Report of a Quality Audit of Sub-degree Operations of The Chinese University of Hong Kong

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QAC Audit Report Number 17

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PREFACE

Background

The Quality Assurance Council (QAC) was established in April 2007 as a semi-autonomous non-statutory body under the aegis of the University Grants Committee (UGC) of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China.

UGC is committed to safeguarding and promoting the quality of UGC-funded universities and their activities. In view of universities' expansion of their activities and a growing public interest in quality issues, QAC was established to assist UGC in providing third-party oversight of the quality of the universities' educational provision. QAC aims to assist UGC in assuring the quality of programmes (however funded) offered by UGC-funded universities.

Since its establishment, QAC has conducted two rounds of quality audits, the first between 2008 and 2011 and the second between 2015 and 2016. By virtue of its mission, however, these audits conducted prior to end 2016 include only first degree level programmes and above offered by the UGC-funded universities.

In 2016, UGC has assumed the role of the overseeing body of the external quality audits on the sub-degree operations of the UGC-funded universities, with the involvement of QAC as the audit operator. The sub-degree audit cycle commenced in end 2016 with the promulgation of the Audit Manual.

Conduct of QAC Quality Audits

Audits are undertaken by Audit Panels appointed by QAC from its Register of Auditors. The Audit Panel composes of three auditors who are either international or regional experts in higher education quality assurance, drawn from a higher education system based outside of Hong Kong. The Panel also includes at least two local members, at least one of whom should be drawn from another UGC-funded university.

QAC's core operational tasks derived from its terms of reference are:

- the conduct of institutional quality audits
- the promotion of quality assurance and enhancement and the spread of good practice

QAC's approach to quality audit is based on the principle of 'fitness for purpose'. Audit Panels consider the nature and strength of those operations in terms of the vision, mission and goals of the university and the Sub-degree Providing Unit(s) (SDPU(s)) within it. The degree of alignment between the SDPU(s) and the university's vision, mission, goals and strategic priorities is also considered.

Full details of the audit procedures, including the methodology and scope of the audit, are provided in the QAC Audit Manual on Sub-degree Operations of UGC-funded Universities which is available at http://www.ugc.edu.hk/doc/eng/qac/manual/auditmanual_sub-degree.pdf.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This is the report of a quality audit of the sub-degree operations of The Chinese University of Hong Kong (the University) by an Audit Panel appointed by, and acting on behalf of, the Quality Assurance Council. The report presents the findings of the quality audit, supported by detailed analysis and commentary on the following Dimensions:

1. governance, management, university planning and accountability
2. approach to programme quality assurance
3. curriculum design, programme development and approval processes
4. programme delivery, including pedagogical approaches, learning environments and resources, scheduling
5. support for teaching quality including pedagogical development
6. student learning assessment
7. student participation and student support services
8. systems for acting on quality assurance data to make ongoing enhancements to student learning

The audit findings are identified as features of good practice worthy of commendation, recommendations for further consideration by the University, and affirmation of progress with actions already in place as a result of its self-study.

Summary of the principal findings of the Audit Panel

1. Governance, management, university planning and accountability

The University has recently undertaken a strategic evaluation of its sub-degree programmes resulting in the rationalisation and consolidation of its provision. There is a clear plan for the future involving a refocusing of provision on the needs of the ageing population and second career opportunities. A new Senate Committee has been established to provide university oversight and to support the development of new programmes. There are, however, limited performance indicators at the strategic level and management information at the operational level, which may inhibit the opportunities for both effective governance oversight and management improvement.

2. Approach to programme quality assurance

The evidence seen by the Audit Panel (the Panel) confirmed that the University's re-approval process has been used consistently across higher-level programmes and routinely involved the input of external expertise. It is assessed by the Panel as rigorous in its design and application. The University adopts a qualitative holistic approach to re-approval decisions. Access to a greater range of data

would allow the Senate and Academic Board to enhance their ability to set and maintain academic standards.

3. *Curriculum design, programme development and approval processes*

The Panel acknowledged that the procedures for the development and approval of sub-degree programmes are in line with the processes adopted for undergraduate and postgraduate programmes at the University. It is evident that formal and informal dialogue with external stakeholders, as well as student evaluations, are highly valued as measures to determine whether programmes are meeting their goals. However, there is also scope for the University to systematically collect information from alumni and employers about the job preparedness of its students, and to make more use of market and demand analysis to inform course and curriculum design.

4. *Programme delivery, including pedagogical approaches, learning environments and resources, scheduling*

Students are well supported in their learning by competent and conscientious academic and support service staff, appropriate learning resources and a student-centred approach to programme delivery. Student satisfaction feedback is systematically collected, analysed and responded to and student views are widely sought and acknowledged. Part-time students studying in learning centres are less well engaged in the student community.

5. *Support for teaching quality including pedagogical development*

The University's policies for staff support and staff development apply consistently to those teaching on sub-degree provision. Professional development and orientation programmes courses are well designed and relevant. The Centre for Learning Enhancement And Research promotes the enhancement of teaching quality and innovation, and includes provision for sub-degree programmes. There is, however, a need to ensure that all part-time staff are fully included in developments.

6. *Student learning assessment*

The implementation of an outcomes-based approach to learning and assessment provides the opportunity for sub-degree programme teams to revise and enhance curriculum content and delivery. While the work is continuing, its adoption across the University has been a protracted process. There is more yet to be done to extend the principles across all sub-degree programme levels. The Panel recognised the robust position taken by the University on academic malpractice and would encourage further assessment of these issues in the context of sub-degree provision.

7. *Student participation and student support services*

The University's approach to the provision of student support is focused on full-time Higher Diploma students and Diploma Programme in Foundation Studies students rather than the part-time Professional and Continuing Education cohort. It is clear that staff are committed to supporting and encouraging their students, and this is well appreciated by students. The University may wish to consider a framework for data collection that will identify usage rates, satisfaction levels and the impact of student support services across sub-degree provision.

8. *Systems for acting on quality assurance data to make ongoing enhancements to student learning*

The systematic collection of student evaluations and the responses to issues raised are key features of the University's commitment to its students. It is clear that the evidence gathered feeds in to discussions about teaching quality and is a key indicator of performance. There is an opportunity to further develop these processes to collect direct evidence of student learning and development to inform improvements in programme design and delivery.

INTRODUCTION

Explanation of the audit methodology

This is the report of a quality audit of the sub-degree operations of The Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK; the University) by an Audit Panel appointed by, and acting on behalf of, the Quality Assurance Council (QAC). It is based on an Institutional Submission which was prepared by the University following a period of self-study and submitted to QAC on 3 July 2017. A Mutual Briefing was held on 13-14 September 2017 which provided an opportunity for CUHK to brief Members of the Audit Panel (the Panel) on the context of the University's sub-degree operations.

The Panel visited the University from 7 to 9 November 2017. They met the Vice-Chancellor and President and the senior team; heads of the Sub-degree Providing Units (SDPUs), the deans, heads of departments, sub-degree programme leaders, full-time and part-time teaching staff, academic support services staff, full-time and part-time students, external stakeholders, and members of governance committees.

The Panel evaluates:

- governance, management, university planning and accountability
- approach to programme quality assurance
- curriculum design, programme development and approval processes
- programme delivery, including pedagogical approaches, learning environments and resources, scheduling
- support for teaching quality including pedagogical development
- student learning assessment
- student participation and student support services
- systems for acting on quality assurance data to make ongoing enhancements to student learning

and identifies its audit findings, including features of good practice worthy of commendation, recommendations for further consideration by the University, and affirmation of progress with actions already in place as a result of its self-study.

Introduction to the University

CUHK was founded in 1963. It is a comprehensive research university with a global vision and a mission to combine tradition with modernity, and to bring together China and the West. A brief history of the University is provided at Appendix A.

The University offers a wide-range of sub-degree programmes at Hong Kong Qualifications Framework (HKQF) Levels 1-4, including a substantial portfolio of Higher Diploma (HD) programmes and a variety of Professional and Continuing

Education (PCE) courses. The School of Continuing and Professional Studies, CUHK (CUSCS; the School), established in 1965, is based on the main University Campus and is the principal centre for the arrangement and organisation of sub-degree provision, although the majority of the delivery is based in four Learning and Enrolment Centres located in central Hong Kong and other town centres. All HD programmes are managed by the School. In addition, the Faculty of Medicine, the Faculty of Arts and the Faculty of Education also offer sub-degree programmes.

1. GOVERNANCE, MANAGEMENT, UNIVERSITY PLANNING AND ACCOUNTABILITY

1.1 The University has a large sub-degree capacity operated through units in three faculties (Arts, Education and Medicine) and through CUSCS. The sub-degree provision includes both PCE and HD programmes at HKQF Levels 1-4, although only CUSCS offers HD programmes and the Diploma Programme in Foundation Studies (DFS).

1.2 CUHK has undertaken a strategic alignment of Sub-degree, Professional and Continuing Education Programmes (SPCEPs) with the CUHK Strategic Plan (2016-20), in which the educational goal is 'to serve the needs and demands of the community for lifelong education and continuing development'. CUSCS has formulated a School Development Plan approved by Senate. A key strategy for the School is to 'serve the needs of the ageing population and second career trends in Hong Kong'.

1.3 The Panel reviewed both the University Strategic Plan and the School Development Plan and interviewed the University's senior executive, and identified the clear alignment between the plans. The strategy has been deployed through a strong process of rationalisation and consolidation of programmes. Between 2013 and 2017, 188 programmes have been phased out. This has resulted in a still large but significantly streamlined portfolio of 164 programme offerings (133 through CUSCS) and better attuned to the declining, but still highly competitive, Hong Kong market.

1.4 The University and CUSCS have a process of programme re-approval to keep the programme portfolio under review, which will be considered in *Dimension 2: Approach to Programme Quality Assurance*. The Panel commends the strategic alignment of CUSCS and the University, particularly in the clear specification of a sub-degree strategy. The rationalisation of the programme portfolio provides a valuable opportunity for the SPCEPs to be more finely attuned to the market and demonstrates clear achievement of an area of enhancement identified by the University's QAC Preparation Group. The Panel commends the University for the rationalisation of its SPCEP portfolio as a launch pad for the new strategy.

1.5   Until mid-2017 the governance and management of SPCEPs occurred through the University Extension Board (UExB), a university-level Committee, chaired by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education). From mid-2017, the UExB has been replaced by a new committee, the Senate Committee on Sub-degree, Professional and Continuing Education Programmes (Senate SPCEPs) still chaired by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education). Senior staff indicated that the new committee will provide more direct reporting to Senate, will involve the faculties more as the deans are Senate members, will include the Director of the Centre for Learning Enhancement And Research (CLEAR) to enhance the focus on teaching and learning, and will have an enhanced mandate to cover HKQF Levels 1-6. Executives also indicated that a key focus will be on the quality of sub-degree programmes and on the overall portfolio.

1.6   Senate SPCEP held its first meeting in September 2017 and it is, therefore, too early to assess its enhanced effectiveness and strategic direction. Nonetheless, the Panel affirms the intent of Senate SPCEP to continue the strategic quality enhancement of the University's sub-degree portfolio through strengthening engagement and ownership throughout the institution, and encourages the University to maintain its focus on strategic governance and management oversight rather than 'business-as-usual'.

1.7   CUSCS has its own Academic Board, while the other SDPUs, *i.e.* the academic faculties, are overseen by their respective Faculty Boards. The governance and management structures are therefore different between CUSCS and the units operating through the faculties, reflecting the different histories, scale and foci of operation. However, management and governance of SPCEPs is brought together in the Senate SPCEP that oversees provision, and all HD and PCE programmes are subject to the Operation Manual for Self-Financed Programmes and the Integrated Framework.

1.8   Discussions with staff managing sub-degree processes indicated that there was sufficient consistency of management processes between the SDPUs, for example, in the use of templates and student evaluations. The management and governance of sub-degree provision, while having some variability, was generally working well and inconsistencies are being minimised by policy and governance structures.   But it is a work-in-progress requiring continued collaboration and discussion between CUSCS and the faculties.

1.9   While strategy and policy are becoming aligned, the University's approach to strategy and reporting essentially consists of direction setting, but with few indicators of performance or success. The extract from the CUHK Strategic Plan and the CUSCS School Development Plan have no performance or success indicators attached to them and the university executive confirm this to be the case. The University therefore does not specify the explicit standards that it expects its SDPUs to meet. The Quality Manual for the SPCEPs has policy and procedure but no indicators of quality performance.

1.10   There is a lack of performance indicators at the strategic level and of management information at the operational level that are available for monitoring, reporting and improvement.   This finding was consistent and confirmed at many levels. The Panel considered that the lack of data limits the opportunities both for governance oversight and management improvement and is an area that warrants further development.   It recommends that the University, through Senate SPCEP, review the collection and use of data for monitoring and improvement of programmes, with a view to articulating a suite of key performance indicators that guide improvement priorities and align with the Strategic Plan. The Panel probed this area deeply and heard that CUSCS commenced operation of a small data unit in September 2017. While it is too early to assess the work plan and impact of this unit, the Panel affirms the direction of CUSCS to make better use of comprehensive data sources beyond student evaluations. Indicators of programme success, which include student satisfaction and enrolment data, are considered further under *Dimension 2: Approach to Programme Quality Assurance*.

2.   APPROACH TO PROGRAMME QUALITY ASSURANCE

2.1   The University undertakes programme quality assurance (QA) through its review and re-validation processes, its evaluation mechanisms of student satisfaction, annual reports, and exit surveys. All self-financed programmes, including SPCEPs at HKQF Level 4, have a validity period of six years and a simple process of re-validation which is a list compiled by Registry; a nomination from the SDPU and a decision informed by key statistics. The example statistics quoted are 'intake, enrolment, budget, completion rates and teacher profile'. The Panel was told that this compilation of statistics is essentially a manual process, which is time-consuming and liable to error. The University is encouraged to develop information technology (IT)-enabled systems to enable this process to be streamlined and improved.   Each programme review is preceded by a self-evaluation and evaluated by a panel including external members. These decisions are taken by the Committee on Re-approval of Sub-Degree Programmes as specified in the re-approval policy.

2.2   The Panel received and reviewed several examples of re-approval applications as audit trails including the data indicated. The evidence of the audit trails and from staff shows that the re-approval process is comprehensive and has been used consistently across higher-level programmes, especially at HD level. It has also included the involvement of external experts. The Panel commends the consistent use of re-approval processes using external expertise.

2.3   The major focus of the statistical analysis is the Course and Teaching Evaluation (CTE) and the Sub-degree Student Experience Questionnaire (SSEQ). The CTE shows generally high levels of student satisfaction in the range 4.55 - 5.17 on a six-point scale. Graduate surveys also show high to very high proportions of graduates who went on to employment or further study.

For example, over 90 per cent of DFS graduates went on to further studies, with over 80 per cent into CUHK sub-degree programmes, showing its effectiveness as a pathway.

2.4   The re-approval process strongly emphasises the student evaluations from the CTE and the SSEQ, confirmed by numerous discussions with staff. Student satisfaction is considered an important indicator in the self-financed sector, but other data, such as student attrition, are less used. CUSCS undertook an internal quality audit in 2016-17, in preparation for this exercise, which commented that attrition rates are high for HD programmes. The information from reviews may be used for improvement and some examples were given of improvement in satisfaction scores following action plans. The Panel questioned whether students were informed of changes made to their programme as a result of previous student feedback and heard this happened sometimes but not universally. The Panel considered that a more consistent closing of the feedback loop would enhance continuous improvement of programmes. The University recognises that not much use is made of data trends and the use of data is an area for improvement to be tackled by the new Senate SPCEP.

2.5   The first cycle of programme reviews under the Integrated Framework has been completed (41 programmes between 2013-17) and some programmes have been through two rounds of reviews by the Committee on Re-approval of Sub-degree Programmes. A trend analysis of student satisfaction and a meta-analysis of the first cycle of sub-degree programme reviews have been carried out by CLEAR. The report has focused on the dissemination of good practice, rather than addressing areas for improvement which particularly relate to issues with course and programme design. This is an example where the Panel felt that data analysis could be more directly applied to improvement processes, rather than indirectly by highlighting good practice; the University and CLEAR are encouraged to use this data analysis for improvement in relation to course and programme design (see also paragraph 8.7).

2.6   The Panel questioned the basis of decision-making in the re-approval process, and asked for examples of what level or standard of attrition, student satisfaction, financial viability or staff profile was considered acceptable enough to warrant re-approval, especially as some programmes have been withdrawn and some approved for three years rather than six. However, no set standards are implemented, and the Panel was told that the University adopts a qualitative holistic approach to the re-approval decision. The Panel considered that the Academic Board and Senate should be the bodies setting academic standards for programmes and that more guidance on those standards and their application should be provided, using a greater range of data than the current reliance on SSEQs.

3. CURRICULUM DESIGN, PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT AND APPROVAL PROCESSES

3.1 The Panel was assured that the statements that CUHK makes about the goals and objectives they have identified in relation to curriculum design, programme development, and approval processes are appropriate. Programme learning outcomes in an HD programme within the audit trails clearly indicate alignment with this university goal. The programme demonstrates evidence of addressing the University's commitment to '…meet societal needs [and] cater to the current and future needs of the workforce and community' and also to focus on the needs of secondary school leavers, working adults and ageing learners. It demonstrates self-reflection by making recommendations to '…review the curriculum so as to better equip students for their further study and career development; and to put more effort into industry networking and provide more experiential learning opportunity to students such as internship and company visits'.

3.2 However, the Committee on Re-approval of Sub-degree Programmes communicated an interest '…in knowing the progress of actions taken to address the recommendations of the external Programme Review Panel, in particular the introduction of internship and other experiential learning opportunities to students, and whether any yardsticks had been adopted to monitor the progress'. The Panel acknowledges that the continued review process will likely provide ongoing opportunities for CUHK to demonstrate their consistency of approach across all HD programmes.

3.3 The University has demonstrated its ability to sustain self-funding and the students' high satisfaction with the programme. This indicates that the programmes are generally meeting societal needs. Information that details expectations for how programmes determine these and the expectation of how they are to align with learning outcomes is evident. The evidence to support these statements was communicated in the audit trails and additional information provided. However, at this point in time, the Panel is unsure whether and if so where, direct evidence of student learning outcomes data are being used to inform the design or re-approval process.

3.4 From a website review as well as information provided in the Institutional Submission, it is evident that the University seeks to review various aspects of quality assurance and that they are committed both to programme learning outcome alignment and to programmes demonstrating ability to meet societal need. From the site visit it was also evident that the University recognises the manner in which quality assurance will be enhanced with the establishment of Senate SPCEP (see paragraph 1.5).

3.5 In the CUSCS Development Plan 2016-2020, the impetus and goals for the development of the quality assurance process for part-time programmes in

HKQF Levels 1-4 and full-time programmes in Levels 3, 4, and 5 are noted. However, the Panel remained uncertain as to how specific student learning outcomes data and professional standards informed the current course and curriculum offerings. It was also unclear as to how professional standards and market analysis or market demands consistently informed course and programme design. Specifically, it was unclear how '…niche programmes that meet the changing needs of the learning pace and study modes of young adults' are consistently identified. While examples of market analysis were provided to the Panel, it is unclear how data – apart from CTE and SSEQ data - as well as informal dialogue with external stakeholders, is uniformly informing course and programme design as well as improvement. The Panel recommends that the School consider making more explicit use of data and market information to inform curriculum design and course improvement.

3.6   The commitment to '…meet societal needs and cater to the current and future needs of the workforce and community' is evident. Evidence provided in the audit trails shows that the University is achieving its objectives in relation to programme development and approval processes. Data that inform this primarily comes from CTE results, SSEQ, external examiner reports, annual reports and informal dialogue with external stakeholders. For example, the School appears to have rectified an earlier concern of inconsistent use of criteria to measure student learning and now has all lecturers using rubrics to grade assignments. The University has shown additional evidence of how well their new programme approval processes are working.

3.7   The University's submission documents report that the course and curriculum design 'aligns with the process adopted by the Ug [undergraduate] and Pg [postgraduate] programme of the University.' The Audit Visit confirmed that there is staff collaboration in course and programme design of the HD programmes and although the majority of continuing education classes continue to be designed within CUSCS, they are required to go through the Faculty Consultation Process.

3.8   The School reports using grades, pass rates, self-evaluation scores and checklists, budgets, external advisors, external examiners, evidence of demand, SSEQ scores, CTE scores, exit survey data, and self-reports of satisfaction and job placement to demonstrate whether they are achieving their goals. They also reported a number of examples of how external examiners' comments are used to improve an HD programme. In addition, CUSCS showed how SSEQ results, and exit survey Data are used to inform improvements in the programme. While there is evidence of data collection for grade distribution, pass rates and pass numbers, some evidence of demand, CTE scores, and self-reports of satisfaction and job placement numbers, it was unclear how data other than CTE scores, SSEQ data, and informal comments are informing improvements in each programme (see also paragraph 8.6).

3.9 From on-site meetings, it is evident that formal and informal dialogue with external stakeholders, as well as student feedback via the SSEQ and CTE are highly valued as a measure to determine whether programmes are meeting their goals. The Panel affirms that these are good practices. During the on-site visit, it became evident that the University cultivates and values quality relationships with external stakeholders when designing courses and programmes. The Panel considered this to be helpful and constructive although there are seemingly inconsistent ways of conducting market and demand analysis to inform course and curriculum design. The Panel commends the quality of the relationships that the University has with external stakeholders and how this informs programme design.

3.10 With regard to use of assessment tools, CUHK provided sample assessment rubrics from some HD programmes. They also reported useful exit survey data and provided evidence of how demand and intended community needs are to be met. However, the Panel is unclear how this information informs programme design although there is an indication of how data can be used to inform focus groups and surveys in an effort to gather more information about how to inform programme design. In the materials provided, the Panel was unable to identify CUHK's discussion of this data as it pertains to the level of acceptable performance by the University. However, their discussion of data and how it informs or does not inform recommendations is made evident.

3.11 The School does not appear to be making full use of employer satisfaction data, or student satisfaction data as it relates to job preparedness or employability, although students are generally positive about the responsiveness of staff to their concerns. Enhanced data collection and use may be beneficial to programme design and programme review processes. Exit data and graduate outcomes data profiles are collected and analysed. However, the Panel was not able to find evidence of discussion of this information as it relates to the level of acceptable performance by the University.

4. PROGRAMME DELIVERY, INCLUDING PEDAGOGICAL APPROACHES, LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS AND RESOURCES, SCHEDULING

4.1 The key principles that CUHK states in relation to 'Programme delivery, including pedagogical approaches, learning environments and resources, scheduling' broadly identify the role of UExB/Senate SPCEP in monitoring, supervising and supporting programme delivery.

4.2 The support units of CUHK in the main campus, including CLEAR, the Centre for eLearning Innovation and Technology and CUHK Library, provide professional support to teaching staff and learning support to CUSCS students. An appropriate learning environment and comprehensive learning resources are provided to students at the Main Campus. From the Panel's visit to two

Learning Centres and the meetings with the students, it is evident that the learning environment and supporting resources provide adequate support for student learning.

4.3   From the Audit Visit meetings with the full-time teaching staff it was evident that the Heads of Academic Units in CUSCS provide induction for new teaching staff on program/course design before each semester. The teaching staff members consider that both the Quality Manual on SPCEPs and CUSCS Teaching Staff Handbook provide useful guidelines to follow in teaching. They are also aware of the outcomes-based approach (OBA) requirements, including alignment of Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs) with Programme Intended Learning Outcomes (PILOs). In general, staff members teach 15 to 20 hours per week in addition to 10 student consultation hours per week. The full-time students reported around 18 to 20 class hours per week and 5 to 20 private study hours per week. Most of them reported spending around 10 hours per week in part-time jobs.

4.4   The University management reinforces that CUHK is a bilingual institution. Apart from teaching in English only in medicine and law disciplines, other courses are mainly in English (60 per cent+) while some subjects require the use of Chinese. It is evident from the meetings with teaching staff and students that teaching materials are in English, lecturers and instructors may use bi-lingual delivery (English, Cantonese or a combination) but assessment is in English. The students are satisfied with the English language service in practising English and improvement of writing and speaking by the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) tutors. Since some of the students in DFS and HD programmes may be weak in English proficiency, the flexibility in the use of English and Cantonese by teaching staff facilitates student learning while assessment in English will not deprive students of the opportunity to present and write in English.

4.5   Online learning is used by students in most of the courses for downloading of teaching materials from Moodle. Some of the teaching staff members established a student discussion forum in Moodle as well. Staff members may get time-off for producing e-learning materials. The Panel affirms the teaching support services provided by CUHK to assist teaching staff to create video-clips (including illustrations via virtual reality) and the provision of training in the use of Moodle. The University is encouraged to enhance the effectiveness of teaching delivery and engagement of student learning through the more sophisticated use of Moodle by teaching staff and students.

4.6   Multiple measures on student learning are collected, including CTE and SSEQ. The response rate of SSEQ ranges from 82.2 per cent to 90.7 per cent. The mean score of CTE (6-point scale: 4.55 to 4.97 for Q17 and 4.76 to 5.17 for Q18) largely reflected positive student feedback. It is evident that CTE follow-up meetings are held for improvement of teaching and analysed in the Annual

Programme Report. From the on-site meetings it is evident that some of the teaching staff members conduct early teaching evaluation or seek early feedback from students directly for improvement of teaching.

4.7   It is apparent that CUSCS is responsive to students' learning needs. For example, based on the feedback of the students, the class timetable in the next semester has been changed to reduce students' waiting time for the next class. CUSCS also replaced slow computers based on the feedback from students through the suggestion box. Full-time students have more opportunities to interact with a wider student community in the activities organised by the Student Association. Part-time students tend to interact with the students in the specific course.

4.8   Programme delivery is managed with the appropriate governance structure, resource provision and relevant guidelines/documentation for teaching staff and students. Multiple measures on student learning are systematically collected, analysed and responded to enhancement of student learning. Teaching staff members are highly committed in teaching and support of student in learning and career preparation. The teaching staff members have demonstrated their enthusiasm in continuing professional development, including some of them studying for research degrees.

4.9   Based on the provided documentation and observations during the audit processes, the Panel considers that the key principles that CUHK state in relation to programme delivery, including pedagogical approaches, learning environments and resources, scheduling have been substantially achieved. Students are well supported in their learning by competent and conscientious academic and support service staff, appropriate learning resources and a student-centred approach to programme delivery. Part-time students studying in learning centres are less well engaged in the student community. A more structured approach to the consideration of attrition and progression data might provide an enhancement of this, otherwise, strong environment.

5.   SUPPORT FOR TEACHING QUALITY INCLUDING PEDAGOGICAL DEVELOPMENT

5.1   CUHK aims to apply the same set of human resources (HR) policies to all teaching staff members throughout the recruitment, professional development, and appraisal processes and maintain an optimal and dynamic portfolio of academics, professionals, and full-time and part-time teachers. The recruitment of teaching staff in SPCEPs aligns with the statement made by the University. The recruitment process in CUSCS involves a selection committee comprising at least three members in making recommendations for appointment based on multiple factors. All full-time teaching staff in CUSCS have attained a Master's degree with the required number of years of teaching experience. Adoption of alternative entry requirements for appointment of teachers requires

approval. The Panel commends the value and appreciation that CUHK places on teachers' contributions to the delivery of sub-degree programmes, which have positively motivated them to commit to their teaching and pedagogical development.

5.2 CUHK staff members teaching sub-degree programmes are provided with a wide range of opportunities for professional development. Orientation programmes and workshops are offered for professional development in pedagogy. OBA to teaching and learning is well embedded in the design of the workshops. Collaboration between CLEAR and CUSCS is taking place as a means to enhance staff members' capacity in pedagogical development. More such collaborative initiatives are planned.

5.3 Professional development sessions are also provided to part-time staff members. They are encouraged to attend professional development workshops offered by CLEAR as well as those offered by CUSCS for part-time staff members. More on-line resources for part-time instructors are being developed to provide guidance on teaching and learning.

5.4 All CUSCS full-time teaching staff are subject to annual assessment and appraisal, which is completed by relevant academic heads with reference to the assessment criteria for teaching staff. Academic heads discuss the suggestions for development with their staff and make personnel decisions based on the assessment results.

5.5 Class visits and observations are adopted in CUSCS as a means to support teaching quality. The visits for full-time programmes are conducted by heads of academic disciplines or delegates at CUSCS. Discussions are held between the staff member being observed and the observer around possible enhancements or improvements regarding teaching pedagogy and classroom management. The Panel commends the wide adoption of self-evaluation in SPCEPs and the high level of adoption of class visits that encourage self-reflection and peer learning among teachers.

5.6 A holistic approach to HR is in line with the University's goal of supporting and enhancing teaching quality. The use of the same set of HR policies to all full-time teaching staff members throughout the recruitment, professional development and appraisal processes across different SDPUs helps maintain consistency and uphold teaching quality. The stringent recruitment process contributes to the maintenance of an optimal and dynamic portfolio of academic and professional staff. It is noted that part-time staff members employed on a less than half-time basis will be subject to different appraisal processes.

5.7 The provision of professional development opportunities through various forms, for example, orientation programmes, workshops, and professional

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development courses, supports teaching quality. Samples of evaluation data on selected professional development sessions show that they are well received by participants. Although some of the evaluation data provided did not distinguish between the feedback from the staff members teaching degree programmes and those teaching sub-degree programmes, the Panel was able to confirm the effectiveness and relevance of the professional development sessions with both full-time and part-time staff members teaching sub-degree programmes during the audit meetings. The Panel also noted a strong enthusiasm and a high level of commitment among all staff members, especially full-time teachers, to pedagogical development and teaching quality enhancement. CUHK also supports its teaching quality by encouraging full-time staff members to pursue further study. Study leave is granted for this purpose, which is appreciated by the relevant staff members, as discussed in the audit meeting. The Panel commends the provision of various forms of professional development opportunities as well as the close collaboration between CLEAR and CUSCS for enhancing staff members' capacity in teaching and pedagogical development.

5.8   Part-time staff members are supported in a number of ways, including the workshops for enhancing teaching and learning and a resource website on good teaching practices. They also demonstrate a strong passion in enhancing student learning through experimenting with various pedagogies and expressed appreciation of the support provided by CLEAR and CUSCS. Some professional development opportunities are not made available to part-time staff, for example, conference attendance. It is noted that this type of opportunities (for example, visits or study trips) might be provided in future to staff at different levels. The Panel affirms CUHK's ongoing initiatives to provide part-time staff members with more online professional development resources and to disseminate tailored good practices attuned to the characteristics of the sub-degree sector.

5.9   The assessment criteria for all staff members employed on full-time or greater than half-time basis are presented in the CUHK Academic Staff Handbook. Specific criteria for non-professorial Academic Staff Development Review in one of the SDPUs were provided as an example. A comprehensive set of criteria on teaching that covers classroom teaching, programme management, and pedagogical development is presented with descriptors specified for each level of performance. A good alignment is also found between the overarching criteria in the Handbook and the sample provided. During the audit meeting, the performance appraisal process was described by staff members as a positive experience that supports their development and growth.

6.   STUDENT LEARNING ASSESSMENT

6.1   The approach to the assessment of student learning on sub-degree programmes is determined by university-wide policies that ensure that all assessments are

fair, credible, rigorous and transparent. Individual SDPUs may have specific assessment policies that reflect the nature of their programmes and the requirements of professional bodies.

6.2   CUSCS has adopted the principles of OBA to learning and assessment for all full-time programmes at Level 4. The School states that assessment rubrics and intended learning outcomes are generally defined for individual programmes and for all assignments. Students are briefed on the requirements for assessment and the intended learning outcomes of their studies on HD programmes. The Panel notes that there is more to be done to complete this process (see paragraphs 8.5 and 8.6 below).

6.3   The implementation of OBA for PCE programmes is less comprehensive. At present only around 40 per cent of courses have adopted the principles for student learning and assessment and devised matrices of PILOs by CILOs.

6.4   The University is promoting the adoption of criterion-referenced assessment for all undergraduate and taught postgraduate programmes. The University's Assessment Policy, which has been revised in response to the comments from the QAC Audit Panel (2015), was approved by the Senate in December 2016. Further enhancements to the policy are yet to be considered and approved by Senate at its meeting in December 2017. However, the intention is to apply the same principles to all sub-degree provision. It is recognised that for some specific professional programmes, the assessment requirements of external accrediting organisations will need to take precedence over university policy. However, the University acknowledges that there is a more general need for improvement in aligning assessment with learning outcomes and that assessment policies and procedures are not followed consistently across all sub-degree provision. The Panel recommends that the University progress the uniform adoption of the principles and practices of OBA to learning and assessment across all PCE programmes.

6.5   The School has a policy of ensuring that assignments for HD programmes should be returned to students within two weeks of submission. Students that the Panel met confirmed that this was generally the case. They found that staff were supportive in the advice they gave to students and that the feedback was helpful and constructive. The Panel commends the practice of timely return of work to students and the general use of feedback to enhance the learning experience of students.

6.6   All HD programmes involve the engagement of external examiners to ensure consistency of assessment practice and the maintenance of academic standards. External examiners' reports provide a helpful source of advice on quality improvement. However, it is not clear how programme leaders make use of the feedback from external examiners to support enhancement activities or how the School follows-up on examiners' comments. The Panel recommends that the

School adopt a more structured framework to integrate feedback from external examiners into the process of programme review and improvement.

6.7 The University has identified the adoption of a policy on student access to examination scripts for all PCE programmes as a proposal for future improvement. The Panel affirms its support for this proposal.

6.8 Arrangements are in place to ensure fairness in assessment outcomes for students on internships, placements and practicum programmes. Evaluation is sought from industry partners through the use of a questionnaire, but it was not clear to the Panel how this feedback is used to inform consistency of practice or promote improvements.

6.9 The University has robust policies and procedures to assure the academic integrity of its programmes and to prevent academic malpractice. Students are provided with guidance on the required standards of academic honesty. All written assignments for programmes delivered by CUSCS are required to be submitted using software that checks the authenticity of students' work (VeriGuide) and there are documented procedures for handling cases of plagiarism. Sanctions for proven cases of malpractice are specified and depend on the extent of plagiarism detected. The Panel recognised the steps taken by the University to promote standards of academic discipline, but was less clear about whether these procedures applied to all types and levels of provision, including programmes offered by individual faculties. It recommends that the University confirm that the policies apply consistently across all sub-degree provision.

7. STUDENT PARTICIPATION AND STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

7.1 The University promotes the formative value of non-formal learning activities. Its approach to the provision of student support is focused on full-time HD students and DFS students rather than the part-time PCE cohort, many of whom are in employment and enrol at CUHK in pursuit of professional knowledge and career progression.

7.2 CUSCS offers a range of opportunities for students to participate in community service and student societies. It also offers extra-curricular activities that enhance the students learning activities and encourage personal development. The initiative from the University to strike a new Memorandum of Understanding with the Hong Kong Sports Institute is evidence of a continuing commitment to expanding these extra-curricula activities. Level of engagement among full-time students in Student Association clubs and societies is high and valued by those students.

7.3   There is pervasive pastoral care of students by academic and professional support staff both in the teaching environment and in the support they provide beyond that formal setting, almost invariably through face-to-face advice and consultation and in digital communication media. It is clear that staff are committed, well beyond their formal teaching obligations, to support and encourage their students and that this involves a commitment of hours of their personal time. Student reported on the benefits of personal advice and the opportunities to discuss matters with staff. The Panel commends the level of support provided by staff and the positive engagement promoted with students.

7.4   The School provides a range of academic support services for HD students including, library services and IT support, careers advice and guidance, and personal counselling. Language development support in English and Cantonese is provided for students who need assistance in developing their language skills. CTEs indicate a general level satisfaction with these services with an upward trend in responses over the past three years. Nevertheless, the School recognises that there is scope for improving the services provided to students and has taken steps to improve accessibility to libraries and to enhance the coverage of WiFi.

7.5   The ability of the School to monitor the effectiveness of support services is confined to the feedback gathered from CTEs. Data on the take-up and impact of these services is quite limited or non-existent at present. The Panel recommends that the University consider the development of a framework for data collection that seeks to measure usage rates, satisfaction levels and impact of student support services across sub-degree provision, including for part-time students who may currently have limited engagement with these services.

7.6   Evidence from students that met with the Panel supports the claim that internship and practicum placements, which are integral to many courses across the HD portfolio, are well managed and may lead to positive employment outcomes for students. Appropriate arrangements are in place to monitor student progress and to support their professional development. However, at present there is limited systematic collection of data to demonstrate the effectiveness of placement provision. While it is clear that this dimension of curricula is a priority in the School, there is scope for the School to enhance its oversight of placement arrangements by gathering more information about the student experience and by inviting more systematic feedback from employers and alumni.

7.7   One particular aspect of the need for enhanced data collection and information is the ability of support services to identify and provide targeted support for students 'at risk' and in danger of withdrawing from their programme of studies. Analytical data may offer an opportunity to monitor student progress more closely. The Panel recommends that the University consider its arrangements

for reporting attrition rates and explore in detail the reasons for student withdrawal.

7.8   Discussions with part-time students identified a number of issues with regard to access to the University's IT systems and the use of support services. The University may wish to consider whether the focus on full-time students has meant that insufficient attention has been given to the needs of part-time PCE students.

8.   SYSTEMS FOR ACTING UPON QUALITY ASSURANCE DATA TO MAKE ONGOING ENHANCEMENTS TO STUDENT LEARNING

8.1   The University is committed to improving student learning outcomes. However, it is evident that it is at an early stage of reflection and follow-through with the use of direct evidence of student learning. The University shows an exemplary level of reflection and follow-through when it comes to the responsiveness to student feedback via the CTE results and SSEQ results. On-site meetings indicated a level of high response to student feedback from instructors and programme coordinators. The students consistently reported a high level of satisfaction with how responsive instructors and programme coordinators are to student feedback. The Panel commends the University's responsiveness to student feedback collected using the CTE and SSEQ results. The discussion of SSEQ data, CTE data, as well as exit survey data and how the data informs action plans is well done and seemingly consistent.

8.2   The University provided evidence that illustrated that programmes are engaged in achieving its objectives in relation to ensuring the quality of student learning. However, there is a recognition that it needs to develop a stronger sense of QA culture. In addition, they have indicated that a higher level of QA ownership between the programme offering units and their supervising faculty is needed. For example, data presented is missing a discussion as to whether this trend data is at the level CUHK expects or desires. Apart from the HD programme in the audit trail where external evaluators provide information about what is acceptable, the Panel reports being unable to identify any evidence where CUHK is consistently engaged in the explicit setting of appropriate standards.

8.3   In reviewing the audit trails of a diploma programme and an HD programme offered by CUSCS and a professional diploma programme offered by a faculty, the Panel noted that there are consistent data collection tools including information from external evaluators. However, there are varying ways that the data are used to inform improvements. For example, the professional diploma programme is more focused on using data from teacher's reviews to inform improvement in programme design, while the diploma programme uses course pass rates as a primary data collection tool. The HD programme appears to use data drawn from the SSEQ, exit reviews, and external evaluators as their

primary sources of data to inform improvements. It is possible that such difference in approach is a result of the variances in longevity of each programme. Future follow-up reports would be able to indicate the degree to which policies and procedures are followed consistently across all SDPUs and programmes. The Panel affirms the use of external evaluators and how they inform improvements in programme design and development.

8.4   The School refers to use of criterion-referenced assessment, graduation requirements, including the minimum percentage of attendance, as well as the minimum level of achievements in terms of cumulative Grade Point Average (GPA), grade or even raw score, as the standards that the students must attain for the purpose of graduation. Given the audit trails that were conducted, it is not possible to indicate how well the University is testing whether it is achieving its goals and objectives in relation to ensuring the quality of student learning via the use of direct evidence of student learning, such as the analysis of student assessments, that rubrics are applied to, as well as the reflections and follow-through of programme evaluation (see paragraph 3.8). It was mentioned in the on-site visit, that criterion-referenced assessment will eventually replace grade distributions (see paragraph 6.4).

8.5   The University makes reference to benchmarking and rubrics, although it is noted that the use of rubrics is not very popular. The Panel was unable to find evidence of benchmarking in these programmes, apart from the SSEQ. CUHK might benefit from less reliance on self-reported method of evidence to analysis of direct evidence of learning and development and how that data informs improvements to student learning and development. For example, CUHK has indicated the use of attendance rates, course assessment pass rates, and a cumulative GPA of 1.5 as the assessment methods for the DFS programme. The Panel questions the usefulness of this data in improving the programmes and ensuring CUHK's ability to meet its goals.

8.6   The self-assessment report indicates that assessment practices show a high level of compliance (88.1 to 100 per cent) across CUSCS and faculties. The self-assessment of reviewing external reviewers' comments was 69 per cent across CUSCS and faculties. While the Panel found the Institutional Submission informative, it did not provide actual data on student learning and appeared to be descriptive of the process as opposed to the evidence of student learning and development. For example, overall only 33 per cent of programmes are using rubrics. Even within the evidence provided within the audit trails and the on-site meetings, the direct evidence of student learning and development and how it is used to inform programme improvements is not included.

8.7   It appears that there is commitment among those intricately engaged in this process to be transparent, reflective, and to use data-driven decision-making. However, the evidence that this is happening consistently across all programmes appears to be limited and primarily descriptive self-report of the

process, as well as heavily depended on self-report measures such as the SSEQ and CTE results. This suggests that there is a lack of internal critical evaluation of the use of reflection and follow-through focused on direct evidence of learning and development, and the comparison across all programmes. The Panel recommends that CUHK identify the ways in which they collect direct evidence of student learning and development, discuss at what level learning is expected, and how all types of data collected are explicitly informing the improvement of each programme design and delivery.

9. CONCLUSIONS

9.1 The University has developed a well-established and functional quality framework for its SPCEPs in alignment with its undergraduate and postgraduate programmes as well as HKQF.

9.2 In accordance with the University's current strategic plan there has been a comprehensive reassessment of the portfolio of sub-degree provision to ensure its correspondence with institutional priorities and to address the changing needs of Hong Kong society and economy. This has resulted in the consolidation and rationalisation of programmes and a move towards ensuring that sub-degree provision adheres to the standards of QA that apply for the University's undergraduate and taught postgraduate programmes.

9.3 These changes have also been accompanied by revisions to the governance and management of sub-degree provision with the establishment of a new Senate Committee to provide university oversight of the range and diversity of programmes and to facilitate the development of new courses at Levels 5 and 6. CUSCS has been instrumental in setting standards and promoting the enhancement of the student learning experience.

9.4 Evidence from students, academic staff and professional support staff all indicates a high degree of commitment to providing opportunities for students that are of value and which enhance their chances of employment and career progression. The University is student-centred in its approach to course delivery and students are appreciative of the learning opportunities that are provided for them.

APPENDIX A: THE CHINESE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG (CUHK)
[Information provided by the University]

History

CUHK is a self-governing institution incorporated by Ordinance in 1963 by amalgamating three original Colleges: New Asia, Chung Chi and United (founded in 1949, 1951 and 1956 respectively). With CUHK Ordinance 1976, the structure became more unitary. Shaw College was added in 1986. With five new Colleges approved in 2006 and 2007, there are now nine Colleges in CUHK.

The School of Continuing and Professional Studies of CUHK (CUSCS), known as the Department of Extramural Studies when established in 1965, is an extension unit of the University offering a diverse range of quality self-financed sub-degree, professional and continuing education programmes and courses to meet the changing needs of the society.

Also, academic units of the institution proper have played a role in lifelong education through the provision of professional programmes.

Vision and Mission

CUHK's aspirations as a leading institution of higher education are formally expressed in its Mission and Vision statements –

Vision

To be acknowledged locally, nationally and internationally as a first-class comprehensive research university whose bilingual and multicultural dimensions of student education, scholarly output and contribution to the community consistently meet standards of excellence.

Mission

To assist in the preservation, creation, application and dissemination of knowledge by teaching, research and public service in a comprehensive range of disciplines, thereby serving the needs and enhancing the well-being of the citizens of Hong Kong, China as a whole, and the wider world community.

Role Statement

CUHK:

(a)   offers a range of programmes leading to the award of first degrees and postgraduate qualifications in subject areas including Arts, Science, Social Sciences and Business Administration;

(b)   incorporates professional schools such as Medicine, Architecture, Engineering and Education;

(c)   pursues the delivery of teaching at an internationally competitive level in all the taught programmes that it offers;

(d)   offers research postgraduate programmes for a significant number of students in selected subject areas;

(e)   aims at being internationally competitive in its areas of research strength;

(f)   contributes to the development of Hong Kong, China as a whole, and the region through quality education, research, engagement and service, in all the disciplines it offers;

(g)   pursues actively deep collaboration in its areas of strength with other higher education institutions in Hong Kong or the region or more widely so as to enhance the Hong Kong higher education system;

(h)   encourages academic staff to be engaged in public service, consultancy and collaborative work with the private sector in areas where they have special expertise, as part of the institution's general collaboration with government, business and industry; and

(i)   manages in the most effective and efficient way the public and private resources bestowed upon the institution, employing collaboration whenever it is of value.

Programmes of Study offered by Sub-degree Providing Units

CUSCS offers full-time Higher Diploma (HD) programmes and the Diploma Programme in Foundation Studies (DFS) to secondary school leavers as well as a wide range of part-time professional and continuing education (PCE) programmes in support of lifelong learning.

To satisfy the public's demand for professional development, academic faculties are currently offering a selected range of PCE programmes.

Staff and Enrolment Numbers of Sub-degree Programmes

A breakdown of staff and course enrolments in 2016/17 is tabulated below. The academic and academic supporting staff numbers are extracted from the overall figures as provided by the University Bursary to UGC in November 2017, excluding headcounts on guest speakers, as well as outside practice and in-load teaching.

The course enrolment numbers refer to the headcounts on full-time students and part-time (mixed-mode inclusive) students as at 31 October 2017.

Sub-degree Providing Unit	Academic and Academic Supporting Staff Numbers		Course Enrolment Numbers	
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time
Faculty of Arts	9	1	0	1 062
Faculty of Medicine	1	2	0	648
Faculty of Education	1	1	0	283
CUSCS	35	135	3 058	4 464

APPENDIX B: INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSE TO THE AUDIT FINDINGS

The Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK) wishes to express its gratitude to the QAC and the Audit Panel for conducting the sub-degree quality assurance audit and the compilation of this comprehensive report for the University. The University is grateful to have received a good number of commendations from the Panel. The commendable remarks and critical insights offered by the QAC Audit Panel are an impetus for the University to continue its provision of high quality sub-degree, professional and continuing education experience that one can expect from a leading university in the region.

This Audit Report has confirmed that the University's well-established quality framework for its Sub-degree, Professional and Continuing Education Programmes (SPCEPs) has aligned with that of the undergraduate and postgraduate programmes as well as the Hong Kong Qualifications Framework (HKQF) (para. 9.1). The Panel commends the University's clear specification of a sub-degree strategy and rationalization of its SPCEP portfolio (para. 1.4) demonstrating that the University has effectively undertaken a strategic alignment of SPCEPs with the *CUHK Strategic Plan 2016–2020* and progressively carried out the educational goal of serving the needs and demands of the community for lifelong education and continuing development.

The University is glad that the Panel has given their commendations on the following:

- The consistent use of re-approval processes using external expertise (para. 2.2)
- the quality of the relationships between the University and external stakeholders (para. 3.9)
- the value and appreciation that the University places on teachers' contributions to the delivery of sub-degree programmes (para. 5.1)
- the wide adoption of self-evaluation in SPCEPs and the high level of adoption of class visits that encourage self-reflection and peer learning among teachers (para. 5.5)
- the provision of various forms of professional development opportunities as well as the close collaboration between the Centre for Learning Enhancement And Research (CLEAR) and the School of Continuing and Professional Studies, CUHK (CUSCS) (para. 5.7)
- the practice of timely return of work to students and the general use of feedback (para. 6.5)
- the level of support provided by staff and the positive engagement of students (para. 7.3)

- the University's deployment of data, in particular, its responsiveness to student feedback from the Course and Teaching Evaluation (CTE) and Sub-degree Student Experience Questionnaire (SSEQ) results (para. 8.1)

The University deeply appreciates the Panel's commendations which are in fact the greatest encouragement to its academic faculties and CUSCS, including the teachers, staff and stakeholders at all levels who are all committed to enhancing the learning experience of the students of SPCEPs.

In pursuit of the long-term and sustainable development of the SPCEP sector, the University will spare no effort in strengthening the areas that the Panel has affirmed and continue the strategic quality enhancement of the University's sub-degree portfolio through the Senate Committee on Sub-degree, Professional and Continuing Education Programmes (Senate SPCEP) whose role is on strategic governance and management oversight (para. 1.6). The University welcomes the Panel's affirmations on the University's commitment to continuous self-enhancement and supporting teaching quality, which is underpinned by its dedicated teachers and staff in provision of SPCEPs to the community.

The University is ready to work on areas of recommendations made in the Audit Report. It will follow up with the Panel's recommendations on the uniform adoption of the principles of outcomes-based approach (OBA) for sub-degree provision (para. 6.4), the standardization of policy and procedure of academic disciplines (para. 6.9), the development of a framework for data collection in support of student services (para. 7.5), the reporting of attrition rates (para. 7.7), and the identification of ways to make use of all types of data collected to inform the improvement of each programme's design and delivery (para. 8.7). The University will also create opportunities for part-time students and teachers to better engage themselves in the development of SPCEPs.

This meaningful QAC audit exercise has succeeded in laying a solid foundation of quality assurance (QA) ownership shared at different levels of the academic faculties and CUSCS. The University via the Senate SPCEP will take the lead to guide its Sub-degree Providing Units (SDPUs) to follow up with the Panel's recommendations on the areas identified in the Audit Report and come up with details in an Action Plan to be submitted to QAC after the publication of the Audit Report.

Once again, the University thanks the Audit Panel for the in-depth review and the thorough account for continuous enhancement of student learning experience. The University treasures the commendations and will take heed of the Panel's advice to scale another level of excellence.

APPENDIX C: ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMNS

CILOs	Course Intended Learning Outcomes
CLEAR	Centre for Learning Enhancement And Research
CTE	Course and Teaching Evaluation
CUHK	The Chinese University of Hong Kong
CUSCS	School of Continuing and Professional Studies, The Chinese University of Hong Kong
DFS	Diploma Programme in Foundation Studies
GPA	Grade Point Average
HD	Higher Diploma
HKQF	Hong Kong Qualifications Framework
HR	Human resources
IELTS	International English Language Testing System
IT	Information technology
OBA	Outcomes-based approach
PCE	Professional and Continuing Education
Pg	Postgraduate
PILOs	Programme Intended Learning Outcomes
QAC	Quality Assurance Council
QA	Quality assurance
SDPU	Sub-degree Providing Unit
Senate SPCEP	Senate Committee on Sub-degree, Professional and Continuing Education Programmes
SPCEPs	Sub-degree, Professional and Continuing Education Programmes
SSEQ	Sub-degree Student Experience Questionnaire
UExB	University Extension Board
Ug	Undergraduate
UGC	University Grants Committee

APPENDIX D: CUHK AUDIT PANEL

The Audit Panel comprised the following:

Emeritus Professor Hilary Winchester (Panel Chair)
Higher Education Consultant
Former Provost, CQUniversity

Mr Ian Hawke
Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Enterprise Services), University of Southern Queensland

Professor Marilee Bresciani Ludvik
Professor, Postsecondary Educational Leadership, San Diego State University

Dr Louis Ma
Director, School of Continuing and Professional Education, City University of Hong Kong

Dr Tracy Zou
Assistant Professor, Centre for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning, The University of Hong Kong

Audit Coordinator

Dr Stephen Jackson
QAC Secretariat

APPENDIX E: QAC'S MISSION, TERMS OF REFERENCE AND MEMBERSHIP

QAC was formally established in April 2007 as a semi-autonomous non-statutory body under the aegis of the UGC of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region.

Mission

QAC's mission is:

(a) To assure that the quality of educational experience in all programmes at the levels of sub-degree, first degree and above (however funded) offered in UGC-funded universities is sustained and improved, and is at an internationally competitive level; and

(b) To encourage universities to excel in this area of activity.

Terms of Reference

QAC has the following terms of reference:

(a) To advise UGC on quality assurance matters in the higher education sector in Hong Kong and other related matters as requested by the Committee;

(b) To conduct audits and other reviews as requested by UGC, and report on the quality assurance mechanisms and quality of the offerings of institutions;

(c) To promote quality assurance in the higher education sector in Hong Kong; and

(d) To facilitate the development and dissemination of good practices in quality assurance in higher education.

Membership (as at May 2018)

Mr Lincoln LEONG Kwok-kuen, JP (Chairman)	Chief Executive Officer, MTR Corporation Limited
Professor Chetwyn CHAN Che-hin	Associate Vice President (Learning and Teaching), The Hong Kong Polytechnic University
Professor Adrian K DIXON	Emeritus Professor of Radiology, University of Cambridge
Mrs Belinda GREER	Chief Executive Officer, English Schools Foundation
Dr Kim MAK Kin-wah, BBS, JP	President, Caritas Institute of Higher Education and Caritas Bianchi College of Careers
Professor PONG Ting-chuen	Professor of Computer Science and Engineering, The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology
Professor Jan THOMAS	Vice-Chancellor, Massey University
Dr Don F WESTERHEIJDEN	Senior Research Associate, Center for Higher Education Policy Studies, University of Twente

Ex-officio Member

Professor James TANG Tuck-hong	Secretary-General, UGC

Secretary

Miss Winnie WONG Ming-wai	Deputy Secretary-General (1), UGC