-by-case basis.

IELTS Online and TOEFL Home Edition test results are not accepted. The validity period of language proficiency test results is two years from the date of the examination.

- 4.2.2 Applicants who have met the minimum admission requirements would be invited to attend an interview. Given the diverse background of the applicants, the Operator accepted the Panel's suggestion to introduce a pre-interview task to strengthen the admission process. Applicants would be required to submit a short-written sample responding to an ethical or religion-related theme to demonstrate their ability to articulate an argument at the

undergraduate level. Apart from providing interviewers with a set of guidelines on admission interviews, the Operator would also introduce a set of rubrics for assessing the written samples to enhance transparency, fairness and alignment to HKQF Level 6 standards.

- 4.2.3 The Operator shared with the Panel that lectures, assessments and formal academic discourses would be conducted in English while selected readings in elective courses might be in Chinese where academically necessary. While Chinese Language proficiency would not be included as an admission requirement, the Programme Team undertook to ensure that non-Chinese speaking students would have enough choices to satisfy their elective requirements.
- 4.2.4 Regarding “equivalent qualification”, the Operator cited examples of professional qualifications generally considered as equivalent to a bachelor’s degree for admission purpose. Given that this is a part-time master’s degree programme targeted at the working population and enhancement of professional profiles, the Panel **advised** the Operator to consider setting up a formal system for recognising prior experiential learning for admission.
- 4.2.5 The Operator shared with the Panel that they were confident with student recruitment, starting from local students, particularly those within the Catholic community, with the possibility of recruiting non-local students in the future. As discussed in paragraph 4.1.4, the Panel observed that the target audience of the MAER programme was relatively limited at the moment. The Panel **advised** the Operator to formulate marketing strategies to attract students beyond the Catholic community. On the other hand, since the Programme could be used to augment the Operator’s own staff development and potential employers have indicated that they would recommend the Programme to their employees, the Panel also **advised** the Operator to explore potential funding support for students, both within and beyond the Catholic community, to make the Programme accessible to a wider audience.

For BScPS Programme

- 4.2.6 The minimum admission requirements of the BScPS programme are as follows:

Applicants should have obtained:

- | |
|---|
| a) a higher diploma or associate degree pitched at HKQF Level 4 |
|---|

of the Hong Kong Qualifications Framework in pharmaceutical science or dispensing; OR

- b) a higher diploma or associate degree pitched at HKQF Level 4 of the Hong Kong Qualifications Framework in related discipline PLUS one-year work experience in pharmaceutical dispensing service in an institution, organisation, or company (required to take an additional course of *Fundamentals of Pharmacology and Therapeutics*); OR
- c) an academic qualification that is deemed as equivalent to the above PLUS two-year work experience in pharmaceutical dispensing service in an institution, organisation, or company (required to take an additional course of *Fundamentals of Pharmacology and Therapeutics*).

4.2.7 Since the graduates of the BScPS programme are expected to be good communicators in the discharge of their role in the industry, the Panel was concerned that the students admitted should have appropriate language proficiency, particularly proficiency in English given that the medium of instruction (MOI) of the Programme, and the medium for prescriptions and drug names are all English. The Panel noted that the minimum English requirement for admission to the feeder higher diploma programmes was DSE Level 2 and students who have completed a higher diploma were considered to have attained DSE Level 3 English, meaning that English proficiency was assumed, not tested. The Panel, therefore, **advised** the Operator to ensure that students have appropriate English language proficiency to effectively engage with and succeed in their learning.

For Both Programmes

4.2.8 The Operator confirmed that it would abide by the Government's policy on the yearly quota of non-standard admission for local degree programmes accredited under the HKQF, that is, 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 is applied in line with the general expectation on self-financed degree-awarding institutions in safeguarding teaching and learning quality and thereby upholding the credibility and recognition of the qualifications. The percentages are based on the sum of new student numbers across all years of study.

- 4.2.9 The Operator confirmed that there were mechanisms in place to verify applicants' qualifications and documentations. Charged with confirming the validity and authenticity of submitted qualifications, the Registry of the University is required to perform initial qualification validation, conduct education verification and adopt measures to prevent fraud. The Operator also confirmed that robust anti-corruption measures, including requirements on declaration of interests, setting out the relevant code of conduct in the Staff Handbook, organising anti-corruption talks for staff development, and maintenance of a well-developed admission system with a comprehensive log, were maintained in the admission process to prevent malpractices.
- 4.2.10 In consideration of the above, the Panel formed the view that, for both Programmes under review, the student admission process and admission requirements can ensure that students enrolled in the Programmes have the knowledge and skills to undertake the learning activities of the Programmes.

4.3 Programme Structure and Content

The structure and content of the learning programme must be up-to-date, coherent, balanced and integrated to facilitate progression in order to enable learners to achieve the stated learning outcomes and to meet the programme objectives.

For MAER Programme

- 4.3.1 The MAER programme is a two-year part-time programme divided into three stages, namely, the preparatory stage, the main stage and the final stage. Students have to complete eight courses, including five core courses, two elective courses and one capstone course, totalling 24 credits.
- 4.3.2 The programme structure, with the number of credits in brackets after the course title, of the MAER programme is as follows:

Stage	Course Type*	Course Title
Semester 1 (Total credits: 6)		
Preparatory Stage (2 core courses)	C	<i>Philosophy of Religion (3)</i>
	C	<i>Humanistic Approach to Ethics (3)</i>

Semester 2 (Total credits: 6)		
Main Stage (2 core courses in specialised areas)	C C	<i>Bioethics and the Dignity of Life</i> (3) <i>Exploring Ethical and Spiritual Dimensions of AI</i> (3)
Semester 3 (Total credits: 6)		
Main Stage (1 core course in specialised area and 1 elective course)	C	<i>Environmental Ethics and Religions on Global Ecological Issues</i> (3)
	E	<i>Christian Personalistic Approach to Ethics</i> (3)
	E	<i>Ethics and Religion in Buddhism, Daoism, and Confucianism</i> (3)
Semester 4 (Total credits: 6)		
Final Stage (1 elective course and 1 capstone course)	E	<i>Ethics and Religion in the Educational Field</i> (3)
	E	<i>Global Ethics and Spirituality</i> (3)
	Cap	<i>Guided Readings in Ethics and Religious Studies & Senior Seminar</i> (3)

* C: Core course; E: Elective course; Cap: Capstone course

4.3.3 The notional learning hours and QF Credits are as follows:

Course	Contact Hours	Non- contact Hours	Notional Learning Hours	QF Credits
<i>Philosophy of Religion</i>	45	90	135	13.5
<i>Humanistic Approach to Ethics</i>	45	90	135	13.5
<i>Bioethics and the Dignity of Life</i>	45	90	135	13.5
<i>Exploring Ethical and Spiritual Dimensions of AI</i>	45	90	135	13.5
<i>Environmental Ethics and Religions on Global Ecological Issues</i>	45	90	135	13.5
<i>Christian Personalistic Approach to Ethics</i>	45	90	135	13.5
<i>Ethics and Religion in Buddhism, Daoism,</i>	45	90	135	13.5

<i>and Confucianism</i>				
<i>Ethics and Religion in the Educational Field</i>	45	90	135	13.5
<i>Global Ethics and Spirituality</i>	45	90	135	13.5
<i>Guided Readings in Ethics and Religious Studies & Senior Seminar</i>	45	90	135	13.5
Total (for 8 courses)	360	720	1080	108

- 4.3.4 The Panel noted that despite being described as a programme in ethics and religion, the curriculum of the MAER programme appeared predominantly philosophical. The Panel noted that the connection between philosophy and religion (especially in ethics) was well-established and religion encompassed elements beyond philosophical discussion, yet the programme title did not mention philosophy. The Operator explained that they had considered alternative titles such as “MA in Philosophy of Ethics and Religion” during the planning stage and had decided to use the current title as it could signal the Programme’s applied orientation and graduate pathways more accurately. Given the above observation, the Panel made the following recommendation:

Recommendation

The Operator should keep the curriculum under regular review and consider maintaining an appropriate balance between religion and philosophy in the curriculum.

- 4.3.5 The Panel also noted that in the course covering the ethical perspectives of Confucianism, Buddhism and Daoism, the approach to Daoism focused only on philosophical Daoism but not religious Daoism. The Panel considered that to better achieve the Programme’s objective to broaden students’ understanding of religion, the Programme should cover the religious traditions of Daoism. The Panel, therefore, made the following recommendation:

Recommendation

The Operator should adjust the course content, either within the course *Ethics and Religion in Buddhism, Daoism, and Confucianism* or in another appropriate course, to ensure that religious Daoism is

adequately covered and that the Programme's stated objectives are achieved.

- 4.3.6 The Panel observed that the Programme did not appear to provide students with substantial exposure to a wide range of different religions. While it was understandable that the curriculum was constrained, with only eight courses and various topics in applied ethics to address, the limited coverage might not fully align with the expectation for a master's degree programme claiming to develop "a comprehensive understanding of ethics and religion" in students. The External Stakeholders also shared with the Panel that with the rapid increase in the number of Muslim and Hindu students in the local community, there was an urgent need for teachers to understand diverse religions and cultures to enable them to discharge their role more effectively. Recognising the need to incorporate more diverse religious perspectives to better fulfil the PILOs and meet the needs of students, the Programme Team has, in addition to making adjustments to the curriculum submitted in the accreditation documents, agreed to consider adding new tradition-focused or practice-focused elective courses, such as a course on Islam, upon the launch of the Programme.
- 4.3.7 When asked about the logical sequence and pedagogical relationships among the six core courses and the rationale for the selection of *bioethics*, *AI ethics* and *environmental ethics* as the three specialised areas, the Panel observed that the External Stakeholders were much more articulate in their responses than the internal representatives. The Panel opined that the Operator might have to improve the rigour and consistency of the programme design to ensure that the courses provide a coherent suite of learning materials and a narrative that appropriately reflects the core programme and that the electives, both current and future, consistently elaborate examples and case studies that build upon the programme core. The Panel, therefore, **advised** the Operator to articulate more proactively the intellectual coherence and integration of the content to be delivered and improve the integrity and communication of the Programme to the teachers, students and external bodies to ensure coherence and consistency.
- 4.3.8 The Operator shared with the Panel that although there was not a thesis component in the MAER programme given the credit structure and its applied degree nature, students would be asked to complete a mini thesis in the capstone course and a major assessment task in each of the other courses to demonstrate their ability to integrate and synthesise their learning. The Panel, however, opined that some

students might wish to write dissertation as part of the Programme, for example, to better prepare for doctoral studies, especially when the Programme's education pathway included in its description "the opportunity to pursue further academic study such as MPhil/PhD..." The Panel understood that it might not be appropriate to require all students to complete a dissertation as many might prefer a predominantly coursework-based pathway. Offering an optional pathway, such as a track or stream within the capstone seminar course or as a separate elective course, might be a better choice and might also diversify the student intake. The Panel, therefore, made the following recommendation:

Recommendation

The Operator should consider offering a dissertation or research project as an optional pathway to support a wider range of student interests and future goals.

- 4.3.9 The graduation requirements for the MAER programme are as follows:

To be eligible for the award of the MAER, students should have:

- a) completed 24 credits and 108 QF credits as required; and
- b) obtained an aggregate Grade Point Average (GPA) of at least 2.0 in the Programme.

- 4.3.10 Students who have fulfilled the following requirements would be eligible for the intermediate exit awards:

PgC in Ethics and Religion

- a) completed a minimum study period of 1 year;
- b) passed the following two courses and any other two courses:
 - *MAER511 Philosophy of Religion*;
 - *MAER512 Humanistic Approach to Ethics*;and
- c) obtained a GPA of at least 2.0 (out of 4.0) in these four courses.

PgD in Ethics and Religion

- a) completed a minimum study period of 1.5 years;
- b) passed the following two courses and any other four courses:
 - *MAER511 Philosophy of Religion*;
 - *MAER512 Humanistic Approach to Ethics*;

and
c) obtained a GPA of at least 2.0 (out of 4.0) in these six courses.

4.3.11 The Panel also reviewed the following documents and information regarding the programme structure and content of the MAER programme:

- (a) Course syllabi of the Programme;
- (b) Mapping of the courses against the PILOs;
- (c) Mapping of the CILOs against the PILOs; and
- (d) Comments from External Advisors on the programme structure and content.

4.3.12 Having reviewed the relevant documents and discussed with the representatives of the University, the Panel formed the view that the MAER programme has appropriate structures with relevant content that enable students to achieve the PILOs and meet the POs in general.

For BScPS Programme

4.3.13 The BScPS programme is a three-year part-time programme offering two “specialty” streams of study, namely, the Clinical Stream and the Community Stream, and comprising 16 common core courses for both streams (including one University-required non-credit bearing course) and four core courses for each stream. One of the common core courses is a *Workplace Attachment* comprising at least 90 hours of on-site training.

4.3.14 The programme structure, with the number of credits in brackets after the course title, of the BScPS programme is as follows:

Delivery Sequence*		Course Title
Pharmacy-related Courses		
Y1	S2	<i>Advanced Pharmacotherapy Complex Care and Special Populations (3)</i>
Y1	S2	<i>Health Promotion and Patient Education (3)</i>
Y1	S1	<i>Pharmacotherapy Chronic Disease Management (3)</i>

Dispensing Service Courses		
Y1	S3	<i>Advanced Dispensing Practice (3)</i>
Y2	S1	<i>Clinical Practice in Dispensing (3)</i>
Y2	S2	<i>Pharmacy Operations and Management (3)</i>
Personal Development		
Y1	S1	<i>Critical Thinking (3)</i>
Y2	S3	<i>Emerging Technology and AI in Health Care (3)</i>
Y1	S1	<i>Ethics and Moral Issues (3)</i>
Y2	S2	<i>Evidence-based Clinical Reasoning (3)</i>
Y1	S2	<i>Global Citizenship (3)</i>
Y1	S3	<i>Professional Communication in Health Care (3)</i>
Y2	S1	<i>Professional, Legal and Ethical Issues in Health Care (3)</i>
Y1	S3	<i>Research Methodology (3)</i>
Experiential / Work-based Learning		
Y3	S1	<i>Workplace Attachment (6)</i>
University-required Course		
Y1 – Y3**		<i>Integrated Seminar and Community Involvement (0)</i>
Stream-specific Courses		
Clinical Stream		
Y2	S1	<i>Clinical Pharmacy for Dispensers: Internal Medicine and Surgery (3)</i>
Y2	S2	<i>Clinical Pharmacy for Dispensers: Pediatrics and Oncology (3)</i>
Y2	S3	<i>Medication Therapy Management for Dispensers (3)</i>
Y2	S3	<i>Parenteral Pharmacy Service and Practice (3)</i>
Community Stream		
Y2	S3	<i>Applied Lifestyle Medicine (3)</i>
Y2	S3	<i>Community and Primary Healthcare (3)</i>
Y2	S1	<i>Community Pharmacy Practice (3)</i>
Y2	S2	<i>Complementary & Alternative Medicine in Healthcare Practice (3)</i>

* Y: Year; S: Semester

*** please refer to the following paragraph for details*

- 4.3.15 The Panel noted that students have to complete a University-required non-credit-bearing course of *Integrated Seminar and Community Involvement* by attending two seminars recognised by the University. Seminars would be organised in the evening for part-time students to suit their needs.
- 4.3.16 The notional learning hours and QF credits for the credit-bearing courses are as follows:

Course	Contact Hours*		Self-study Hours	Notional Learning Hours	QF Credits
	a	b			
<i>Advanced Pharmacotherapy Complex Care and Special Populations</i>	21	24	90	135	13.5
<i>Health Promotion and Patient Education</i>	27	18	90	135	13.5
<i>Pharmacotherapy Chronic Disease Management</i>	21	24	90	135	13.5
<i>Advanced Dispensing Practice</i>	45		90	135	13.5
<i>Clinical Practice in Dispensing</i>	45		90	135	13.5
<i>Pharmacy Operations and Management</i>	18	27	90	135	13.5
<i>Critical Thinking</i>	45		90	135	13.5
<i>Emerging Technology and AI in Health Care</i>	45		90	135	13.5
<i>Ethics and Moral Issues</i>	45		90	135	13.5
<i>Evidence-based Clinical Reasoning</i>	30	15	90	135	13.5
<i>Global Citizenship</i>	17	28	90	135	13.5
<i>Professional Communication in Health Care</i>	45		90	135	13.5
<i>Professional, Legal and Ethical Issues in Health Care</i>	21	24	90	135	13.5

<i>Research Methodology</i>	12	33	90	135	13.5
<i>Workplace Attachment</i>	90		180	270	27.0
Clinical Stream					
<i>Clinical Pharmacy for Dispensers: Internal Medicine and Surgery</i>	24	21	90	135	13.5
<i>Clinical Pharmacy for Dispensers: Pediatrics and Oncology</i>	24	21	90	135	13.5
<i>Medication Therapy Management for Dispensers</i>	30	15	90	135	13.5
<i>Parenteral Pharmacy Service and Practice</i>	45		90	135	13.5
Community Stream					
<i>Applied Lifestyle Medicine</i>	27	18	90	135	13.5
<i>Community and Primary Healthcare</i>	24	21	90	135	13.5
<i>Community Pharmacy Practice</i>	27	18	90	135	13.5
<i>Complementary & Alternative Medicine in Healthcare Practice</i>	27	18	90	135	13.5
Total (for 19 courses)	900		1800	2700	270

* a: face-to-face lectures, tutorials, workshops and/or laboratories (on-site training for Workplace Attachment); b: online lectures

- 4.3.17 The Panel noted that online live lectures, amounting to no more than 30% of total contact hours for each stream, would be offered to allow flexibility to students who were expected to be in full-time employment. The Operator indicated that the decision for inclusion of online live lectures in a course was teaching context dependent. In general, only lectures would be conducted online to maximise flexibility. The Operator stressed that for courses where practical skills were essential, lectures would be delivered face-to-face.
- 4.3.18 The Panel learned from the sharing of the potential employers that graduates of the Programme were expected to undertake inhouse briefings and explanations to individuals or groups (e.g., on proper use of drugs and healthy eating). However, the Panel noted that there appeared to be a lack of training in the curriculum on delivering

presentations or on making complex ideas understandable. Moreover, the Operator claimed that the Programme would “create strong potential for career advancement to senior levels”. The Panel noted that training in coaching, supervisory and people management skills appeared to be lacking in the curriculum. The Panel, therefore, made the following recommendation:

Recommendation

The Operator should review and consider enriching the curriculum by providing students with more training in communication, coaching, supervisory and people management skills to develop their competences in performing their translational and leadership roles effectively.

- 4.3.19 When asked whether the University would consider implementing an OSCE (Objective Structured Clinical Examination) to comprehensively assess students’ clinical competence prior to their workplace attachments, the Programme Management shared that OSCE was a more comprehensive test for pharmacists, not for dispensers, so they would use it in individual practical courses only. The Panel, however, opined that since the BScPS programme was meant to be a translational programme aiming at training a middle layer of professionals between the doctors/pharmacists and the patients, it would be essential to have an overall test to assess the students’ competencies in a broad range of skills, including clinical, technical, communication, problem-solving and decision-making skills, before they were deployed to serve the public. The Panel suggested that the University could adopt the principles of OSCE and refine the scope and scale to suit its own purpose and could be more innovative in so doing. The Panel, therefore, made the following recommendation:

Recommendation

The Operator should consider implementing a comprehensive OSCE-like exercise across the courses to assess students’ holistic competencies in a broad range of skills prior to their workplace attachments.

- 4.3.20 The Panel was informed that the supervising teachers would keep close contact with the students during their workplace attachment and that students would submit their feedback at the end of the attachment for further improvement of the course. The Panel suggested that sharing sessions or workshops could be held

regularly during the attachment period so students could have more interactions and easier access to their supervising teachers for advice and support at an earlier stage of their attachment. These regular meetings would also offer opportunities for students to learn from one another's experience and teachers to gain insights on the current practice. The Panel, therefore, **advised** the Operator to incorporate regular sharing sessions or workshops into the Workplace Attachment to facilitate interactions between the students and the supervising teachers and enhance learning for the students and the teachers.

4.3.21 In reviewing the sample course materials, the Panel noted that the course *Community and Primary Healthcare* was a course shared with the Master in Nursing and Allied Health programme. The Panel reminded the University to ensure fairness among the BScPS students and master's degree students in terms of learning, teaching and assessment.

4.3.22 The graduation requirements for the BScPS programme are as follows:

To be eligible for the award of the BScPS, students should have:

- a) completed and passed a total of 20 courses (including the non-credit bearing *Integrated Seminar and Community Involvement* course) comprising 60 credits; and
- b) obtained an aggregate Grade Point Average (GPA) of at least 2.0 in the Programme.

4.3.23 The Panel also reviewed the following documents and information regarding the programme structure and content of the BScPS programme:

- (a) Course syllabi of the Programme;
- (b) Mapping of the courses against the PILOs;
- (c) *Workplace Attachment Handbook* for Preceptors;
- (d) *Workplace Attachment Workbook* for Students;
- (e) Syllabus of *Fundamentals of Pharmacology and Therapeutics*;

- (f) Mapping of *Fundamentals of Pharmacology and Therapeutics* against the Generic Level Descriptors at HKQF Level 4; and
- (g) Comparison table of courses of the Programme with those of feeder programmes.

4.3.24 Having reviewed the relevant documents and discussed with the representatives of the University, the Panel formed the view that the BScPS programme has appropriate structures with relevant content that enable students to achieve the PILOs and meet the POs in general.

4.4 **Learning, Teaching and Assessment**

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

For MAER Programme

- 4.4.1 The Panel reviewed the following documents regarding the learning, teaching and assessment of the MAER programme:
- (a) Learning and Teaching Policy of the University;
 - (b) Assessment and Feedback Policy of the University;
 - (c) *Teaching and Learning Quality Manual 2025*;
 - (d) Course syllabi of the Programme;
 - (e) Assessment scheme of the Programme;
 - (f) Procedures and Timelines for Quality Assurance of Assessment;
 - (g) Sample teaching and/or assessment materials of five courses;
 - (h) External Examiner System of the University;
 - (i) Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) Policy of the University; and

(j) *Student Handbook for Postgraduate Students.*

- 4.4.2 The Panel was given to understand that the Medium of Instruction (MOI) for the Programme was mainly English while selected texts in the elective courses might be in Chinese where academically necessary and discussion might occasionally reference Chinese concepts for interpretive accuracy. The Operator undertook to ensure that all core courses would be conducted in English and that non-Chinese speaking students would have enough choices to satisfy their elective requirements.
- 4.4.3 The Panel noted that while the teachers were enthusiastic and experienced, the syllabi of the courses appeared to be individualistic and there was little consistency. The Panel observed that there did not appear to be any strategic or holistic academic oversight of programme from the Programme Leader or from senior leaders, which raised concerns as to how the consistency, pedagogic strategies and assessment were to be managed and delivered. The Panel considered that programme leadership needed to be strengthened and that course team practices needed to be established in order to engage students more in critical thinking and to stabilise what was currently quite a fragile structure. Please see paragraphs 4.5.2 to 4.5.8 for further discussion on the academic leadership. Meanwhile, the Panel **advised** the Operator to take advantage of both team teaching and/or theme teaching, such as integrating various courses around a unifying theme or current concern, to enhance the coherence of the Programme in practice.
- 4.4.4 The Panel noted that learning and teaching methods for the Programme included lecture, tutorial and discussion, capstone seminar, presentation and peer review, web-based learning and teaching (mainly the use of Moodle and Turnitin), e-learning and industry events. The Panel also noted that while the teachers appeared to be open to new methods, the Programme had not yet placed significant emphasis on innovative teaching practices such as blended learning, flipped classroom models, or the integration of AI tools to enhance learning and teaching. The Panel opined that innovative teaching practices could help boost student engagement, foster the professional development of the teachers and connect theoretical education to real-world needs. The Panel, therefore, made the following recommendation:

Recommendation

The Operator should actively encourage and support the adoption of innovative teaching practices by providing incentives, resources and professional development opportunities for staff in order to enrich the learning experience of students and maintain currency with contemporary educational practices.

- 4.4.5 The Panel noted from the GenAI Policy of the University and the *Student Handbook* that a student would face penalty if his/her assignment was flagged by Turnitin as containing AI-generated text at or above 20%. The Panel found this practice problematic given that both research and Turnitin itself acknowledged the unreliability of such AI detection tools. While teachers reported a more nuanced approach in practice during the site visit, the Panel opined that reliance on a fixed threshold could cause confusion or unfair outcomes for students. The Panel, therefore, made this recommendation:

Recommendation

The Operator should regularly review and update the GenAI policy and academic integrity policies in general to provide clear guidance on the ethical and appropriate use of AI in academic work.

- 4.4.6 The assessment scheme of the MAER programme is as follows:

Course	Assessment Method	%	Total
Core Courses			
<i>Philosophy of Religion</i>	Online Open Forum Participation	20	100
	Presentation	30	
	Final Essay	50	
<i>Humanistic Approach to Ethics</i>	Class Activities	20	100
	Presentation & Discussion	30	
	Final Critical Reflection	50	
<i>Bioethics and the Dignity of Life</i>	Team Debates	20	100
	Presentation & Discussion	30	
	Individual Assignment	50	
<i>Exploring Ethical and Spiritual Dimensions of AI</i>	Short Review	20	100
	Presentation & Discussion	30	
	Final Critical Reflection	50	
<i>Environmental Ethics</i>	Short Assignments	20	

<i>and Religions on Global Ecological Issues</i>	Presentation & Discussion	30	100
	Final Critical Reflection	50	
<i>Guided Readings in Ethics and Religious Studies & Senior Seminar</i>	Literature Review	20	100
	Presentation & Discussion	30	
	Final Critical Reflection	50	
Elective Courses			
<i>Christian Personalistic Approach to Ethics</i>	Short Quiz	20	100
	Presentation & Discussion	30	
	Final Critical Reflection	50	
<i>Ethics and Religion in Buddhism, Daoism, and Confucianism</i>	Book Report	20	100
	Presentation & Discussion	30	
	Final Critical Reflection	50	
<i>Ethics and Religion in the Educational Field</i>	Short Quiz	20	100
	Presentation & Discussion	30	
	Final Critical Reflection	50	
<i>Global Ethics and Spirituality</i>	Two one-page Reflection Summary & Short Presentation	20	100
	Presentation & Facilitation	20	
	Final Paper	50	
	Class Participation	10	

- 4.4.7 Having reviewed the information and discussed it with the relevant stakeholders, the Panel considered the learning, teaching and assessment activities of the MAER programme effective in the delivery of programme content and attainment of learning outcomes.

For BScPS programme

- 4.4.8 The Panel reviewed the following documents regarding the learning, teaching and assessment of the BScPS programme:

- (a) Learning and Teaching Policy of the University;
- (b) Assessment and Feedback Policy of the University;
- (c) *Teaching and Learning Quality Manual 2025*;

- (d) Course syllabi of the Programme;
- (e) Assessment scheme of the Programme;
- (f) Study Plan for the Programme;
- (g) Sample teaching and/or assessment materials of five courses;
- (h) Sample in-class discussion materials;
- (i) Workbook of Workplace Attachment;
- (j) External Examiner System of the University;
- (k) Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) Policy of the University; and
- (l) *Student Handbook for Undergraduate Students.*

4.4.9 The Panel was given to understand that the Programme would be operated in three semesters per academic year with three courses to be delivered in each semester and the entire programme could be completed in approximately seven semesters of study in three years.

4.4.10 When asked about how the teaching staff would manage online lecture attendance and participation, the Programme Team shared with the Panel that they had different methods to monitor attendance such as calling upon students by name to answer questions and conducting roll call anytime during the online lectures and they follow students' performance and progress closely with tutorials. The Panel **advised** the Operator to require the students to have their camera on and use more active learning and teaching techniques and structured interactions, such as real-time polling and quizzes and breakout rooms for small group discussion, during the online sessions to stimulate engagement.

4.4.11 The Panel noted that the MOI for the Programme was mainly English with practical assessments involving patient communication and patient education conducted in Cantonese. The Programme Team shared with the Panel that since the students were from feeder programmes, they were deemed to have attained at least Level 2 in DSE Chinese Language or equivalent standard. The Programme Team also added that applicants would be interviewed in both English and Chinese before they were admitted to the Programme.

4.4.12 The Panel noted that learning and teaching methods for the Programme included lecture, laboratory practice, tutorial, workshop, problem-based / case-based learning, project, guest seminar and talk and workplace attachment. The Panel observed that the learning, teaching and assessment methods outlined were relatively traditional and suggested that a more innovative approach could be adopted. For example, the online lectures could be enriched by using more interactive approaches and the OSCE approach as suggested in paragraph 4.3.19 could be adopted to demonstrate the graduate quality of the Programme and distinguish the skills at Level 4 and the holistic expertise of the graduates at Level 5. The Panel therefore **advised** the Operator to encourage teaching staff to explore more innovative approach in learning and teaching and make good use of the sharing forums held every year on best practice to enhance and improve teaching.

4.4.13 The assessment scheme of the BScPS programme is as follows:

Course	Assessment Method	%	Total
Core Courses			
<i>Advanced Dispensing Practice</i>	Laboratory Practice	60	100
	Practical Examination	40	
<i>Advanced Pharmacotherapy Complex Care and Special Populations</i>	Assignment(s)	60	100
	Project	40	
<i>Health Promotion and Patient Education</i>	Assignment(s)	70	100
	Practical Examination	30	
<i>Pharmacotherapy Chronic Disease Management</i>	Assignment(s)	70	100
	Written Examination	30	
<i>Professional Communication in Health Care</i>	Examination	40	100
	Presentation	25	
	Project	35	
<i>Research Methodology</i>	Assignment(s)	50	100
	Project	50	
<i>Emerging Technology and AI in Health Care</i>	Assignment(s)	50	100
	Project	50	
<i>Professional, Legal and Ethical Issues in Health Care</i>	Assignment(s)	50	100
	Project	50	
<i>Clinical Practice in Dispensing</i>	Laboratory Practice	60	
	Practical	40	

Course	Assessment Method	%	Total
	Examination		100
Evidence-based Clinical Reasoning	Test(s) & Assignment(s)	50	100
	Project	50	
Pharmacy Operations and Management	Assignment(s)	50	100
	Project	50	
Workplace Attachment*	* This is a pass/fail course.		
General Education Courses			
Critical Thinking	Test	30	100
	Assignment	40	
	Project	30	
Ethics and Moral Issues	Test	40	100
	Essay	30	
	Group Presentation	30	
Global Citizenship	Online Quizzes	30	100
	Project (Group)	50	
	Presentation	15	
	Discussion & Participation	5	
Clinical-Stream-Specific Courses			
Clinical Pharmacy for Dispensers: Internal Medicine and Surgery	Assignments	50	100
	Project	50	
Clinical Pharmacy for Dispensers: Pediatrics and Oncology	Assignment(s)	50	100
	Project	50	
Medication Therapy Management for Dispensers	Assignment(s)	50	100
	Practical Examination	50	
Parenteral Pharmacy Service and Practice	Assignment(s)	60	100
	Practical Test	40	
Community-Stream-Specific Courses			
Applied Lifestyle Medicine	Assignment(s)	50	100
	Practical Examination	50	
Community and Primary Healthcare	Assignment	50	100
	Project	50	
Community Pharmacy Practice	Assignment	20	100
	Quiz	10	
	Practical Test	30	
	Project	40	

Course	Assessment Method	%	Total
<i>Complementary & Alternative Medicine in Healthcare Practice</i>	Assignment(s)	50	100
	Practical Examination	50	

4.4.14 The Panel noted that the workplace attachment would involve preceptors who would have to oversee the students and their learning and teaching activities at the attachment site and evaluate the performance of the students and that certain topics were expected to be delivered during the attachment. Although the Panel learned that supervising teachers would communicate with the preceptors prior to the commencement of the attachment to ensure mutual understanding of the expectations, the Panel was concerned that the preceptors might not have the appropriate knowledge and experience to perform their role as anticipated. The Panel **advised** the Operator to discuss with the employers and HA on the choice of preceptors for attachment and stipulate the criteria for appointing preceptors.

4.4.15 The Operator shared with the Panel that the research infrastructure in the SHS was developed alongside the Healthcare Research Centre which was complemented by a community practice model comprising CommunityHealth@SFU and Caritas Saint Francis Pharmacy. In developing this new programme and this new “species” of professionals, the Panel also **advised** the Operator to consider a new research framework along the line of ‘care in the community’ in terms of allied health and pharmacies to help staff and students stay abreast of the latest development in the field and actively contribute to its development.

4.4.16 Having reviewed the information and discussed it with the relevant stakeholders, the Panel considered the learning, teaching and assessment activities of the BScPS programme effective in the delivery of programme content and attainment of learning outcomes.

4.5 Programme Leadership and Staffing

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

quality delivery of the programme.

For Both Programmes

4.5.1 The Panel reviewed the following information regarding programme leadership and staffing of each of the Programmes:

- (a) Policy for Staff Recruitment and Appointment;
- (b) Appointment Criteria of Academic Staff;
- (c) Staff Appraisal System;
- (d) Academic Workload Allocation Guide;
- (e) Scholarly Activity Scheme;
- (f) Staff Development Activities for 2022 to 2025;
- (g) “Learning and Teaching in Higher Education” Training series for new staff;
- (h) Composition of Programme Planning Committee;
- (i) CVs of Programme Management;
- (j) Profiles of potential teaching staff; and
- (k) Projection of staff requirement for AY2026/27 to AY2028/29 (for MAER) / Projection of staff requirement for AY2026/27 to AY2030/31 (for BScPS).

For MAER Programme

4.5.2 The Operator informed the Panel that the MAER programme would operate under a collective governance structure with academic standard supported by (i) SHL’s Examiners Committee and Programme Management, (ii) External Examiners and Advisors, and (iii) senior academic members who contribute to capstone supervision and moderation. While the Panel raised no major concern over the governance structure, it remained concerned about the strategic leadership of the Programme in terms of how the Programme was conceived and who had the oversight over its design and implementation.

- 4.5.3 The Panel noted that there were four full-time and seven part-time academic staff members on the Programme. The Panel observed that the full-time teachers were drawn from various units in the University. The Senior Management explained, and the Panel considered it understandable, that given their scale of operation, they did not have a designated department in ethics, religion or philosophy. The Operator undertook to recruit more teachers and when required, starting from part-time and moving towards full-time appointments.
- 4.5.4 During the site visit the Panel learned that the Programme would rely heavily on part-time teachers, but these teachers would also invite guest speakers to cover specific topics where they might not have direct expertise. The Panel opined that while bringing in guest lecturers would enrich the students' learning experience, an over-reliance on part-time and guest lecturers might result in challenges concerning consistency, continuity and the overall coherence of student learning.
- 4.5.5 The Panel considered that a solid core team with strong leadership was essential for the effective operation and development of the Programme. The Panel's advice was that the Operator should in the longer term bring in further support for the Programme Leader by recruiting more senior and experienced academic staff at the rank of professor or associate professor.
- 4.5.6 The Panel noted that a significant proportion of the staff were more rooted in philosophy than in religious studies or integration of religion and ethics. Additionally, some teachers did not appear to have the experience in postgraduate teaching or supervising postgraduate students and their research. The Panel also observed that some of the proposed teachers did not have significant research output in the relevant subject areas, and in some cases, their teaching backgrounds did not align with the courses assigned to them. In response to the Panel's observations, the Senior Management indicated that they would consider recruiting two more teachers for religious studies. For the ethics courses, the Operator claimed that they would draw on the existing pool of expertise across the University. Nevertheless, the Panel reminded the Operator to review the composition of their ethics expertise and strengthen their expertise in teaching specific areas, such as AI ethics, to be covered in the Programme.
- 4.5.7 Following the review of the staff profiles and expertise and meeting with the potential teachers during the site visit, the Panel formed a

view that the teachers were dedicated and keen to contribute to the Programme. The Panel, however, observed that the current teaching team, while they have worked together for some time in other capacities and knew each other well as scholars, it was evident that they had not as yet developed a cohesive, team-based approach to curriculum planning and delivery. Teaching responsibilities appeared to be divided by individual courses, rather than through regular collective discussions and shared planning of the Programme as a whole, resulting in an apparent lack of coordination of the ILOs and holistic overview of the contents.

- 4.5.8 Based on the observations described in paragraphs 4.5.2 to 4.5.7, the Panel, therefore, imposed the following requirement:

Requirement

The Operator is to strengthen the academic leadership and staffing of the Programme by expanding the full-time teaching team with two or three additional staff members subject to recruitment. This would include senior research active academic staff with the relevant experience and expertise aligned to the final programme content, to (i) secure a dedicated core team, and (ii) provide more input and support for the strategic leadership, management and effective delivery of the Programme.

The Operator is to submit evidence of the arrangements made to strengthen the academic leadership and staffing of the Programme to HKCAAVQ on the fulfilment of the above requirement **on or before 31 July 2027**.

- 4.5.9 The Panel also made the following recommendation to address the issues raised in paragraphs 4.5.6 and 4.5.7:

Recommendation

The Operator should provide targeted staff training and development particularly in areas where staff expertise might be limited, and develop mechanisms for regular and structured collaboration of the teaching team, such as through mentoring, team teaching, theme teaching and seminars, to promote a holistic and coordinated approach to programme planning and delivery.

For BScPS Programme

- 4.5.10 The Operator informed the Panel that the Dean of SHS and the Programme Leader of BScPS assumed major academic leadership role in the development and delivery of the Programme. The Panel noted that the teaching team comprised six full-time members, who were all registered pharmacists in Hong Kong, for the discipline courses. The Operator added that part-time teaching staff and guest speakers would be invited to supplement the teaching team's expertise and enhance students' learning experience.
- 4.5.11 The Panel noted that while the teachers' profiles showed that they had relevant expertise in community pharmacy practice and clinical pharmacy practice, most of them had little or no research outputs or publications. The Panel considered that for an undergraduate professional programme, it would be critical for teachers to actively engage in research and scholarly activities in order to maintain currency and ensure that the curriculum remains current and that they foster evidence-based practice and develop effective teaching methods to enhance learning and professional competence. Given the applied nature of the Programme, teachers could work with the industry through partnerships, projects and community outreach to try out new ideas in community settings. Similarly, teachers could lead students through undertaking small research projects, facilitating them to become active and critical learners by going through the process. The Panel, therefore, made the following recommendation:

Recommendation

The Operator should actively develop and advance the research skills of teaching staff by fostering a research culture, providing training and incentives to encourage staff and student research, organising collective seminars and inviting academics and guest speakers to share their research, and also establish collaborative partnerships and networks for undertaking research.

- 4.5.12 The Panel considered it essential for the academic staff, as educators, to stay abreast of the development of the industry, not only locally, but also regionally and internationally. The Operator shared with the Panel that in addition to taking up voluntary work and fulfilling the Continuing Professional Development required for registered pharmacists, teaching staff, as well as students, could practise their skills at Caritas Saint Francis Pharmacy, a pharmacy established by the University to provide pharmaceutical services to

the public, and students and staff of the University. The Panel considered that while the idea of setting up a public-facing pharmacy at the University could promote community integration and provide students with hands-on experiential learning, the exposure at Caritas Saint Francis Pharmacy appeared to be relatively limited as far as the teachers were concerned given the size of the membership and the scope of the services provided. In particular, it might not be an ideal place for academic staff to maintain their industry currency or apply their research findings directly to clinical practice and monitor the outcomes. Alternatively, a Teacher-Practitioner model requiring teachers to maintain current, real-life experience as active practitioners in their fields might help to bring cutting-edge knowledge from the industry into the classroom. The Panel, therefore, made the following recommendation:

Recommendation

The Operator should consider implementing a Teacher-Practitioner model to enhance the integration of academic instruction with 'real-world' professional standards and ensure that all teaching is aligned with current industry practice and expertise.

4.5.13 The Panel was given to understand that the teaching staff had been working as a team in the delivery of the Higher Diploma in Pharmaceutical Dispensing programme offered by the University. In advancing to a higher level of educational provisions, the Panel **advised** the Operator to enhance staff development, help the teaching staff build up a strong community to share and improve expertise, and develop the teaching staff to take up some of the load of the Programme Management both for the development of individuals and the Programme.

4.5.14 In consideration of the above and notwithstanding the recommendations, the Panel formed the view that the Operator has appropriately qualified staff to manage and deliver the BScPS programme.

4.6 Learning, Teaching and Enabling Resources/Services

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

For MAER Programme

- 4.6.1 The Panel was provided with a list of the general resources and facilities available on the campuses for review. The Panel was also provided with access to the relevant library resources for the MAER programme during the site visit. The Panel considered the learning and teaching resources appropriate at this stage of development.
- 4.6.2 The Operator informed the Panel that academic staff were encouraged to incorporate multimedia teaching tools into their lectures and revise their pedagogies by increasingly integrating web-based learning and teaching. The Panel observed that there appeared to be limited emphasis on ensuring robust access to a wide range of technological tools and platforms that could support a contemporary, flexible learning environment for both the staff and students. The Panel, therefore, **advised** the Operator to invest in expanding and updating its technological resources, such as digital learning platforms, reliable internet connectivity and access to AI-based tools, to better support innovative teaching methods.
- 4.6.3 Given that over half of the teaching staff might be part-time staff, the Panel reminded the Operator to ensure that part-time staff were familiar with the resources available for supporting the students. The Panel also reminded the Operator to ensure that the teachers would make themselves available for student consultation and support.
- 4.6.4 In consideration of the above, the Panel formed the view that there are sufficient resources and services to support the delivery of the MAER programme.

For BScPS Programme

- 4.6.5 The Panel was provided with a list of the general resources and facilities available on the campuses, a list of programme-specific and research-related software and tools, and a list of relevant library resources, for review. The Panel were also given a guided tour of the Library and Learning Commons and programme-specific facilities, including the Training Centres, CommunityHealth@SFU and Caritas Saint Francis Pharmacy, during the site visit. The Panel considered the learning and teaching resources appropriate.
- 4.6.6 During the campus tour, the Panel observed that students were trained to type out labels for drugs or prescriptions. The Panel **advised** the Operator to update their training system by installing relevant computer software for inputting, processing and managing

prescriptions to better align these with 'real-life' contemporary practice.

4.6.7 The Panel noted that Caritas Saint Francis Pharmacy provided good opportunities for students to practise their dispensing and communication skills under expert supervision and reminded the Operator to make more of this onsite pharmacy to better prepare the students for the professional workforce.

4.6.8 In consideration of the above, the Panel formed the view that there are sufficient resources and services to support the delivery of the BScPS programme.

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

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

For Both Programmes

4.7.1 The Panel reviewed the following information regarding programme approval, review and quality assurance for each of the Programmes:

- (a) Teaching and Learning Quality Manual 2025;
- (b) Membership composition and/or Terms of Reference of:
 - Academic Board;
 - Programme Planning Committee;
 - Programme Committee;
 - Examiners Committee;
 - Advisory Committee;
 - Academic Regulations Committee; and
 - Quality Assurance Committee (Academic);
- (c) Meeting minutes regarding the planning and development of the Programme;
- (d) Annual Programme Review Report Template;
- (e) Details on the following systems:
 - External Examiner System;

- Course and Teaching Evaluation System;
 - Programme Evaluation System; and
 - Graduate Destination Survey System;
- (f) Email Comments of External Advisors (for MAER) / Comments of External Advisor (for BScPS); and
- (g) Internal Programme Accreditation Record.

For MAER Programme

- 4.7.2 Having discussed the programme planning and development with the External Advisors and potential employers during the site visit, the Panel observed that there was positive support throughout from these External Stakeholders. Nevertheless, the Panel reminded the Operator that given the interdisciplinary and intellectually complex nature of the Programme, and the fragmentation that would result from the engagement of predominantly part-time teachers, there remained the need for an experienced leadership and a core team to ensure intellectual and structural alignment of the Programme. The Panel **advised** the Operator to strengthen the advisory support (with Advisors alongside the External Examiners) for the Programme to increase the diversity of ideas and oversight.
- 4.7.3 As described in paragraph 4.6.2, teachers were encouraged to reflect upon and review their pedagogic approaches by increasingly integrating web-based learning and teaching. The Panel, however, noted that there was currently limited evidence of systematic review or evaluation within the University's quality assurance processes regarding the effectiveness and integration of new pedagogical and technological approaches. The Panel, therefore, **advised** the Operator to include review and regular monitoring of innovative teaching practices and technological resources within its annual quality assurance cycle to ensure continuous improvement and responsiveness to new developments.
- 4.7.4 In consideration of the above, the Panel concluded that a quality assurance system is in place to monitor and review the development and performance of the MAER programme on an on-going basis.

For BScPS Programme

- 4.7.5 The Panel found the External Stakeholders they met during the site visit very conversant with the development and supportive of the launching of the Programme. However, the Panel noted that there

was only one External Advisor in the formal quality assurance system at the moment. The Panel was given to understand that one more External Advisor would be engaged. Given the Operator's serious commitments to supporting healthcare in Hong Kong, the Panel suggested that an Industry/Professional Advisory Board for SHS would be advantageous for informing curriculum design, encouraging innovation and ensuring graduate employability.

- 4.7.6 Since the BScPS programme aimed to train a new layer of professionals for this rapidly evolving sector, the Panel considered it essential for the Operator not only to strengthen its external advisory structure but also to establish an expanded network across the breadth of the sector and to maintain a positive dialogue on how to maintain professional currency in the curriculum. The Panel, therefore, made the following recommendation:

Recommendation

The Operator should consider establishing strategic partnerships with public healthcare providers, Non-Governmental Organisations and community pharmacies to build a professional network and to align to sector-wide developments especially in pharmacy, and across the healthcare sector as a whole, to ensure that the Programme remains relevant, high quality, and aligned with sector and future development needs.

- 4.7.7 In consideration of the above, the Panel concluded that a quality assurance system is in place to monitor and review the development and performance of the BScPS programme on an on-going basis.

5. IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING THIS ACCREDITATION REPORT

5.1 Variation and withdrawal of this Accreditation Report

- 5.1.1 This Accreditation Report is issued pursuant to section 5 of the AAVQO, and contains HKCAAVQ's substantive determination regarding the accreditation, including the validity period as well as any conditions and restrictions subject to which the determination is to have effect.
- 5.1.2 HKCAAVQ may subsequently decide to vary or withdraw this Accreditation Report if it is satisfied that any of the grounds set out

in section 5 (2) of the AAVQO apply. This includes where HKCAAVQ is satisfied that the Operator is no longer competent to achieve the relevant objectives and/or the Programme(s) no longer meet/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(s) 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 HKQF 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 HKQF. 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 HKQF.

Ref: 49/41/01

21 May 2026

JoH/CQ/HW/as

Saint Francis University

**Learning Programme Accreditation
Master of Arts in Ethics and Religion; and
Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Pharmaceutical Studies**

11 – 13 March 2026

Panel Membership

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

Appendix 2

Graduate Profile of Master of Arts in Ethics and Religion

Qualification Title	Master of Arts in Ethics and Religion 倫理及宗教文學碩士
Qualification Type	Master's Degree
QF Level	6
Primary Area of Study and Training	Humanities
Sub-area (Primary Area of Study and Training)	Humanities
Other Area of Study and Training	Not applicable
Sub-area (Other Area of Study and Training)	Not applicable
Programme Objectives	The objectives of the Programme are to: 1. Develop a comprehensive understanding of ethics and religion; 2. Promote interdisciplinary knowledge; 3. Enhance ethical decision-making skills; 4. Cultivate a whole-person approach to ethics in personal and professional life; 5. Encourage global ethical perspectives; and 6. Encourage students for advanced research and professional practice.
Programme Intended Learning Outcomes	Upon completion of the Programme, students should be able to: 1. Critically analyse and interpret philosophical and ethical texts, demonstrating a thorough understanding of the principles and theories discussed; 2. Apply ethical reasoning to real-world scenarios, particularly in bioethics, environmental ethics, and AI ethics; 3. Integrate ethical principles with religious studies, appreciating the interplay between different ethical and religious traditions; and

	4. Demonstrate a global perspective on ethics and spirituality, understanding and respecting diverse cultural and religious viewpoints.
Education Pathways	Graduates will have the opportunity to pursue further academic study such as MPhil/PhD in ethics, religious studies, education, or related humanities disciplines.
Employment Pathways	Graduates may pursue employment enhancement and role transition.
Minimum Admission Requirements	Applicants should have obtained: • a recognised bachelor's degree with honours from a recognised local or overseas institution; OR • an equivalent qualification. Note: Applicants must meet the English language proficiency requirements if their bachelor's degrees or equivalent qualifications did not adopt English as the medium of instruction. English Language proficiency requirements: National College Entrance Examinations (NCEE) • A score of 100 in NCEE. HKDSE • Level 3 in English Language. IELTS # • An overall score of 6. TOEFL # • A score of 80 in iBT. OR Equivalent qualifications • Other equivalent qualifications will also be considered on a case-by-case basis. # IELTS Online and TOEFL Home Edition test results are not accepted. The validity period of language proficiency test results is two years from the date of the examination.
Operator	Saint Francis University 聖方濟各大學

Appendix 3

Graduate Profile of Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Pharmaceutical Studies

Qualification Title	Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Pharmaceutical Studies 藥學(榮譽)理學士
Qualification Type	Bachelor's Degree
QF Level	5
Primary Area of Study and Training	Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences
Sub-area (Primary Area of Study and Training)	Pharmacy
Other Area of Study and Training	Not applicable
Sub-area (Other Area of Study and Training)	Not applicable
Programme Objectives	The objectives of the Programme are to: 1. Develop skilled practice in patient-centred pharmaceutical care, integrating knowledge of medicines and individual patient information to provide safe, effective, and tailored dispensing services; 2. Foster professional practice grounded in ethical principles, effective communication, and societal awareness, ensuring collaborative, equitable, and accountable dispensing services; and 3. Cultivate a forward-looking and adaptive approach to the profession, leveraging technology and a commitment to lifelong learning to advance practice.
Programme Intended Learning Outcomes	Upon completion of the Programme, students should be able to: 1. Analyse and assess the therapeutic appropriateness, potential interactions, and contraindications of prescribed medications, applying clinical pharmacology and patient-specific factors to support safe and rational dispensing; 2. Uphold ethical principles and professional accountability in the dispensing interactions, while

	addressing societal issues such as access to medicines and health equity; 3. Communicate effectively and collaboratively with patients, families, and healthcare professionals to provide patient-centred counselling, resolve medication-related issues, and enhance the quality and safety of pharmaceutical care; 4. Integrate digital health tools and automation systems into daily practice to optimise patient safety, enhance the quality of care, and improve operational efficiency; and 5. Develop a commitment to lifelong learning and reflective practice to enable ongoing personal growth and professional advancement.
Education Pathways	Graduate may articulate to master's degree level programmes at tertiary institutions or universities in pharmacy, dispensing or healthcare related disciplines.
Employment Pathways	Graduates will have the opportunity for career advancement to senior levels such as Senior Dispensers*. <i>*The Programme alone does not qualify graduates for hospital dispenser positions. Eligibility for these roles requires a recognised sub-degree in dispensing-related studies.</i>
Minimum Admission Requirements	Applicants should have obtained: • a higher diploma or associate degree pitched at HKQF Level 4 of the Hong Kong Qualifications Framework in pharmaceutical science or dispensing; OR • a higher diploma or associate degree pitched at HKQF Level 4 of the Hong Kong Qualifications Framework in related discipline PLUS one-year work experience in pharmaceutical dispensing service in an institution, organisation, or company (required to take an additional course of <i>Fundamentals of Pharmacology and Therapeutics</i>); OR • an academic qualification that is deemed as equivalent to the above PLUS two-year work experience in pharmaceutical dispensing service in an institution, organisation, or company (required to take an additional course of <i>Fundamentals of Pharmacology and Therapeutics</i>).
Operator	Saint Francis University 聖方濟各大學

