Notes of the Third Meeting of the Liaison Panel for Academic Accreditation at 10:00 a.m. to 11:40 am on 14 September 2018 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 John CRIBBIN
	Professor Simon HO
	Professor Reggie KWAN
	Professor James LEE
	Professor Jimmy LEE
	Professor LUI Yu Hon
	Mr LUN Chi Wai
	Mr Jonathan NG
	Dr Lillian WONG Sin Ying
	Mr Wilbur PANG (Secretary)
Absent with apologies:	Dr CHEUNG Ping Kuen

WELCOME

Chair welcomed Members to the third meeting of the Liaison Panel for Academic Accreditation (LPAA).

1. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING

1.1 HKCAAVQ advised Members that three Student Liaison Meetings have been organised in the 2017/18 academic year to provide an opportunity for discussions between students and HKCAAVQ about the developments in and quality assurance of the higher education sector. Students were given the opportunity to understand the international perspective on student engagement in a presentation made by a former Vice-Chancellor of a university in the United Kingdom who is also a specialist of HKCAAVQ. These meetings were well received by students as reflected in the end-of-meeting surveys.

1.2 HKCAAVQ would take student engagement forward with different initiatives. An association named "VQ Club" and a logo designed by the students will be established so that student representatives who have graduated can continue to participate. Information about international good practice of student participation in academic quality

assurance would be shared with the students via an e-platform. HKCAAVQ would identify a number of lead student representatives, provide them with the relevant training in quality assurance, and invite them to observe accreditation exercises. In the long term, HKCAAVQ would explore the possibility of including students as members of review panels.

1.3   HKCAAVQ advised Members that a gradual approach to publish full accreditation reports would be adopted. Full reports for all Initial Evaluation exercises with accreditation documents submitted on or after 1 April 2019 would be published. Full reports for all academic accreditation exercises covering local and non-local programmes under the Four-Stage Quality Assurance Process with accreditation documents submitted on or after 1 April 2020 would also be published. Summary reports for learning programme accreditation exercises for vocational programmes would continue to be published in the current form. Accreditation reports for institutional reviews, purely in-house training programmes and non-approval cases would not be published.

1.4   Members were updated the progress of the implementation of the Credit Accumulation and Transfer (CAT) Database on the Qualifications Register (QR). The new features and enhancements made to the QR were introduced. Members discussed the pros and cons of indicating Recognition of Prior Learning as a new type of CAT on the QR, and noted that such indication was in line with the government policy intent.

2.   LATEST DEVELOPMENTS OF HKCAAVQ'S ACCREDITATION SERVICES

2.1   Members noted the following:

(a) The Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) in the United Kingdom (UK) and HKCAAVQ conducted one joint accreditation review in May 2018. QAA also conducted a case study in another HKCAAVQ accreditation exercise. Through these joint initiatives, QAA concluded that it can confidently rely on HKCAAVQ's accreditation decisions for UK Transnational Education (TNE) provision in Hong Kong with HKCAAVQ's peer-review panels and the use of the Hong Kong Qualifications Framework.

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(b) The revised accreditation standards and the *Evidence Guide* were published in April 2018, and the *Manual for the Four-stage Quality Assurance Process under the Hong Kong Qualifications Framework* was published in July 2018 in the HKCAAVQ website. To facilitate stakeholders' understanding on the new standards, six briefings / workshops for operators and three seminars for specialists have been conducted from April to September 2018.

(c) The accreditation standards for learning programme accreditation / re-accreditation under the Four-stage Quality Assurance Process would be used to accredit online learning programmes with additional evidence requirements applicable to the context of online delivery. Learning programmes with more than 50% of instruction delivered online will be accredited with reference to the additional evidence requirements. A pilot exercise has been conducted. It proved that the approach was effective and would be applicable for future accreditation of online learning programmes. Operators can apply for accreditation of their online learning programmes starting from April 2018.

2.2 Members welcomed the recognition of QAA to HKCAAVQ's QA work. There was a comment that operators involved in the TNE review should be well informed of the arrangements in advance. HKCAAVQ recognised that there was a communication issue in dealing with multiple partners but that this issue would be addressed in any future exercises as a result of the lessons learnt in the joint exercise.

2.3 Members agreed that provision of online programmes is a trend in the higher education sector. It is necessary to assure the quality of these online programmes. Members exchanged views on how the requirement of "more than 50% of instruction delivered online" can be operationalised for accreditation purposes.

3. HKCAAVQ ANNUAL EVENT 2018

3.1 The event is an important occasion for exchange of views on issues of common interests among the stakeholders from academic and vocational and professional education and training sectors. The event will be held on 13 November 2018. The highlights of the event include:

(a) Launch of the CAT Database on the QR;
(b) Panel discussion titled "In Dialogue with Major Stakeholders of HKQF"; and

(c) Presentation of certificates of appointment of HKCAAVQ specialists.

4. LATEST DEVELOPMENTS IN THE SELF-FINANCING HIGHER EDUCATION SECTOR IN HONG KONG

4.1   The Chief Executive announced in her 2017 Policy Address to set up a task force to consider issues pertinent to the development of the self-financing post-secondary education sector. A Task Force on Review of Self-financing Post-secondary Education (the Task Force) was set up in October 2017. With the inputs and feedback from different stakeholders, the Task Force has come up with some initial observations. A consultation document was published and members of the public are welcome to provide any views/ opinions. Members exchanged their views on the consultation document, including the revamp of the Post- Secondary Colleges Ordinance (Cap. 320), government assistance to self-financing institutions, and articulation of sub-degree holders to bachelor's degree programmes. In general, Members agreed that the Post- Secondary Colleges Ordinance should be reviewed and updated. Members also considered that transnational education, being an important component in the higher education sector in Hong Kong in terms of the number of students and institutions, should not be excluded from consideration.

4.2   Members discussed the accreditation of and articulation into non-local programmes in Hong Kong. Non-local courses must be registered under the Non-local Higher and Professional Education (Regulation) Ordinance (Cap. 493) before they can be offered legally in Hong Kong. Members noted that only about 15% of the non-local courses under Cap. 493 have also been accredited, and queried whether all non-local courses should go through accreditation to ensure their quality. Members exchanged views on this issue from different perspectives, including the quality assurance, consumer protection, benchmarking to local standards, legal requirements that should be complied with by the non-local institutions in their home countries, and the government subsidies to students studying accredited programmes.

5. DISCUSSION ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF LPAA

5.1   A questionnaire would be sent to the Members to collect their feedback on the following aspects:

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(a) Composition of the membership of LPAA;
(b) Provision of feedback on HKCAAVQ's services;
(c) Communication among different stakeholders;
(d) Timing of conducting LPAA meetings; and
(e) Number of meetings per year.

6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

6.1 There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:40 am.

RF/WP/wp

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