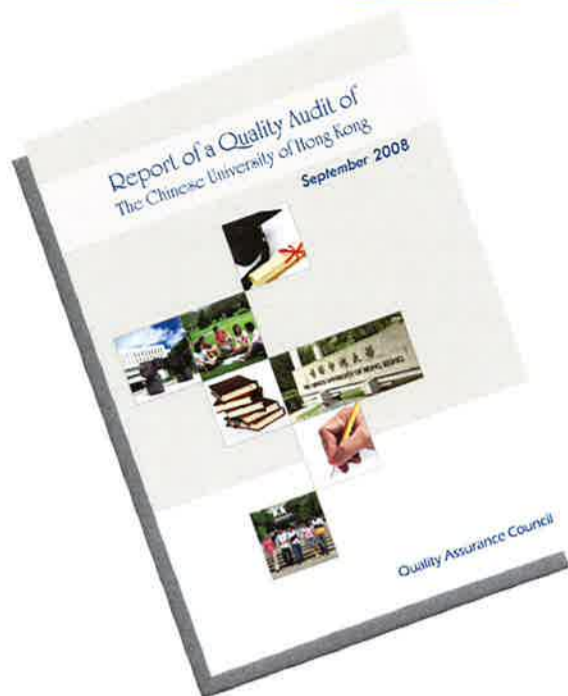


Commended by UGC's Quality Assurance Council



The Quality Assurance Council (QAC) of the University Grants Committee (UGC) released its *Report of a Quality Audit of The Chinese University of Hong Kong* on 6 September. Compiled by an independent panel, the Report confirms that 'CUHK is providing a high quality student learning experience that reflects its mission and role statement, underpinned by good quality assurance systems.' The Panel commends the University's 'overall commitment to assuring and enhancing the quality of its taught programmes.' The University is also commended for 'its commitment to [a] bilingual policy and for the application of resources deployed to achieving desired language attributes at undergraduate level.'

QAC: "CUHK is providing a high quality student learning experience that reflects its mission and role statement, underpinned by good quality assurance systems."

Setting a Good Example as First Institution Audited

Professor Lawrence J. Lau, Vice-Chancellor of CUHK, welcomes the QAC's Audit Report and thanks the panel for its work. 'CUHK is proud to have been the first UGC-funded institution to be audited by the QAC. In terms of providing high quality teaching and learning, this report, compiled by independent experts, confirms that the University is upholding its mission of becoming a bilingual research-led comprehensive university of world-class standing. To meet the needs of globalization, CUHK is committed to continually improving the quality of its education and learning environment, ensuring the disciplinary relevance of its curriculum, providing whole-person education, enriching students' learning experience, and nurturing graduates with generic skills. Members of the University are heartened by the outcome of the QAC Audit.'



QAC Affirms Improvement Measures Proposed by CUHK

CUHK believes that quality enhancement is a continuous process. The QAC affirms many measures formulated by the University for self-improvement as it leads its members on a path of continuous self-enhancement. These include the move from elected to appointed deans, the use of Exemplary Teaching Award winners to disseminate good practice, the incorporation of all undergraduate curriculum components into the Integrated Framework, the adoption of an outcomes-based approach (OBA) to raise curriculum effectiveness, and the continued study of the use of technology in student life and learning.

Quality Assurance Framework and Rich Learning Experience Commended

The QAC commends the University, in particular, for assuring the core quality of its teaching and learning activities.

Commendations

- ✓ Overall commitment to assuring and enhancing the quality of its taught programmes and especially the development and implementation of an *Integrated Framework for Curriculum Development and Review*.
- ✓ Articulating graduate attributes with the capacity to clearly differentiate CUHK graduates from those of other universities in Hong Kong and elsewhere; and its commitment to implementing the teaching and learning aspects of its Strategic Plan.
- ✓ Introduction of a rigorous system of Programme Reviews, and the use of review outcomes to inform funding decisions as a means both of rewarding good practices and of encouraging identified improvements.
- ✓ Approach to curriculum design, which ensures the University's desired graduate attributes are reflected through the inclusion of major, minor, elective, general education and language courses.
- ✓ Requiring all students to pass a student IT Proficiency Test as a graduation requirement.
- ✓ The level of academic support and pastoral care available to undergraduate students.
- ✓ The variety and extent of experiential learning opportunities available to students, particularly the exchange and internship programmes, and its success in securing travel grants and other funding to enable students to participate in these various activities.
- ✓ Clear commitment to recognising and rewarding good teaching through a variety of channels including the promotion threshold related to teaching, the transparency of the performance assessment system for merit increases and the systems of exemplary teaching awards.
- ✓ Support of teaching staff and the compulsory staff development courses for new junior staff and Teaching Assistants.
- ✓ Commitment to its bilingual policy and the application of resources deployed to achieving desired language attributes at undergraduate level.
- ✓ Overall approach to providing and assuring a quality experience for its research students.

Affirmations

- ✓ Plans to incorporate all components of the undergraduate curriculum (including majors, minors, electives, general education and language courses) into the undergraduate *Integrated Framework for Curriculum Development and Review*.
- ✓ Production of "OBA roadmaps" to consolidate a number of initiatives for more efficient and effective curriculum development and to indicate how an outcomes-based approach (OBA) will be implemented in all programmes.
- ✓ Move from elected to appointed Deans and the key role that these, and the Associate Deans (Education), will play in assuring and enhancing the quality of student learning at CUHK.
- ✓ Continued study of the use of technology in student life and learning, with a view to using the outcomes to inform course delivery in the four-year normative curriculum.
- ✓ Plans to re-examine the role of the Independent Learning Centre as part of its Action Plan.
- ✓ Decision to implement the recommendations of the Senate Committee on Teaching and Learning Working Party on Assessment.
- ✓ The use of Exemplary Teaching Award winners to disseminate good practice within their Departments.
- ✓ Intent to implement the Action Plan that stemmed from its self-review as a means of continuing to assure and enhance the quality of student learning.



QAC's commendations and affirmations have sealed its approval of CUHK's existing quality assurance measures and their results. To fulfil its mission of encouraging institutions to excel in their areas of activity, QAC has further made a number of recommendations for further enhancement.

Recommendations

- ✓ **Graduate attributes at postgraduate level are more clearly and concisely articulated**, particularly those relating to bilingual proficiency and whole-person development.
- ✓ **To consider introducing a mandatory, standard template for course outlines across the University.**
- ✓ **To review its policy in regard to undergraduate and postgraduate students being taught together** and specify the maximum number of undergraduate course credit units that can contribute towards a taught postgraduate award.
- ✓ **(1) To identify clear procedures**, including lines of responsibility and accountability, for implementing the Action Plans arising from six-yearly Programme Reviews; **(2) to consider implementing annual programme and course monitoring** driven by standard data sets presented in time series; and **(3) to more closely align the monitoring and review processes for undergraduate and taught postgraduate provision.**
- ✓ **To consider ways to draw on its links with local employers and professional bodies, to gain more external input into curriculum development** and to obtain external evaluation of the effectiveness of curricula in imparting desired graduate attributes.
- ✓ **To develop and implement an institutional e-Learning strategy** as part of its preparation for the four year normative curriculum.
- ✓ **To clarify the roles and responsibilities of the various academic and pastoral student support agencies** including how they inter-relate, how they are accessed and how overall provision, as well as each component of provision, is evaluated.
- ✓ **To implement an assessment policy for all taught programmes** to be applied across all Faculties and Departments at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels.
- ✓ **To consider (1) revising Course and Teaching Evaluation (CTE) to elicit student feedback** on a broader range of institution-wide elements of teaching and **(2) adopting University-wide procedures, informed by best practice, for administering the CTE.**
- ✓ **In affirming CUHK's adaptation of the annual progression form** to allow research students to record any views and concerns about supervision, resources or other relevant matters, the QAC **recommends that University-level processes are put in place to monitor and address any research student concerns.**
- ✓ **To draw on international best practice to codify its policies and procedures in regard to research student training, supervision and management**, and mandate their implementation across the University.

The University is grateful to the QAC for the identification of a number of areas for future attention, in most cases confirming the University's own assessments and plans. These include extending the coverage of the *Integrated Framework* and enhancements of assessment policy and curriculum review mechanisms for greater uniformity of practice.



For the QAC Audit Report, please go to:
http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/v6/en/teaching/images/qac_cuhkreport.pdf

For the Institutional Response to the Audit Findings, please go to:
http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/v6/en/teaching/images/qac_cuhkresponse.pdf

The Chinese version of this leaflet can be obtained on the website:
http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/v6/b5/teaching/images/qac_leaflet.pdf

CUHK Receives High Commendations from Independent Audit Panel

The QAC's mission is to assure that the quality of educational experience in all first degree level programmes and above, however funded, offered in UGC-funded institutions is sustained and improved, and is at an internationally competitive level; and to encourage institutions to excel in this area of activity.

The quality audit on CUHK was undertaken by an independent Panel appointed by the QAC. The Audit Panel is chaired by Professor Andrew Lister, Consultant and Emeritus Professor, University of Queensland, Australia, and comprises Professor Graham Webb, Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Quality), Monash University, Australia, Dr Malcolm McVicar, Vice-Chancellor, University of Central Lancashire, United Kingdom, Professor Paul Lam, Acting Vice-President for Undergraduate Education, City University of Hong Kong, Professor T S Chan, Associate Vice-President (Administration and Planning), Lingnan University and Chairman of the Joint Quality Review Committee, Hong Kong, and Dr Anissa Chan, Principal, St. Paul's Co-educational College, Hong Kong. The Panel's findings are expressed as: commendations of good practices; affirmations which recognize improvements the institution is already making as a result of its self-review; and recommendations for improvement.

In a press conference introducing the Audit Report on 6 September, QAC expressed that it is pleased with CUHK's efforts in maintaining and enhancing a high quality student learning experience. The success is underpinned by good quality assurance systems commended by the QAC. This signifies CUHK's fulfillment of its important role of ensuring quality teaching and learning for students as a world-class university.



Mr Philip Chen Nan-lok (centre), Chairman of QAC and two other members, Sir Colin Lucas (left) and Mr Michael V Stone (right)

CUHK's Tried and Tested Quality Assurance System

To continuously monitor and enhance the quality of its teaching and learning, the University has a comprehensive quality assurance system in place. Built into the University's *Integrated Framework* are regular curriculum reviews. Between major reviews, departments are required to submit annual progress reports and a detailed interim report for each of their programmes. The University also draws upon the advice of external experts and international good practices as references in its review of curriculum and methods of assessment. Teaching quality being a priority, there are performance appraisal and management systems for its teachers. The University seeks and collects the views of teachers and students in its efforts to improve the quality of its curricula.

Timetable for Quality Audit

Jul 2007	CUHK started preparing for the quality audit of QAC
Jan 2008	Institutional Submission to QAC
Apr 2008	QAC panel visited CUHK and met with over 150 teaching and administrative staff, 80 students, lay members of the University Council, local employers and CUHK alumni
Sep 2008	QAC released Quality Audit Report of CUHK
Mar 2010	CUHK to submit a progress report to QAC

