

The Chinese University of Hong Kong
Second Round Teaching and Learning Quality Process Reviews
School of Continuing Studies

Self-Evaluation Document

As a part of The Chinese University of Hong Kong, the School of Continuing Studies at CUHK places quality of its programmes and services as a top priority. A set of mechanisms has been designed and put in place in the School for the assurance of its teaching and learning quality. For the two Advanced Diploma Programmes included in this Second Round TLQPRs, respectively, in Leadership, Communication and Management, and in Security Studies (Distance Education), various quality assurance mechanisms are adopted as described below with specific reference to the design of curricula, teaching and learning process, student assessment, implementation quality, and commitment of resources to education quality work. The School strongly believes that only quality teaching and learning through its programmes could provide a truly rewarding continuing education to the adult learners. With that belief, the School is committed to uncompromising quality of its educational programmes and services, fully backed up by the required resource.

1. Design of Curricula

Programme Leaders are senior full-time staff members of the School of Continuing Studies (SCS), who have overall responsibilities for the design, development and implementation of their respective programmes. In the process of designing curricula, the Programme Leaders concerned always seek academic advice from CUHK Faculties and/or other academic institutions. Professional view and expertise from relevant industries are also sought to ensure that the curricula are useful for professional development. For the two Advanced Diploma Programmes concerned, professionals from the related industries were invited to serve as Programme Directors on a part-time basis for the respective programmes. The role of the Programme Directors is to provide academic and professional inputs to the respective Programmes in relation to the design, development, and implementation of the programmes. They discuss in detail with the Programme Leaders to formalise the programme proposals and to ensure that the programme design and contents are of high quality. The Duties of Programme Directors extracted from their appointment letter is in Appendix 1.

To further assure the quality of curricula, all new programme proposals and their curricula must go through a series of consultation, endorsement, and approval processes. Relevant academic Faculties of CUHK are invited to comment on the proposals and curricula. The proposals and curricula will be revised, as suggested, and submitted to the Senate Committee on Continuing Studies and the Senate Academic Planning Committee for endorsement. Each CUHK Faculty has a representative in the Senate Committee on Continuing Studies. Thus, views and comments of all CUHK Faculties vis-à-vis the development of SCS programmes could be expressed formally. At every stage, comments and inputs from the Faculties/Committees concerned will be addressed and incorporated into the programme proposals and curricula. Finally, the proposals and the curricula will be submitted to the Senate for approval. In brief, the two Advanced Diploma Programmes are accredited through CUHK. The endorsement and approval procedures for all SCS award-bearing programmes are in [Appendix 2](#).

Continuous efforts are put to further improve the design of curricula. For example, a Programme Advisory Committee (PAC) is formed for the “Disciplinary Forces and Security Programmes”, and the Advanced Diploma Programme in Security Studies (Distance Education) is one of such programmes and thus also receives advice from the PAC. Members of the PAC include the Programme Leader, the Programme Director, and teacher and student representatives. An objective of the PAC is to review the programme design. In PAC meetings, members review the programme curricula by taking into consideration students and teachers’ feedback. A meeting note of the PAC for the Disciplinary Forces and Security Programmes is in [Appendix 3](#).

SCS is aware that it is important to keep the curricula up to date. For revisions of curricula, formal endorsement by the Senate Committee on Continuing Studies is required. In a sense, any changes to the current curricula have to be reviewed and supported by all Faculties of CUHK before the changes/updates could be materialised.

Students are also encouraged to express their views on the curricula through an evaluation questionnaire on completion of each course. A sample of the course evaluation form is in [Appendix 4](#).

2. Design of Teaching and Learning Process

The Programme Directors concerned discuss with the Programme Leaders in various issues on teaching and learning before the programmes formally commence. Furthermore, the

Programme Leaders and Programme Directors meet with their instructors to review their teaching plans and finalise teaching-related matters before they start the teaching. A sample of the lesson plan prepared by an instructor and confirmed by the Programme Director and the Programme Leader of the Advanced Diploma Programme in Leadership, Communication and Management is in [Appendix 5](#).

The meetings of PAC for the “Disciplinary Forces and Security Programmes” serve as forums to review and suggest improvement for the teaching and learning process. As for the Advanced Diploma Programme in Leadership, Communication and Management, there are Programme Management Committee (PMC) meetings, in which various issues on teaching and learning are reviewed and discussed. A PMC meeting note is shown in [Appendix 6](#).

In view of the importance of English language proficiency of students, they would be advised to take a preparatory English course before starting their study as an optional training. The study sequence of the Advanced Diploma Programme in Security Studies (Distance Education) including a preparatory English course is shown in [Appendix 7](#).

SCS organises various development workshops for its instructors in an attempt to improve and further develop their skills in the teaching and learning process. All instructors of SCS are invited to attend the workshops, which are delivered by experienced educators or professionals in related fields.

Outside classroom training and development is also provided to enrich students’ learning experience. For example, the Advanced Diploma Programme in Leadership, Communication and Management organises a series of luncheon seminars for the students in Saturday afternoon so that they can learn directly from listening to and interacting with the speakers. The luncheon seminars’ schedule is in [Appendix 8](#).

With the help of information technology, teaching and learning could be enhanced not only in the classroom by the use of IT-based teaching aid, but also outside the classroom through the World Wide Web. For example, the students of the Advanced Diploma Programme in Security Studies (Distance Education) could interact with each other and with instructors and programme team members at SCS through a web site, constructed by the Disciplinary Forces, Policing & Security Programmes Team. A printout of the web site is in [Appendix 9](#).

Students’ views on the design of the teaching and learning process could be obtained from the evaluation questionnaires. Students could also reveal their opinions during informal counselling services. Orientation activities may be organised by the Programme Leaders to

introduce to the students their respective Programme Directors and the Programme Team members, and to discuss with the students on the support services they will receive in the learning process.

3. Design of Student Assessment and Use of Assessment Results

To ensure that all programme assessment instruments employed are effective and at the appropriate level, the Programme Leaders and Programme Directors review all tests, examination papers and other assessments prepared by the instructors. Assessments may have to be revised as suggested. A sample of a mid-term assessment for the Advanced Diploma Programme in Leadership, Communication and Management, confirmed by the Programme Director is in [Appendix 10](#).

Quality of learning could be enhanced with instructors' timely feedback to students' course work. Feedback is given in the form of written comments and face-to-face discussions. This helps students to identify their weaknesses/problems in learning as soon as possible. Apart from formal examinations, students are also assessed through continuous assessment, which is considered to be useful in checking students' learning process and progress. Continuous assessment may include projects, and presentation and participation in class.

The Programme Leaders, the Programme Directors and the teachers regularly review the students' progress, and advise those who need to improve their performance. Informal student progress meetings are conducted with those under-performing students with a view to helping them to improve their learning outcomes. A letter requesting a student to attend a progress meeting arranged by the Advanced Diploma Programme in Security Studies (Distance Education) is in [Appendix 11](#).

Upon completion of assessment, the Programme Directors together with the Programme Leaders review the students' performance in assignments, tests, project reports and/or final examinations. Those students who have successfully completed the programme requirements would be recommended for approval from the Undergraduate Examinations Board of CUHK for the award of the respective qualifications.

4. Implementation Quality

Quality teaching staff is essential to quality teaching and effective student assessments. Before the programmes start, instructors were appointed through a vigorous recruitment exercise. All of them had to meet with the interview panels attended by the respective Programme Leaders and/or Programme Directors. The recommended candidates need to be reviewed by the personnel function of SCS for qualification and documentary verification, and approved by the School's Director for formal appointment. A sample of the instructor interview assessment form is in [Appendix 12](#).

After the programmes commence, proactive measures are also taken to ensure the implementation quality. Students are encouraged to give their opinions on the programmes in relation to the delivery, administration and learning environment, through the evaluation questionnaires, meetings with the teachers, Programme Directors and/or Programme Leaders, and the Internet. Members of the PAC/PMC could also express their views on matters related to the teaching and learning activities.

Results of evaluation survey are compiled and reviewed as soon as practicable after the collection of the survey data. This provides an opportunity for the instructors to further improve the teaching and learning process in the next cycle. Class visits are paid by the Programme Leaders and/or Programme Directors to observe the instructors' performance and the students' learning activities. Constructive feedback is provided to the instructors to help improve their performance or reinforce their good practice. A sample of the Instructor Assessment Report completed after a class visit by the Programme Director of the Advanced Diploma Programme in Leadership, Communication and Management is in [Appendix 13](#).

The Programme Leaders lead their Programme Team members to work together in administering all matters on lectures, seminars, assignments and examinations in accordance with the programmes' master schedules. Corrective actions, if necessary, will be taken as quickly as practicable.

School's Staff Meetings chaired by the School's Director are held on a regular basis. There is an agenda item in the meetings for the Programme Leaders / Co-ordinators to exchange their views on current programmes and to report their implementation progress. Constructive feedback is gathered and solutions are developed as a matter of normal practice in the Staff Meetings.

5. Commitment of Resources to Education Quality Work

Development workshops led by educators, social workers and other professionals are organised for the instructors to share and exchange their views on good practice in the teaching and learning process. The School also has provision to support full-time staff to attend relevant training programmes or workshops so as to strengthen their capabilities in servicing students. A sample of the instructor development workshops is shown in Appendix 14.

The School's annual retreat provides opportunities for full-time programme and administrative staff to exchange views on the design of future programmes, revision of current programmes, and student service related matters. The Director also regularly holds his Director's Cabinet Meetings in order to identify areas for improvement in education quality work in terms of student services, programme development, and teaching and learning related policies. Members of the Director's Cabinet include all Programme Leaders, Manager of Student Services and Manager of Administrative Services of the School. Other members of the School may be invited to attend the meetings on a need for information and knowledge basis.

The School keeps the information technology facilities in all of its computer and multimedia labs up-to-date with a view to enriching students' learning experience. The School is also committed to upgrading physical resources, including teaching aids, air-conditioning and general classrooms to improve the learning environment. All learning centres, both within SCS premises and at external venues, are well supported by on-site workmen and technicians to provide timely services to both the teachers and the students. The list of audio-visual equipment purchased during 2000/01 is in Appendix 15.

The School has been actively searching additional venues to provide quality learning facilities in the city centres for the convenience of the students. A new learning centre is to be established in Central district, which will provide a most convenient venue for busy professionals and a range of quality learning facilities featuring well-equipped classrooms, multimedia labs, a lecture theatre, a learning resource room, and cyberspace for students to get on to the Internet. Furthermore, all students of the two Advanced Diploma Programmes are permitted to use the University libraries on a fee-paying basis.

List of Appendices

- 1 The Duties of Programme Directors extracted from their appointment letter
- 2 The endorsement and approval procedures for all SCS award-bearing programmes
- 3 A meeting note of the Programme Advisory Committee for the Disciplinary Forces and Security Programmes
- 4 A sample of the course evaluation form
- 5 A sample of the lesson plan prepared by an instructor and confirmed by the Programme Director and the Programme Leader of the Advanced Diploma Programme in Leadership, Communication and Management
- 6 A Programme Management Committee meeting note
- 7 The study sequence of the Advanced Diploma Programme in Security Studies (Distance Education) including a preparatory English course
- 8 The luncheon seminars' schedule
- 9 A printout of the web site
- 10 A sample of a mid-term assessment for the Advanced Diploma Programme in Leadership, Communication and Management, confirmed by the Programme Director
- 11 A letter requesting a student to attend a progress meeting arranged by the Advanced Diploma Programme in Security Studies (Distance Education)
- 12 A sample of the instructor interview assessment form
- 13 A sample of the Instructor Assessment Report completed after a class visit by the Programme Director of the Advanced Diploma Programme in Leadership, Communication and Management
- 14 A sample of the instructor development workshop
- 15 The list of audio-visual equipment purchased during 2000/01