

Self-Evaluation Documents
for the
Second Round Teaching and Learning Quality
Process Reviews
from
The Chinese University of Hong Kong

The Chinese University of Hong Kong

Second Round Teaching and Learning Quality Process Reviews (TLQPRs)

Self-Evaluation Document

Introduction

Consistent with its mission* and vision, The Chinese University of Hong Kong (CUHK) believes that quality teaching and learning is not only desirable, but necessary and achievable. To ensure its educational programming can and does work effectively within a framework of a research-intensive university, CUHK has established a variety of policies and procedures, inducements and aids to monitor, maintain and assist quality in teaching delivery and learning outcomes. The various mechanisms used for quality assurance, incentive and assistance are described in the following sections.

By employing a variety of mechanisms, CUHK has adopted a strategy that helps all staff, students, Departments, Faculties and Colleges to take part in at least some aspects of CUHK's quality processes and that these constituents' contributions can be coherently used for purposes of continuous quality improvement.

CUHK attempts to appropriately balance its quality assurance systems and its encouragement of quality enhancement initiatives. There is a measured and intended delocalisation and diversity to the particular processes being emphasized at any particular unit level and at a particular point in time. As progress in teaching and learning does vary across Faculty/Departmental/Unit programmes, each is expected to have and use the type of quality assurance, assistance and incentive mechanisms that best fits with the Unit's need but which is within the framework of CUHK's strategic plan for continuous quality improvement in teaching and learning. This level of delocalisation is intended to enhance a sense of ownership for the procedures used, and avoid or reduce a tendency for minimal compliance by academics with systems that are imposed in a top-down fashion.

CUHK's Strategic Plan has placed an emphasis on student-centred learning. The operational plan for this strategy is to "help faculty to adopt new roles as follows:

- devote larger proportions of time to students;
- shift from our past emphasis on what teachers wanted to teach to what students need to learn;
- focus on student outcomes;
- use appropriate teaching technologies; and
- accept accountability for what student outcomes do occur."

* The mission of CUHK is '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, in order of priority, Hong Kong, China as a whole, and the wider world community' .

1. Design of Curricula

A. The role of design input from staff, employers, students and others

The expertise and knowledge of CUHK's teaching staff are regarded as significant resources for the University's on-going efforts in curriculum review and design. Ideas for improvement at the course level normally originate from the teaching staff. In general if ideas are supported by the relevant Department Boards they will be forwarded to the relevant Curriculum Committees for comment, validation and/or revision. Design of courses is viewed as a collaborative responsibility involving teaching staff across all levels.

Annual retreats are often organized by Departments and Faculties for purposes of curriculum review, during which teachers are encouraged to offer suggestions for improvements in curricula, the delivery of courses, and the quality of student intake and performance. Normally reports for each retreat are reviewed by Department Boards and then forwarded to the Faculty Board for information. Practices assessed by a given Department are typically shared amongst other Departments in the same Faculty. For example, in 2000-01, more than 75% of the teaching faculty in the Faculty of Business Administration attended their department/school retreats. The Faculty of Medicine organized its annual retreat in 2001 as a two-day retreat involving all teachers for information-sharing, soliciting advice for addressing expected difficulties in implementing and developing a more faculty-wide ownership for the major curriculum changes introduced in September 2001. Attendance in this retreat included every teacher in the Faculty with a CUHK appointment and nearly three dozen additional adjunct teachers holding appointments in the Hospital Authority (see [Appendix 1](#)).

Views of alumni and employers pertaining to curricula are sought through periodic surveys. Faculty of Business Administration now conducts annual exit surveys in order to obtain feedback from fresh graduates of its Integrated Business Administration Programme (see exit survey questionnaire in [Appendix 2](#)). Academic Advisory Boards are formed in Departments for formative evaluations. The Advisory Boards comprise internationally renowned experts in the respective disciplines, representatives of professional bodies and local practitioners (see, as an example, the membership list of the Advisory Boards for the programmes of the Faculty of Business Administration in [Appendix 3](#)). Input sought from these outside bodies are used to assess the existing design of the University's curricula and has proved to be effective in enhancing educational quality.

Students are encouraged to provide suggestions and formative evaluation comments, through a variety of formal and informal channels listed below. The feedback obtained pertains to courses and to the design of curricula, programmes and courses being offered:

- The Senate Staff-student Consultative Committee and Staff-student Consultative Committees at Department/Faculty levels.
- Departments' Curriculum Committees in which there are student representatives.
- Surveys of students' opinions.
- Student advisory system in Departments, in which each student is assigned a teacher as Academic Advisor.

- Discussion forums are held by Departments in which Department Chairmen meet with students to discuss the curricula and teaching. This is most common when the Department concerned is considering a major revision to the curriculum.
- Course-based student forums on the web serve as an effective channel for students to voice their opinions.
- Meetings with External/Visiting Examiners.
- Participation in Department Boards as student members or observers.
- Informal channels such as interaction between teachers and students.

External/Visiting Examiners' views on the appropriateness of the curricula, and areas for further improvements and advancement are solicited, which is in accordance with recommendations made by UGC's Review Panel after the first TLQPR Visit in 1996. Reports from the External/Visiting Examiners are discussed in Department Board meetings or circulated among Department members. A sample of a Visiting Examiner's report and the response from the Faculty of Engineering is provided in [Appendix 4](#).

Throughout CUHK, an increasing number of short-term Visiting Scholars has enabled greater awareness and stimulated aspirations for further developments in various programmes of study. Documents published by relevant professional bodies and accreditation reports following a curriculum review are referenced and used as guides in curriculum renewal efforts. Departments also consult overseas experts in the related fields to improve their curricula.

A major curriculum revision recently introduced for the M.B.Ch.B. and Nursing Programmes accounted for significant input from various sources, including staff, employers, alumni, students and external bodies (see details of this review in [Appendix 5](#)).

B. Work to bring input together into a coherent curriculum while providing a degree of flexibility appropriate to programme goals

It is CUHK's policy to support appropriate freedom of academic departments and enable them to have as much programme flexibility as possible in order to help the units achieve their own defined programme goals. CUHK's overriding policies for curriculum review are best characterized as the provision of support to new initiatives whenever targets for curricula developments are achievable and at internationally recognized standards for quality.

Therefore, within CUHK, the design of most new curricula and the revision of existing curricula are normally initiated by senior academic staff in their capacity as members of Department/Faculty Curriculum Planning Committees. The normal practice of CUHK's academic units is to consult or involve teaching staff with the express purpose of enabling a full debate of any new proposals for new or changed programmes at each level of the review process. Recommendations for new curricula and major revision of existing curricula are, as required by CUHK's policies, deliberated by the relevant Department Board, then the relevant Faculty Board, and then by the University's Senate. This process is a collaborative responsibility of staff at all levels. An illustration of such coherent efforts on curriculum development is provided (see [Appendix 6](#)).

Systematic and formative evaluation is sought for the proposed initiatives or for new or revised curricula using various outside units and institutions (e.g., accreditation reports of professional programmes, input from Advisory Boards, External/Visiting Examiners' annual reports, surveys of

employers and CUHK graduates, and by individual academic unit's visits to other centres that offer similar tertiary educational programmes).

C. Assurance of the standard of academic awards offered by CUHK

In order to ensure the standard of academic awards offered by CUHK, all teaching Departments review their curricula according to relevant criteria (i.e., pedagogical principles, needs of the discipline, accreditation criteria of professions and/or changing market needs). Some reviews are done annually, others less frequently, with the period between reviews usually being a function of how recently a major curriculum review or accreditation has occurred.

Views from teachers and students concerned are regarded as important input by Departments in revising existing or introducing new programmes. Emphasis is also put on the importance of language proficiency of students regardless of their discipline, and language enhancement components are added to different programmes as appropriate. For revisions of curricula, formal endorsement by Department Boards and approval by Faculty Boards are required. For introduction of new programmes, approval by the University's higher levels of authority, the Senate APC and the Senate, is also necessary. Thus, all teachers and units of CUHK take on the revision and introduction of programmes as a collaborative responsibility.

All Departments have set up Examination Panels in accordance with requirements set by the University Senate. Examination Panels play an important role in ensuring that the standard of students is maintained at a high level. These Panels are the authority for approving or altering the grades for all courses recommended by the course teachers. They also make recommendations on the honours classification for final-year students for consideration by the respective Faculty Board concerned and for approval by the University's Undergraduate Examinations Board.

Apart from the above internal mechanisms, advice is also sought from outside units and institutions regarding the standard of CUHK's programmes. To this effect, External/Visiting Examiners' views are solicited for all programmes with a view to ensuring that CUHK's programmes of study are of an internationally recognized standard. Professional programmes are subject to accreditation by the relevant professional accrediting bodies to ensure that the standard of the awards and the education provided meet requirements of the profession. Illustrative details for accreditation for the programmes being offered by the Faculty of Engineering are provided (see [Appendix 7](#)).

D. Resolution of controversies

In revising the curricula or initiating proposals for new programmes, controversies relating to proposals are primarily handled at the department level and usually resolved at their initial stages. If controversies relating to programme proposals remain when brought forward to the Department Board or Faculty Board meetings, the respective Department Chairman and staff will explain the proposals and remaining unresolved issues to members of these Boards at which time any controversies are usually resolved.

2. Design of Teaching and Learning Process

A. Forums for staff to discuss issues

Regular meetings of Department Boards, Faculty Boards, as well as Teaching and Learning Quality Committees, Curriculum Committees, Graduate Divisions and Staff-student Consultative Committees of Departments and Faculties are forums from which the design of courses can be reviewed and teachers helped to improve their methods of teaching and learning. Following the first TLQPR Visit in 1996, Teaching and Learning Quality Committees were set up in all Faculties to ensure that coherent efforts were in place for teaching and learning quality. For example, the Business Administration Faculty's Committee on Teaching and Learning oversees the teaching and learning quality of all courses and monitoring of teaching quality. This Committee usually meets two or three times a year to discuss new teaching concepts and related implementation techniques. It coordinates with CUHK's Centre for Learning Enhancement And Research (CLEAR) (formerly Teaching Development Unit (TDU)) to organize workshops for new faculty members, or relating to new technologies or strategies.

Across the campus, various types of activities are organized for teachers to discuss and exchange views on teaching and learning, including:

- faculty forums and workshops;
- talks by guest speakers including internationally renowned scholars;
- departmental retreats;
- hosting international conferences that focus on the teaching and learning of the relevant subject matters;
- informal weekly lunch gatherings held by Departments;
- teachers of common classes meeting regularly to share views on teaching methods and materials; and
- electronic forums for teachers of different disciplines to exchange ideas.

As an illustration, a TLQPR-type workshop organized by the Faculty of Arts is described in [Appendix 8](#).

CUHK teachers, like those in its sister institutions, participate in conferences that focus on teaching and learning in their areas of specialization, such as the Conference on 'Quality in Teaching and Learning: A Celebration of Best Practices in Hong Kong Higher Education' and the Conference on 'Scholarship of Teaching and Learning' organized by the UGC.

The TDU was established in CUHK in 1994 as a formal structure for the creation of a supportive environment of excellence for teaching and learning, for teachers to reflect and exchange views on their teaching, and also for the organization of a series of teaching development programmes on a university-wide basis. After the TLQPR visit in 1996, the operation of the TDU was fine-tuned for efficiency and effectiveness. Following a two-day Think Tank on Teaching Enhancement organized by TDU for senior CUHK faculty in 1999, recently CUHK further re-formulated TDU into the present CLEAR with a mission consistent with the University's latest strategic plan for quality enhancement (as described on page 1). The CLEAR's mission is now to:

- (i) help teachers adopt teaching techniques that facilitate active student learning;

- (ii) assist teachers to establish evidence as to the effect of any changes introduced into the pedagogy on student learning;
- (iii) improve the quality of student learning and develop their independent, lifelong learning skills; and
- (iv) implement new pedagogy using innovative education research findings as a primary reference for the chosen directions, approaches and changes introduced.

Two new academic staff were appointed to CLEAR in early 2002 and have expanded CUHK's efforts by working with teaching staff to initiate and encourage engagement in quality enhancement initiatives at Faculty, Department or course levels. These ventures are project-based in nature with the intention of addressing issues raised through the feedback channels described in this document, and by implementing the types of innovations described in subsequent sections. Most importantly, this work includes conducting research into adult education so that evidence related to learning outcomes is integral to on-going re-design in curriculum and adopted pedagogies. CUHK's strategy is thus one of using the evidence of successful ventures of some local teachers to encourage others to attempt similar initiatives and to guide their direction in doing so.

B. Consideration of desired and achieved learning outcomes

In its consideration of desired and achieved learning outcomes, CUHK has paid much attention to the means for improving student learning within the local text. In order to measure and achieve desired learning outcomes, an appropriate variety of means are adopted.

Various forms of academic counselling sessions are arranged: small group counselling for first year students, lunch meetings with second and third year students, tutorials/seminars for acquiring IT proficiency, learning paper writing techniques and using WebCT. Details of the activities pertaining to academic counselling provided by the Faculty of Education and the Faculty of Engineering are illustrated in [Appendix 9](#).

Students are encouraged to consult teachers on matters related to their courses of study. Academic Advisor Systems are in place for assisting students with academic problems. Teaching Supervision Schemes are used in which an experienced teacher co-teaches courses with a less experienced teacher. The School of Graduate Studies and CLEAR put emphases on training Graduate Assistants in a variety of skills including teaching.

In the Faculty of Arts, pre-registration of elective courses is arranged by Departments in order to facilitate the planning of teaching well in advance of implementation. In some other Faculties, pre-term courses are provided for those students who lack certain basic knowledge in their major field of study.

Apart from classroom contact, students are also provided with out-of-class training related to skills necessary for their specific discipline (e.g., decision-making, human relationships, effective communications and continuous self-enhancement). This type of training uses various formats (e.g., study-abroad programmes, summer internships, overseas exchanges). An illustration of 'out-of-class' training in the Faculty of Business Administration is provided in [Appendix 10](#).

Through these various processes and activities, which both teachers and students participate in, the delivery of quality education becomes a collaborative responsibility for both parties. Through their

interaction with teachers in these processes and activities, students also understand their own role in the quality process and the importance of having the process as an on-going one.

C. Role of external inputs and student views

The extensive role of External/Visiting Examiners was noted in Section 1A. Input is also sought from other outside units, all of which play a key role on the effectiveness of CUHK's education quality work. Academics and professionals of high standing from Hong Kong, China and overseas institutions are regularly appointed as Adjunct Professors and Visiting Scholars/Professors for the Departments. The involvement of Adjunct Professors in teaching and learning activities within the Faculty of Social Science is provided (see [Appendix 11](#)).

Faculty Advisory Boards serve as an important bridge between the Faculties and industry, as well as the community at large. For instance, the Faculty Advisory Board of the Faculty of Engineering provided constructive advice for tracking job expertise required by industry in the job survey conducted by CUHK's Office of Student Affairs.

Academic alliances are formed by the Departments with their counterparts in other institutions. For instance, in 1998 the School of Accountancy initiated the formation of the *Dragon League* - an academic alliance with the accounting departments in Peking University, National Taiwan University, and Fudan University. The goal was to promote academic exchanges between the mainland, Hong Kong and Taiwan, and a mission to contribute to accounting education and research by generating cooperative synergies among the accounting faculties at these leading universities. In addition to joint research and educational projects, the League's members now host annual student case competitions on a rotational basis and co-organize executive training programmes.

Views of students regarding the design of teaching and learning processes are obtained from CUHK's course and teacher evaluation exercises. Systematized and compulsory, these exercises help ensure that measured educational outcomes are taken into account in designing the quality assurance processes. While Faculties are given the flexibility to design their own course evaluation questionnaires, all must include two common questions on 'performance of the teacher' and 'performance of the course'. The questionnaires are reviewed systematically and views of students are incorporated and if appropriate with additional input collected via departmental Staff-student Consultative Committees. For cases that call for substantial improvement, the Department Chairman discuss concerns with the respective teacher with a view to encouraging and helping improve performance.

The data collected through questionnaires are analyzed using tailor-made computer programmes. As illustration, the course evaluation results for the Faculty of Science for the 1st term of 2001-02 are in [Appendix 12](#). The ACCESS system which incorporates norming scales has been developed and used for the course evaluation exercise in the M.B.Ch.B., Nursing and Pharmacy Programmes of the Faculty of Medicine. (details of the system as used for the Nursing Programme are provided in [Appendix 13](#))

Students also provide input via the Student Advisory Scheme, Staff-student Consultative Committees, Department Boards, regular postgraduate meetings, newsgroups on the internet, participation in meetings with External/Visiting Examiners, structured discussion forums, opinion

surveys, newsletters, as well as daily interaction with teachers. Faculty Boards and Department Boards have student membership. Some Departments have Mentor Systems whereby students can express their views about the teaching and learning process. These mechanisms for seeking students' views are done on a continuing basis. These activities all designed to and do help staff and students understand and execute their roles in the quality process on an on-going basis.

D. Support for innovation to improve/encourage student learning

A high priority is given to encouraging Faculties and Departments to undertake quality enhancement initiatives in order to implement CUHK's strategic plan. Clearly such initiatives must be contextualised at the unit level and often have a project-based nature. Over the past six years a wide range of these quality enhancement projects have taken place and many are currently in operation. Some initiatives were funded by UGC's TDGs, some by internal CUHK grants, and others funded by the respective Faculty/Department. However, all initiatives were developed from the respective units and their views as to the most pertinent issues to address, given monitoring of learning needs.

Evidence for both the number and quality of such initiatives comes from the success of CUHK in obtaining TDGs. Convincing rationales for initiated projects come from areas which have already had at least initial attention, and good grant proposals are normally conditional upon a level of experience from trial ventures. The record of CUHK in obtaining TDG grants is a testimony to a high level of quality enhancement and an indication of the quality of it.

Departments have also made use of advanced technology to improve students' learning environment. With the help of technology, teaching and learning are no longer confined to the classroom during school hours. In recent years, the Faculties have been promoting web-based teaching and learning. CUHK's Information Technology Service Centre (ITSC) has set up different platforms that provide an environment for the operation of various web-based teaching tools. Teachers can posit multimedia course materials on the Internet for more vivid illustration, or offer course-related hyperlinks for students as supplementary learning materials. Discussions among students or with teachers are also facilitated. The ITSC also contributes to the preparation of multimedia teaching resources. Advanced teaching and learning strategies used by Departments include:

- use of problem-based learning case studies;
- development of web-pages, including course-related hyperlinks for supplementary learning materials;
- role plays and simulations;
- video records of classroom activities put into image banks and subsequently accessible via the Internet for classroom teaching;
- introduction of new professional skills laboratories; and
- introduction of evidence-based methodologies for assisting students to critically analyze literature.

Departments also provide outside classroom training to arouse students' interest in learning and help students acquire the necessary skills in their own discipline. The activities include:

- fieldwork studies within and outside Hong Kong;
- summer internships; experiential learning;

- case analysis training;
- residence week and study week; and
- Distinguished Guest Speaker Series.

3. Design of Student Assessment and Use of Assessment Results

A. Allocation of responsibility for assessment

Recognizing that the measurement of the outcomes of delivered education is very important for the further improvement of its performance in teaching and learning, CUHK has incorporated various student assessment protocols.

Department Boards, and in particular the teachers, assume primary responsibility for student assessment, and make use of the assessment results to improve teaching and learning. For formal assessments, an Examination Panel is set up for each programme offered by CUHK and has responsibility for monitoring the grading standard and approving course grades. Grading recommended by the teachers that deviate significantly from the University Senate's grading guidelines are reviewed carefully, and corrective actions are taken where appropriate. The Examination Panel meets with the External/Visiting Examiners during their visits to the Departments. Feedback given by the External/Visiting Examiners on the quality and format of the questions as well as grading standard is regarded as very important by the Examination Panel. Recommendations are conveyed to the respective teachers for improvement.

Apart from formal examinations, students are also assessed through continuous assessment, which is not just for purposes of grading but is also used to help students develop self-assessment abilities. Through this process, quality assurance processes and activities can be orientated to the process of student learning. Continuous assessments include formative examinations on the Web, group projects, quizzes and web discussion forums. These approaches have enabled teachers to provide timely feedback to students. Features of continuous assessment adopted by the Faculty of Medicine are described (see [Appendix 14](#)). The Department of Chinese Language and Literature and the English Language Teaching Unit use pre- and post-course assessments to measure the effectiveness of language proficiency courses. The data collected are used to improve the content and implementation of the courses.

Generally CUHK students are encouraged to participate in local and overseas competitions, which serve as arenas in which students not only demonstrate their academic attainments but are used as benchmarks for desired student performance. By comparing the performance of CUHK students with that of the students from other institutions, areas for further improvement and weaknesses are being identified.

External professional examinations are sometimes employed to serve as another mode of assessment. For example, Accounting students are required to attend the Joint Examination Scheme of the Hong Kong Society of Accountants (HKSA) and the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA). Since December 1994, 46% of the prize winners of ACCA Joint Examination Scheme are CUHK graduates. CUHK graduates have gained recognition not only in local examinations but also in the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA) Examination where some have received the Silver Medal and Sells Awards. CUHK accounting

graduates usually obtain a professional qualification within 2 years after graduation. These results were regarded as value added data that desired educational outcomes were attained.

Engineering students are encouraged to participate in various external competitions, such as the Goldman Sachs Global Leader competitions. A list of competitions attended by Business Administration students and their attainments is in Annex 6 to Appendix 10.

B. Mechanisms for feedback to improve assessment

In order to help monitor student assessment, and in response to UGC's Review Panel after the 1st TLQPR Visit in 1996, stating that CUHK should have a systematic framework for soliciting views from students, CUHK has now put in place various mechanisms for seeking students' feedback on the assessment methods. The mechanisms include the compulsory course evaluation exercise, student membership in various committees and web interaction. These multiple approaches aid communications between students and staff regarding teaching and learning quality and are developing a sense of collaborative responsibility for improving quality.

The Faculties take course evaluation results into account when considering contract renewal of teachers. The implementation of the course evaluation exercise is under close scrutiny in CUHK, and questionnaires are continuously refined by Faculties and Departments. Results are carefully analysed, and feedback is compared across programmes within the same Faculty. The teachers concerned are provided with not only individual results but in comparison to Faculty or Departmental norms. The Department/Unit Chairpersons are provided with results of all teachers. Deans are provided with a summary of the results. Summarized results of closed-ended questions are released to students upon request. Faculties require that necessary follow-up actions are taken by the Department/Unit Chairpersons with the teachers concerned. The results are also discussed in general terms in the Faculties' Staff-student Consultative Committees. Teachers with identified weaknesses in teaching are encouraged to reflect on ways to improve their teaching, to observe classes taught by their peers, and to attend workshops organized by CLEAR and/or receive one-to-one additional assistance from CLEAR staff.

While the course evaluation exercise is always done at the end of each academic term, many Departments administer mid-term course evaluations as a means for formative feedback to help teachers improve their teaching during the second half of the teaching term.

Student representation on Department Boards (as student observers or as student members), the Staff-student Consultative Committee, the Student Advisory System, and regular meetings between teachers and Teaching Assistants are used as mechanisms for assessing students' learning process and to determine if the educational objectives have been achieved. Illustrative samples of agenda and minutes of the meetings of Staff-student Consultative Committees of the Faculty of Arts and the Faculty of Science are provided in [Appendix 15](#).

Course-based newsgroups or curriculum web pages are used by Departments to provide students with the channels to voice opinions and suggestions on all aspects of a course, including the assessment issues.

C. Process/activities to enhance the linkage of assessment to educational objectives

All Departments and Faculties of CUHK have set forth clear educational objectives for the programmes they offer. The objectives of each programme are designed in such a way that they will suit the needs of the community and the students. The student assessments are designed in reference to the fulfillment of educational objectives for the programmes offered by CUHK.

Given the importance of this aspect, CUHK has resorted to various processes and activities to enhance the linkage of assessment to educational objectives. One of the most important mechanisms used by Departments and Faculties is the assessment of students' academic results by Examination Panels. Panels meet at the end of each term to review all grade lists of undergraduate courses with reference to University guidelines. In order to enhance the linkage of assessment to educational objectives, cases of academic problems of students that are identified by the Examination Panels are followed up by the teachers and Departments concerned. In most cases, they will understand the problems of the students concerned and do as much as they can to help the students. As an illustration, the papers of a meeting of the Examination Panel of a programme is in [Appendix 16](#).

Students are also assessed through continuous assessment. When problems are identified regarding students' learning progress, actions are taken to help. Some students may be referred for academic counselling. Other methods like interviews are also used. For example, the Bachelor of Business Administration Programme's Associate Director interviews a student twice in an academic term if the student's grade point average in the previous term was lower than 1.50. Such interviews have proved to be very effective in assisting the respective students to meet set educational objectives in this particular programme. As a continuous process to help students achieve the educational objectives, some teachers attach feedback sheets to students' assignments, providing students with specific comments about their strengths and weaknesses. For postgraduate students, their academic performance is always closely monitored by their supervisors and the Divisions concerned. Such close monitoring of students' learning process demonstrates that CUHK's quality assurance processes are orientated to the process of student learning.

For those programmes that require students to engage in practicums or internships (e.g., Faculty of Education and the Faculty of Engineering), teachers and teaching supervisors pay regular visits to students during their practicum or internship. These results are used to assess student learning and to help the students solve problems. For the Faculty of Education, pre- and post-teaching practice meetings are held to prepare students for the practicum as well as to gather feedback after students' teaching practice.

Some Departments require the students to do final year projects as a graduation requirement (eg. Faculty of Engineering). For these, a small number of final year students are assigned to each academic staff member to ensure quality supervision is available. Engineering Departments have fine-tuned their assignment and grading mechanism for the final year projects so as to ensure a fair allocation of projects to students and a uniform assessment of students' performance. This measure in assessment has proved to be effective in helping the students achieve the educational objectives of the study programmes.

As a response to the comments given by the Review Panel after the 1st TLQPR Visit in 1996 regarding External/Visiting Examiners, input is gathered from External/Visiting Examiners

concerning the enhancement of the linkage of assessment to educational objectives. The practice used by the Faculty of Medicine is illustrated in [Appendix 17](#).

4. Implementation Quality

A. Staff recruitment and development

Recognizing that the quality of teaching and learning relies heavily upon the quality of teachers, CUHK has spared no effort in the recruitment and development of teachers. Clear policies and guidelines are laid down to facilitate effective practices of staff management at both Department and Faculty levels. The guidelines and policies are under constant review so as to ensure that any personnel matters involving the appointment of new teaching staff, contract renewal of existing staff, and review of staff for new academic titles, substantiation, crossing of the efficiency bar and promotion are dealt with in a fair and unbiased manner. The setting of such clear policies and guidelines is also an evidence of CUHK's 'seriousness of purpose' in its commitment to quality teaching and learning. Staff recruitment is initiated at the Department level and all new appointments are made in line with the strategic planning of the Department concerned. Shortlisting and interviewing of candidates are conducted by Departments' Standing Selection Committees, whose membership has been approved by the Department Executive Committees. Recommendations for appointments are then considered by the Selection Committees of the Faculty concerned and further approved by the Administrative and Planning Committee (AAPC) of the University.

As training and development are very important for teachers, especially for the new or junior ones, orientation of new teachers is provided by the Department Chairmen or Directors of Studies concerned. Teachers are also encouraged by Departments with financial support to attend orientation and teaching enhancement programmes, and workshops regularly organized by CLEAR and outside organizations.

Apart from the training and development provided for teachers, orientation and training workshops are also provided for Teaching Assistants who serve as course tutors. Every year, meetings or discussion forums that focus on methods of conducting effective tutorials are organized by Departments for the tutors. Some Departments also run workshops for tutors with the Department's 'exemplary' teachers as speakers. The Teaching Assistants are also encouraged to participate in the tailored training workshops for Teaching Assistants that are organized by the Graduate School and CLEAR.

The performance of Teaching Assistants is closely monitored by Departments. Teaching Assistants are required to attend all lectures related to their assigned courses. Teachers conduct class observations of their Teaching Assistants during their tutorial sessions. For some Departments, the performance of the Teaching Assistants is evaluated by both the teachers concerned and the students. The teachers have regular meetings with the Teaching Assistants to provide guidance and feedback to the latter. The Teaching Assistants are required to respond to the evaluation.

B. Promotion of teaching standard

Quality teaching has been made one of the important criteria for staff promotion, substantiation, crossing of efficiency bar, contract renewal and change of academic title. This is also an area which the Review Panel had commented on after the 1st TLQPR Visit. Teaching performance is included in the annual appraisals that are completed on all CUHK teaching staff. Compulsory course evaluation results over a number of years are considered (see example in [Appendix 18](#)). As a means to further improve the teaching and learning quality of CUHK, those teachers who have attained outstanding performance in teaching but who are not interested in pursuing research are made Teaching Fellows, so that they can concentrate their efforts on teaching.

Teaching and Learning Quality Committees are formed in Departments and Faculties. These committees meet regularly to discuss teaching and learning issues and oversee the implementation of quality assurance processes within the Departments or Faculties. These committees contribute to the degree of coherence in the various quality processes at different levels of the Departments and Faculties.

As a form of support and incentive for teachers, those teachers with outstanding performance in teaching are recommended for teaching awards at Department/Faculty level. Teachers with the most outstanding performance in teaching in a Faculty are nominated for the Vice-Chancellor's Exemplary Teaching Award, first introduced in 1999-2000.

Surveys on Teaching Assistants are conducted by Departments to monitor their teaching performance. Some Departments also give awards to those tutors with outstanding performance in teaching. To promote the sharing of good practices, Teaching Assistant award recipients are invited to give seminars or talks on the tutoring skill at the beginning of each school year to all new Teaching Assistants. CLEAR's orientation programme for Teaching Assistants utilizes experienced Teaching Assistants to help in effectively guiding new Teaching Assistants.

Teachers also benefit from the External/Visiting Examiners' comments and evaluation of the performance of the courses and students. Such inputs from outside bodies can help enrich teachers' teaching skills and thus contribute to the overall effectiveness of CUHK's education quality work.

C. Feedback from students

As already noted, the collection of feedback from students and appropriate follow-up actions regarding teaching and learning is regarded by CUHK as a most important elements for the achievement of quality teaching and learning. In light of its significant role, the course evaluation system is constantly kept under review, and course evaluation results are systematically reviewed by the respective teachers, Department Chairman and Departmental/Faculty Teaching and Learning Quality Committees.

In addition, Faculty Deans conduct interviews with student representatives from different Departments/ programmes. The suggestions made by students in these interviews are followed up by Faculties and Departments. As already noted, feedback from students are also collected through student membership on Department Boards, Faculty Boards, the Senate, the Senate Staff-student Consultative Committees and Staff-student Consultative Committees in Departments and Faculties.

When negative feedback is received from students regarding the teaching performance of teachers, the respective Department Chairman and Faculty Dean review cases in more detail and have taken appropriate actions including non-renewal of teachers' contracts in extreme cases.

D. Peer review

Peer observation of teaching is encouraged but not compulsory in Departments. In many Departments, however, all teachers are encouraged to observe each other's classes on a voluntary basis. Some Departments also encourage their teachers to videotape their lectures for self and/or peer observation. For those Departments that have a significant number of contract staff, Department Chairmen frequently observe selected classes as a means for assessing the teaching performance of teachers. This also helps inform decisions regarding contract renewal.

Team teaching is a common practice in many undergraduate and postgraduate programmes. Teachers engaged in team teaching plan their courses and identify teaching materials together. Teachers are learning from the strengths of each other.

A variation of peer review employed by Departments is the use of a subject team leader's or Department Chairman's visit to classes taught by new teachers. Many Departments also make the course outlines of all courses accessible to all teachers and students. These outlines are also kept at the Faculty Office for reference by other teachers upon request, or posted on the departmental web pages for easy access by colleagues and students.

E. Measures of the student learning experience outside the classroom

Given that the student learning outcome is the most significant and major issue in quality teaching, CUHK has focused on students' learning process, taking into account how students learn, how they acquire their learning skills and their self-learning capabilities.

Different measures of student learning experiences outside the classroom are adopted by CUHK. Various committees are formed in Departments and Faculties for the provision of various student services that enhance student learning through activities. The organization of these activities enables the teachers and Departments to understand the learning process of students. For example, in the Faculty of Education, a Teacher Festival is independently organized by the students of the Bachelor of Education in Language Education Programme. Competitions and orientation programmes are organized annually. The Faculty's Student Affairs Committee is constituted by the Scholarships Sub-committee, the Staff-student Consultative Sub-committee, the Student Activities Sub-committee and the Student Counselling Sub-committee. These committees jointly provide a full range of student services geared to enhance student learning.

Student-led extra-curricular activities are also strongly supported by Departments. For example, many student-led extra-curricular activities are organized by the Faculty of Arts (e.g., English drama competitions, student creative writing journal, choir concerts and orchestral recitals organized by students, concerts for new music compositions, European cultural festival, Japan Festival, philosophy camp and public lectures on philosophy). The Faculty of Engineering organizes parallel activities (e.g., programming contests, hardware design competitions, regional and international programming contests). The Faculty of Education's parallel activities include teacher-student competitions and orientation camps (see details in [Appendix 19](#)).

F. Teacher-student interaction

Apart from the organization of various outside-classroom activities for students, student-oriented teaching that emphasizes students' independent study skills are increasingly used by Departments as one of several means for enhanced teacher-student interaction. With the advancement of information technology, many teachers now communicate with students via electronic means (emails and Web forums and chat rooms). Forums on teaching and learning quality are organized by Faculties and Departments, where teachers and students can discuss and communicate freely on issues related to teaching and learning. They also communicate and reflect on what they expect from each other in a friendly atmosphere during Department retreats.

As described earlier, many Departments have Academic Advisor Systems, in which each student is assigned a teacher as his/her advisor throughout the period of study in the Department. Departments also have Staff-student Consultative Committees that provide an effective forum for teachers and students' communications. Student activities are also supported by Departments and teachers who participate in most of the activities.

G. Mechanisms to respond to these indicators

In addition to mechanisms noted earlier, CUHK has also made use of other mechanisms to respond to the various indicators for implementation quality. The first was by establishing CUHK's Task Force on Teaching and Learning Quality on a permanent basis soon after the 1st TLQPR Visit. In addition to the further promotion of teaching and learning quality at CUHK, the Task Force also facilitated the bidding for Teaching Development Grants and monitored projects funded by the Grants. In view of the importance of the Task Force, it was recently re-constituted, with the Vice-Chancellor, one representative from each Faculty, the Dean of the Graduate School, the Registrar, the Director of CLEAR, and the Director of the School of Continuing Studies as members.

Committees on Teaching and Learning Quality were set up in Departments and Faculties after the 1st TLQPR Visit in 1996. These committees serve as forums for Departments and Faculties to respond to the various indicators for the promotion of teaching standard and improvement of the quality of teaching and learning. For instance, at a Faculty level, a Committee on Teaching and Learning Quality was established in the Faculty of Business Administration in 1996. In the Faculty of Social Science, a task force was appointed by the Dean to study the means to develop good teaching culture in the Faculty. The Faculty of Science established its Teaching Quality Assurance Review Committee in 1994 to coordinate matters relating to teaching and learning quality. Other Faculties have also established similar committees for the same purpose.

Starting from 1997, information on the activities undertaken by Departments to enhance teaching and learning quality, and problems encountered in teaching is made a compulsory item in the Annual Departmental Records submitted to CUHK's Vice-Chancellor. The Records should also include a listing of individual teachers' activities in the Department and description of all related teaching activities.

All these institutionalized policies on quality teaching and learning initiated by CUHK demonstrate its 'seriousness of purpose' in further improving its quality teaching and learning.

5. Commitment of Resources to Education Quality Work

A. How does CUHK use resources to enhance education quality work?

Given the paramount importance of education quality work, CUHK and its Faculties and Departments regard the delivery of quality education to students as a collaborative responsibility. Therefore considerable resources have been directed by Faculties and Departments to the implementation of various activities for the further enhancement of education quality work. This is made possible under the new funding methodology of CUHK, where the decision-making authority for the deployment of resources is decentralized to Faculties and Departments, which in turn make use of the resources for education quality work. CUHK has adopted the credit unit system for its undergraduate programmes (except the MBChB and Nursing programmes) and students have to take elective courses in addition to courses of their major programmes. A Department that does well in teaching can attract more students to take the elective courses it offers, and as a result will gain student numbers and hence resources. This new funding methodology therefore provides incentives for Faculties and Departments to further improve in the quality of teaching, among other things.

CUHK has also directed its resources to support various endeavours for the further enhancement of education quality work. A breakdown of CUHK's expenditure for this purpose during the period January 2001 to February 2002 is provided in Appendix 20.

To meet the additional IT and language proficiency requirements of students, CUHK has directed additional resources to Faculties and Departments for the hiring of teachers in these two areas.

CUHK contributes infrastructure services for supporting education quality work of all units. As mentioned earlier in this document, CLEAR organizes various teaching and learning related workshops, seminars and short courses for teachers to reflect upon their teaching and help teachers further improve their teaching skills. The Independent Learning Centre and the English Language Teaching Unit also play an active role to help students improve their language proficiency. The ITSC provides sufficient technical support to those teachers who conduct web-based teaching. From time to time, workshops/seminars are conducted by ITSC for introducing new and user-friendly software packages and for discussion of issues related to this new mode of teaching and learning.

B. Are quality assurance processes/activities adequately funded?

In the Faculties, Departments are allocated one-line budgets with the Department Chairmen as budget-holders. Funds are allocated from the one-line budgets to support various quality assurance processes and activities, such as:

- appointment of distinguished scholars as Visiting Professors/Scholars on a longer term basis;
- staff training and development;
- organization of academic conferences, seminars or workshops on teaching and learning;
- arrangement of visits by academic scholars;
- appointment of computer staff to support the use of new technologies in teaching and research;

- upgrades for computing and audio-visual equipment in Departments' resources centres, multi-media classrooms, computer laboratories and other kinds of teaching/research laboratories to promote student learning; and
- special projects, like annual art exhibitions for presenting the work of Fine Arts students, and the development of Japanese language textbooks and tapes, etc.

An illustration of the Faculties' use of resources for upgrading facilities for purposes of enhancing teaching and learning quality is in [Appendix 21](#).

Funding support for various quality assurance processes and activities are also provided by CUHK through:

- Special Equipment Grants for large equipment items that are not able to be supported by the one-line budgets;
- Library book funds for purchase of CUHK's library resources and subscriptions of teaching-related journals; and
- Special grants for teachers to conduct teaching- and learning-related research projects in summer.

Departments and Faculties can always make special requests to the Resource Allocation Committee (RAC) for financial support for activities relating to teaching and learning quality. Such requests are always favourably considered by the RAC.

C. Incentives established to reward good performance in delivering quality education

Various mechanisms are used by CUHK as incentives to reward excellent performance in delivering quality education. As mentioned in the previous sections of this document, increasing weight has been attached to teaching performance as an independent assessment criterion for staff appraisal purposes during the review of teachers for substantiation, promotion, crossing of efficiency bar and contract renewal.

At Department and Faculty levels, teachers who have performed exceptionally well in delivering quality education are rewarded for their efforts. As noted, annual exemplary teaching awards are implemented in Departments and Faculties to recognize and encourage teaching excellence. Teachers with very outstanding performance in teaching are recommended for the annual Vice-Chancellor's Exemplary Teaching Award.

Some Departments and Faculties also give awards to teaching support staff, such as Teaching Assistants, for their good performance in teaching.

D. Do individual components of education quality work receive funding sufficient to perform their missions?

As seen in the previous sections of this document, various mechanisms are used by CUHK for the delivery of education quality work. The implementation of the mechanisms have to be supported, in one way or another, by resources from the Departments, the Faculties, the University or other sources. As illustrated by the financial statement in [Appendix 20](#), a lot of resources have been directed by CUHK to the implementation of various measures and activities for the delivery of

education work.

Given that technical support is very important for the delivery of education quality work, teachers and students are provided with sufficient technical support in their course of teaching and learning. For example, teachers are provided with notebook computers for teaching purposes, and students can have access to computing facilities and audio-visual services. Seed money is also set aside in Faculties to subsidize the application of IT in teaching and learning.

Resources are allocated to provide students with training beyond the classroom, such as participation in international competitions that allow students to gain valuable exposure to different cultures. For instance, for the Faculty of Business Administration, about HK\$330,000 was spent in 2000-01 on undergraduate student activities, serving a total of 435 students. Details of the breakdown are in [Appendix 22](#). Half of the funding was from the Faculty's private fund.

Endowment funds are set up in Faculties to support students to pursue studies or exchanges at overseas institutions with a view to widening their scope and providing them with the chance to experience a different mode of learning process. Considerable staff time and resources are also put into the development and implementation of students' summer job training, internship, and mentor programmes. For instance, in the cases of exchange visits to other countries organized by the Faculty of Science, students are accompanied by staff of the Department concerned throughout the entire period of exchange so as to ensure the students' well-being. Financial subsidies are also provided by Departments and Faculties to needy students for such exchange activities. The Faculty of Business Administration has a Faculty Mentor Programme in Teaching Skills to offer advice to new faculty members in teaching matters. Two faculty members from each Department of the Faculty have generously supported the programme by acting as mentors. A membership list of the Faculty's mentor programme is in [Appendix 23](#).

Department and Faculty retreats, which provide good opportunities for teachers to exchange views on teaching- and learning-related matters, are supported financially by Departments and Faculties.

Processes are also in place in Faculties to determine appropriate teaching assignments and service workloads. For example, the Faculty of Business Administration has adopted a course release system to alleviate teaching workload for faculty members who are very much involved in curriculum reviews and organizing out-of-class training, such as the Associate Directors, Programme Directors and Department Chairmen. Over \$2m teaching relief funding was given to Departments in the recent MBA curriculum review exercise, to enable them to employ additional staff to take up teaching duties, so that colleagues involved in such a time-consuming exercise would not be overloaded.

Funding support has also been provided by CUHK through:

- Special Equipment Grants for large equipment items that are not able to be supported by the one-line budgets, e.g. establishment of UNIX servers to provide hardware support to teachers and students in the Department of Philosophy; upgrading of the language laboratory into a multimedia classroom and establishment of the computer room in the Department of Translation; and the purchase of special musical instruments in the Department of Music. As an illustration, the application for Special Equipment Grants 2001-02 by the Faculty of Social Science is in [Appendix 24](#).

- Library book funds for purchase of CUHK's library resources and subscriptions of teaching-related journals. Special items like reproductions of painting and calligraphy have been purchased using the funds.

Apart from the funding resources from Departments and Faculties, external funding is solicited for the development of learning enhancement projects, for example, the bidding of Teaching Development Grants from the Government. Direct grants, RGC Earmarked Research Grants and funds from the Standing Committee on Language Education and Research (SCOLAR) are used to conduct research with a focus on teaching and learning quality.

E. Do these principles of allocation filter down to the Unit level?

Under the one-line budget system, Faculties set up committees to assess the resources required and to monitor the sub-allocation and utilization of resources. The Departments then sub-allocate funds from their one-line budget to support various endeavours relating to the delivery of education quality work. There are internal guidelines governing the sub-allocation of resources.

Departments are committed to developing and upgrading their physical resources to promote students' learning such as:

- setting up of computer laboratories;
- upgrading of the self-access learning facilities in laboratories;
- setting up of research libraries;
- establishment of the multi-media classrooms;
- establishment of the Chinese Teaching Information Technology Centre by the Department of Chinese Language and Literature;
- establishment of a Centre for Scientific Modelling and Computation in the Faculty of Science to aid teaching and research;
- setting up of a new campus observatory by the Physics Department;
- setting up of a Consultation Room, a Bone-setting and Acupuncture Room, and a medicinal garden by the School of Chinese Medicine to provide laboratory and Clinical support for students; and
- setting up of a new Clinical Skills Laboratory at Prince of Wales Hospital, which is now rated as one of the world's top five skills laboratories.

CUHK also provides the Faculties with Academic Equipment Grants for special equipment needs. In the allocation of the Academic Equipment Grants to Departments, the Faculties accord a priority to requests for teaching equipments in laboratories, so as to make sure that the experimental setups are both adequate and up-to-date.

Departments are also encouraged to share some of the facilities and equipments with one another such that resources can be maximized.

Concluding Remarks

As seen from the foregoing paragraphs, more explicit mechanisms and policies have been put in place in CUHK after the first review visit by the TLQPR Panel in 1996. These have been

introduced to be consistent with CUHK's strategic planning for achieving quality teaching and learning.

CUHK offers a wide variety of programmes with different educational objectives and outcomes, the quality of which cannot be measured by one university-wide mechanism. By measured design CUHK provides Departments and Faculties with the flexibility in running their programmes and in how to monitor quality, assist with and provide incentives for improvements for teaching delivery and learning outcomes. Overlaying this strategy, the University has set policies, established procedures, provided programmes and funded facilities that provide an enabling infrastructure for individual units to execute their processes of quality assurance, assistance and incentives. CUHK believes these mechanisms and this strategy are indeed helping to not only maintain a culture of quality teaching and learning but also to improve within a context of expected continuous quality improvement.

THE CHINESE UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG

Second Round Teaching and Learning Quality Process Reviews (TLQPRs)

A List of Appendices to the Full-length Self-evaluation Document

(The appendices are readily available for members of the Review Panel upon request)

Appendix 1	Faculty of Medicine's curriculum retreat
Appendix 2	2001 Integrated BBA graduates exit survey conducted by the Faculty of Business Administration
Appendix 3	Membership lists of Advisory Boards of the Faculty of Business Administration
Appendix 4	A sample of a Visiting Examiner's recommendation and response from the Faculty of Engineering
Appendix 5	Major curriculum review of the M.B.Ch.B. and Nursing Programmes of the Faculty of Medicine
Appendix 6	The coherent effort and focus of the Faculty of Medicine in curriculum review
Appendix 7	Accreditation of the programmes offered by the Faculty of Engineering
Appendix 8	A workshop on TLQPR organized by the Faculty of Arts
Appendix 9	Academic counselling provided by the Faculty of Education and the Faculty of Engineering
Appendix 10	The 'out-of-class' training for students provided by the Faculty of Business Administration
Appendix 11	The involvement of Adjunct Professors in the teaching and learning activities of the Faculty of Social Science

Appendix 12	The course evaluation results of the Faculty of Science for the 1st term of 2001-02
Appendix 13	The 'ACCESS' system for course evaluation for the Nursing programme of the Faculty of Medicine
Appendix 14	Continuous assessment of the Faculty of Medicine
Appendix 15	Samples of agenda and minutes of the meetings of Staff-student Consultative Committees of the Faculty of Arts and the Faculty of Science
Appendix 16	The papers of a meeting of the Examination Panel of a programme of the Faculty of Social Science
Appendix 17	Activities to enhance the linkage of assessment to educational objectives in the Faculty of Medicine
Appendix 18	An example of the use of course evaluation statistics for staff review
Appendix 19	Some student-led extra-curricular activities organized by the Faculty of Education
Appendix 20	A breakdown of CUHK's expenditure from January 2001 to February 2002 for the further enhancement of education quality work
Appendix 21	The Faculties' use of resources for the further improvement of learning facilities
Appendix 22	Extra-curricular activities for undergraduate students of the Faculty of Business Administration
Appendix 23	A membership list of the mentor programme of the Faculty of Business Administration
Appendix 24	Application for Special Equipment Grants 2001-02 by the Faculty of Social Science