

Second Round Teaching and Learning Quality Process Reviews

Review Template

Goals

1. The UGC has established four goals for the second round of Teaching and Learning Quality Process Reviews (TLQPRs) as follows:
 - (a) to maintain the focus on teaching and learning as the primary mission of Hong Kong's tertiary institutions;
 - (b) to assist institutions in their efforts to continuously improve the quality of teaching and learning;
 - (c) to enable the UGC and the institutions to discharge their obligation to maintain accountability for the quality of teaching and learning; and
 - (d) to inform, in respect of UGC-funded institutions, the UGC's consideration of the triennial funding, on the basis of the review outcomes.
2. The UGC, the TLQPR Panel (the Panel), and the institutions share these goals and view the review as a collegial process.

Focus on Education Quality Work

3. The second round of TLQPRs will continue to focus on processes to assure and improve the quality of delivered education, i.e. on "education quality work", not on the quality of teaching and learning itself. For example, processes and activities aimed at improving assessment methods are subject to review, but the quality of the actual assessment of students is not.
4. Institutional, faculty and departmental education quality work will be reviewed on the basis of five domains, including "design of student assessment measures and use of assessment results", which will be given special consideration in the reviews.

Scope

5. The second round will cover taught degree and sub-degree programmes offered by the institution on its own or jointly with non-local universities, regardless of the funding source. (For example, self-funded degree programmes like the MBA will be included.)
6. It will also include degree and sub-degree programmes organized by continuing education units (CEUs) in the sole name of the UGC-funded institutions, but exclude those organized by non-local universities where the UGC-funded institutions only act as an agent. For the sub-degree programmes, they will be confined to programmes at associate degree, advanced diploma, higher diploma and equivalent levels. A separate template for review of CEU programmes is at [Appendix A](#).
7. A review of research postgraduate programmes will take place concurrently with the second round TLQPRs and be included as a section of each institution's TLQPR report. A small sub-panel will conduct this review using a separate protocol and visit schedule that will focus on the training and mentoring of research postgraduate students, not on the institution's research programme *per se*. A separate template is at [Appendix B](#).

Methodology

8. The review will involve three stages: a self-evaluation report prepared by the institutions; site visits by a review panel; and preparation of a report by the review panel.

Preparation of self-evaluation document

- Institutions will be given around two months to prepare a 20-page self-evaluation document for the Panel's consideration. Institutions will be invited to submit an outline of the document for consideration by the Panel before proceeding to the preparation of the full-length document.
- A guideline for preparation of the document (including a 4-page supplement for research postgraduate education and a supplement for CEU programmes at a maximum of 10 pages) is at [Appendix C](#).
- The document will be considered by the Panel before the site visit. Institutions will be requested to provide supplementary information as necessary.

The TLQPR panel

- An eleven-person TLQPR Panel will be formed¹. It will be headed by Professor Rosie Young (ex-Chairman of the Education Commission and currently Honorary Professor for Medicine in HKU), and composed of local higher education peers, overseas higher education experts (including those with experience in self-financed programmes) and overseas UGC members.

Site visit

- Each site visit will basically last for one and a half days, but the length could vary according to the different circumstances of the institutions. A general outline is at [Appendix D](#)².
- The review panel will meet with faculty/department/unit/student representatives.
- Each institution will nominate faculties/departments/units to be visited according to the guidelines at [Appendix E](#). The review panel will select from the list and add any at its discretion. Each institution will be informed by the UGC of the list of faculties/departments/units to be visited at least one month before the actual visit. Any special issues that will be raised will be conveyed to the institutions prior to the visit.
- Libraries or registries will not be reviewed as part of the TLQPR exercise, but support units for teaching and learning (including, for example, educational development centres and units providing programmes for general education) would be included in the site visits where appropriate.

Review report

- The format and guidelines for the content of the review report will be subject to further collaborative discussion when the review panel has been formed. However, as an overarching goal, the report will not emphasize the assessments of institutions. Rather, it will focus on areas for improvement, in keeping with the agreed focus on the TLQPR as a formative review process as opposed to a summative one.

¹ The finalized membership of the Panel consists of 14 persons.

² The original outline has been replaced by an up-to-date version at [Appendix D](#) reflecting the situation since the commencement of the exercise.

Review timetable

- The review timetable is at Appendix F³.

External agency

- No external agency will be involved in the reviews.

Review Protocol

A. Five domains subject to review

9. The review will cover five “domains” of education quality work.
 - (a) ***Design of curricula***: processes/activities to design, validate/revalidate and improve programme curricula, including: the role of design inputs from staff, employers, students and others; work to bring inputs together into a coherent curriculum while providing a degree of flexibility appropriate to programme goals; assurance of the standard of academic awards offered by the institutions; and resolution of controversies.
 - (b) ***Design of teaching and learning processes***: processes/activities to design, review and improve methods of teaching and learning, teaching materials, and students’ learning environment, including: forums for staff to discuss issues; consideration of desired and achieved learning outcomes; role of external inputs and student views; and support for innovation to improve/encourage student learning.
 - (c) ***Design of student assessment and use of assessment results***: processes/activities to design, review and improve the assessment of students, the assessment of student learning and the relation of assessment to educational objectives, including: allocation of responsibility for assessment; mechanisms for feedback to improve assessment; and process/activities to enhance the linkage of assessment to educational objectives.
 - (d) ***Implementation quality***: processes/activities to assure that the curricular, teaching, learning and assessment design and processes are being carried out coherently and effectively according to plan, including: staff recruitment and development; and promotion of teaching standard, processes/activities to assure and improve the quality of delivered teaching, learning and assessment day-in-day-out for all student groups, including: feedback from students; peer review; measures of the student learning experience outside the classroom; teacher-student interaction; and mechanisms to respond to these indicators.
 - (e) ***Commitment of resources to education quality work***: how do institutions use resources to enhance, or inhibit, education quality work; are quality assurance processes/activities adequately funded; are incentives established to reward good performance in delivering quality education; do individual components of education quality work receive funding sufficient to perform their missions; do these principles of allocation filter down to the unit level?
 10. A diagrammatic presentation of the five domains is at Appendix G.
- ### B. Criteria to be used in the review exercise
11. In making its assessments of these domains and in making recommendations for improvement in the work of institutions, the review panel will consider the following principles for successful education quality work:

³ The original timetable has been replaced by an up-to-date version at Appendix F showing the dates of various site visits as subsequently agreed between the review panel and the institutions.

- (a) The efforts of units and institutions to improve their performance through **measuring the outcomes** of delivered education, and the commitment to ensuring that quality assurance processes are designed to take into account measured educational outcomes. While it is recognized that exact measurement of educational outcomes is often a difficult and controversial exercise, improvement cannot go forward without assessment.
- (b) The orientation of quality assurance processes and activities to the **process of student learning**. A focus on the learning process requires taking into account how students learn, the build up over time of learning skills, and students' self-learning capabilities.
- (c) The **degree of coherence** in the various quality processes operating at different levels in the institution. Education quality work will go forward more successfully when it is mutually reinforcing and appears coherent to staff and students. There should be an awareness of, and sensitivity to, those units that are less mature in terms of education quality work, and there should be a culture to disseminate good practice across the units and across the institution.
- (d) The degree to which staff, units and the institutions understand that the delivery of quality education to students is a **collaborative responsibility**. The design of quality assurance processes and the implementation of education quality work require a collective commitment to assessing outcomes and improving quality.
- (e) The role of inputs sought from outside units and institutions to assess performance against appropriate **benchmarks and good practice**. Experience gained in other units/institutions and the developing literature on student learning and quality management has a key role in the effectiveness of education quality work.
- (f) The **priority given to continuous improvement**, through education quality work, in the work of units and institutions. Success in improving quality relies on managers, staff and students understanding their own role in the quality process and following through on a continuing basis. The institution should, as a whole, show evidence of "seriousness of purpose" in maintaining and developing their work in this regard, with a commitment to following up recommendations for improvement.

C. Variations in education quality work

- The review exercise is therefore developed within the framework of a formative review, emphasizing a collaborative, rather than an evaluative, process designed to assist institutions in their ongoing efforts to improve the quality of education provided. It is not the intention of the review panel to provide a summary assessment of institutional or unit level performance in validating education quality work.
- Nevertheless, institutions, and units within institutions, will have developed different levels of accomplishment in moving towards the goals above, will have established to different extents the quality assurance processes/activities subsumed under this review, and will have embedded the culture of education quality work to a greater or lesser extent.
- At the lowest maturity level in units, traditional practices will override any consideration of further development of quality assurance activities. Better units may, however, have individuals who are concerned with such development, or may allow for individual initiatives. At a higher level of maturity, these ad hoc developments become organized at the unit level, becoming the focus of discussion and planning within the unit, the results of which may be tracked. A higher level of maturity exists when concern with education quality work is embedded as a central part of the unit's academic culture.
- Similarly, universities will vary in the extent to which higher levels of maturity within units have become the norm. They will also vary in terms of the degree to which they have institutionalized the development and tracking of education quality work, and they will vary in the extent to which education quality work has become a central element of the academic culture.
- By reference to the characteristics of education quality work to which all units and institutions should aspire, the TLQPR can facilitate the spread of good practice throughout the institutions reviewed. In this way, the TLQPR will be a valuable and positive exercise for institutions and staff in the overall context of providing frameworks for the delivery of the highest quality of teaching and learning for Hong Kong students