

Notes of the First Meeting of the Liaison Panel for Academic Accreditation at 9:30 a.m. on 22 July 2016 at the office of the Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications, Conference Room, 2/F, 10 Siu Sai Wan Road, Chai Wan, Hong Kong

Present: Mr Robert FEARNSIDE (Chair)
Professor CN CHANG
Dr CHEUNG Ping Kuen
Dr John CRIBBIN
Professor Simon HO
Professor James LEE
Professor Jimmy LEE
Professor LUI Yu Hon
Mr LUN Chi Wai
Mr Jonathan NG
Mr Wilbur PANG (Secretary)

Absent with apologies: Professor Reggie KWAN
Dr Lillian WONG Sin Ying

WELCOME

Chair welcomed Members to the first meeting of the Liaison Panel for Academic Accreditation (LPAA); and expressed appreciation of the participation of the Members.

1. INTRODUCTION OF ESTABLISHMENT OF LPAA

1.1 Members noted that HKCAAVQ engaged the International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE) to conduct an external review against INQAAHE's Good Practice Guidelines in 2015/16. LPAA is established to promote dialogue between HKCAAVQ and different stakeholders in response to one of the recommendations of the external review.

2. LATEST DEVELOPMENTS OF HKCAAVQ ACCREDITATION SERVICES

2.1 Members noted the following:

(a) Dr Sandra Wong took up the position of Deputy Executive

Director (VPET) since 6 June 2016.

- (b) HKCAAVQ received funding support from the Quality Enhancement Support Scheme of Education Bureau (EDB) to establish a Quality Management System (QMS) to strengthen the data management of HKCAAVQ. Phase Two of the QMS, including an e-portal for electronic submission of assessment applications and accreditation documents, was launched in June 2016. HKCAAVQ would conduct a briefing on the use of e-portal for operators on 29 July 2016. Over a hundred representatives of the operators enrolled for the briefing.
- (c) A new classification with 14 Areas of Study and Training in the Qualifications Register (QR) was promulgated by the EDB in July 2015. HKCAAVQ developed Sub-areas for the 14 Areas of Study and Training, with each Sub-area described by an illustrative scope statement and examples of subject matter. The new Areas of Study and Training, and their corresponding Sub-areas are being used for accreditation exercises in 2016.
- (d) Facilitation consists of two approaches, namely preview approach and customised approach. The Council of HKCAAVQ approved the piloting of two facilitation approaches in September 2013. A pre-test on the two approaches and two pilot studies were conducted between December 2013 and January 2015. Academic Accreditation and Assessment Unit (AAA) have been trialling out the two approaches with exercises taking place since September 2015 for a one-year period.
- (e) AAA assigned a case manager to each operator in October 2015. Case managers serve as the first point of contact at HKCAAVQ, and provide information and/or advice to operators on HKCAAVQ's recent developments in academic accreditation.

3. LATEST DEVELOPMENTS IN HIGHER EDUCATION SECTOR IN HONG KONG

3.1 Members noted the following:

- (a) HKCAAVQ published the Institutional Review Manual for Private University Title (IR Manual) in its website. The IR Manual provides clear standards and criteria for operators who wish to go through an institutional review for the purpose of applying for a university title from the Government.

- (b) As shown in the government statistics, the number of secondary school graduates continues to decrease until 2022. Institutions are required to plan ahead to cope with the demographic changes in the coming years.

4. ISSUES DISCUSSED

- 4.1 The Post Secondary Colleges Ordinance, Cap. 320 came into effect in 1960 and no material amendments have been made since then. Members pointed out that some of the requirements have not been kept up to date, such as the requirements of the governing structure and the restrictions on offering online courses. Members were of the view that amendments should be made to Cap. 320.
- 4.2 Members reflected that the public has an impression that the programmes of self-financing institutions are of low quality even though the programmes have been accredited. Members considered that HKCAAVQ, as the statutory quality assurance body in Hong Kong which is recognised internationally, should have a role in helping explain to the public the quality of accredited programmes.
- 4.3 Some accredited programmes, such as social work and nursing programmes, require accreditation or recognition by professional bodies so that the graduates can enter into relevant professions. There have been cases where the validity periods granted by HKCAAVQ and professional bodies are not synchronised. Institutions are required to prepare for separate re-accreditations by HKCAAVQ and the relevant professional body every two or three years. Members considered that HKCAAVQ and the professional bodies should explore the possibility of conducting joint accreditation exercises.
- 4.4 Members shared their experience in designing and/or delivering MOOCs, and discussed the possibility of collaboration between institutions. Since MOOCs become popular in Hong Kong and other countries, Members considered the need to assure the quality of these MOOCs by the relevant authorities including HKCAAVQ.
- 4.5 Members exchanged their views on the experience in seeking approval of substantial change from HKCAAVQ, and expressed concern about the process and time taken in handling substantial changes.

5. USE OF DATA COLLECTED BY GOVERNMENT FOR QA PURPOSES

- 5.1 The Government collected various data from the institutions for policy and monitoring purposes. Some of the data are relevant to quality assurance. The reporting may help HKCAAVQ better understand the performance of institutions and programmes. It may also assist in reducing the process and time taken in handling substantial change approval from HKCAAVQ. Members were asked to discuss the sharing of this data between the government and HKCAAVQ with their stakeholders and provide their views at the next meeting.

6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- 6.1 Members discussed the time for next meeting, and considered that a meeting in early November would fit their schedule.
- 6.2 The next meeting would be scheduled by the Secretary after consulting the Members. There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:15 a.m.

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