

## Project Overview

Project Title (in English):

Enhancing quality culture and quality assurance in post-secondary education: Trends and models from international and local quality assurance practices

Project Title (in Chinese):

提升高等教育的質素文化及質素保證: 國際及本地質素保證方式的趨勢與模式

## Executive Summary

*(Please provide, within this page, an executive summary of the project.)*

With the increase in the number of institutions, growth in student numbers in individual institutions and the increasing diversity and flexibility in progression pathways in the post-secondary education sector (the sector), there is a real need to further strengthen the quality assurance capability of the sector to ensure that students receive a quality education that meets the manpower needs of Hong Kong. The HKCAAVQ proposes three interrelated initiatives to improve the quality assurance practices and promote quality culture within the sector.

### (a) Forums for sharing of local good practices across the sector

An effective way to improve the quality in an institution as a whole is to identify good practices within itself followed by mutual sharing and dissemination of such practices across the institution. We propose to extend the scope of these activities to sector-wide sharing of good practices by organizing a series of forums. In each forum, an institution will be invited to share their good practices with other institutions. Through the sharing of different perspectives in quality assurance, new approaches to quality enhancement and examples of successful cases, these forums will promote the overall quality culture in the sector.

### (b) Workshops on international QA perspectives

Hong Kong aspires to be an education hub in the region. It is essential that our education system embraces the latest knowledge about international developments and practices in quality assurance. To this end, we plan to invite international experts to conduct tailor-made training workshops to enrich the knowledge of our staff. One example of such workshops could be on the latest development of the Enhancement-led approach adopted by QAA Scotland. This workshop could provide insights into how our 4-stage Quality assurance process could be fine-tuned to extend the current focus on threshold standards to include a dimension on enhancement, especially in the Programme Re-validation and Periodic Review stages. The workshop might also inspire us about whether and how aspects of enhancement could be incorporated into the future external quality audits in the sub-degree sector. A careful review of international trends and exchanges with overseas experts and local institutions will be conducted to decide the appropriate themes of the workshops.

### (c) Electronic knowledgebase for dissemination of local good practices and international perspectives

To facilitate dissemination across the sector, the good practices presented in the forums will be consolidated and incorporated into a knowledgebase. Relevant good practices gained from the workshops will also be incorporated. For instance, the QAA Scotland's Enhancement-led approach

emphasizes student engagement. Their experience in this aspect may benefit the local institutions and hence relevant information from the workshop will be consolidated and captured in the knowledgebase.

The HKCAAVQ is well placed to develop and implement these three initiatives as we have the relevant experience, expertise and extensive network within the sector and internationally. Further, we have extensive experience in organising and conducting sharing sessions for local institutions from diverse backgrounds. The HKCAAVQ has also an extensive network in the international quality assurance community through which we can invite international experts to conduct the training workshops.

### Problems Identified

*(Please provide your assessments to the problems / needs identified.)*

Identifying and sharing of good practices is an effective way to enhance quality but the adoption of this method has so far been largely limited to in-house QA activities within individual education and training providers. To leverage the efforts of individual operators to drive quality enhancement for the whole sector, there is a need to establish an open platform that allows exchange and sharing of good practices among institutions.

The HKCAAVQ shares the Government's view that internationalization and quality assurance are mutually supporting<sup>1</sup>, and hence it is imperative to keep pace with international standards and best practices in quality assurance. In this regard, the HKCAAVQ have invited overseas experts to conduct seminars and workshops over the past two years. For instance, a seminar by an expert who is familiar with university quality reviews in Australia has enriched our knowledge in conducting institutional review, and a training workshop by an UK expert has sharpened our staff's questioning techniques.

To enable HKCAAVQ to gain more in-depth understanding of the international QA practices, we see a need for a systematic review of the international trends and local needs so as to plan and conduct a series of workshops on international QA perspectives.

The HKCAAVQ will share the international perspectives of the overseas experts with local institutions through the electronic knowledgebase and the forums, and apply it in the quality assurance of the sector.

<sup>1</sup>Mrs Cherry Tse, JP, Permanent Secretary for Education, a speech presented in "Asia-Pacific Association for International Education (APAIE) Conference and Exhibition 2013", 13 March 2013.

### Project Objectives and Deliverables

Measurable Objectives	How it can be achieved
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<p>1. To establish an electronic knowledgebase of good practices in quality assurance for education and training providers in the post-secondary education sector (the sector)</p>	<p>1.1 Plan a series of forums by identifying suitable themes and speakers                      1.2 Host the forums in which speakers share their perspectives on quality assurance and success stories in quality enhancement                      1.3 Analyse and consolidate good practices shared in the forums                      1.4 Incorporate good practices into an electronic knowledgebase</p>
<p>2. To disseminate good practices for the continuous improvement and the promotion of quality culture in the sector</p>	<p>2.1 Invite local operators' participation in the forums mentioned in (1.1) above                      2.2 Provide access to an electronic knowledgebase of good practices to all local education and training providers</p>
<p>3. To enhance international QA perspectives in the sector</p>	<p>3.1 Conduct a series of tailor-made workshops on international developments and trends in education and quality assurance by international experts                      3.2 Disseminate the knowledge of international QA practices through forums and the electronic knowledgebase</p>

**Project Deliverables**

*(Please list out all the deliverables to be achieved and how they can be shared with, if possible, other institutions.)*

<p><b>Deliverables</b></p>	<p><b>Sharing mechanism</b></p>
<p>1. Around 6 to 7 forums on local good practices</p>	<p>Invite local education and training providers' participation in the forums, and share consolidated good practices through the electronic knowledgebase.</p>
<p>2. Around 3 workshops on international QA practices</p>	<p>Workshops attended by HKCAAVQ's professional staff, and consolidated information on international QA practices will be shared in the forums in (1) above and through the electronic knowledgebase.</p>
<p>3. Electronic knowledgebase with a comprehensive set of good practices</p>	<p>Provide access to the electronic knowledgebase to all education and training providers in the sector</p>

*(Please indicate the information that can be uploaded onto relevant EDB websites during and after the project period.)*

Upon completion of the project, a hyperlink to the electronic knowledgebase will be provided for posting in relevant EDB websites.

**Beneficiaries**

Expected type and number of beneficiaries of the project	150 professionals in 26 local operators and 50 professional staff of HKCAAVQ
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*(Please provide justification to support the above estimation and explain how they can be benefited from the project.)*

It is estimated that there will be a total of about 280 attendees in the seven forums from around 150 professional and administration staff serving in 26 local operators offering post-secondary programmes. These figures are estimated from the attendance information on previous events held by the HKCAAVQ for local operators, such as the *HKCAAVQ 20th Anniversary Conference Quality Assurance at the Crossroads - A Critical Reflection after Twenty Years* on 14 September 2010 and the forum on *Experience Sharing with FCE Members on CEF Assessment* on 10 October 2011. Around 50 staff members in the HKCAAVQ whose job duties include quality assuring learning programmes will also benefit from the forums. This estimation is based on attendance figures at recent in-house training workshops on accreditation.

The forums will be the first of their kind to be held in Hong Kong that facilitates the sharing of good practices among local operators. The forum provides an opportunity for operators to learn good practices from each other. The sharing of good practices by an operator in an open forum also serves as a form of recognition of the operators and the staff involved which will further motivate the pursuit of quality in its educational provision. Both local operators and the HKCAAVQ staff will benefit directly from these forums.

The series of around three workshops on international QA practices will directly benefit around 50 HKCAAVQ staff members by broadening their perspectives on QA and accreditation practices. They will then apply these in the quality assurance work for the benefit of the sector. Furthermore, consolidated information from the workshops made available in the electronic knowledgebase will also be of benefit to local operators.

The electronic knowledgebase will provide local operators with an easily accessible repository of good practices gathered from among local operators and relevant good practices originating from the international QA community. It is expected that the knowledgebase will serve as a useful information portal that helps inspire local operators in further enhancing their internal QA measures and the HKCAAVQ in further improving its accreditation practice. The direct beneficiaries of the knowledgebase are the 150 staff of the local operators and 50 HKCAAVQ staff members. Due to its ease of access, it is expected that some teaching staff of the local operators will also be inspired by the good practices, thereby resulting in further improvement in their quality of programme delivery.

<b>Implementation Schedule</b>		
<i>(Please list out the implementation schedule and key milestones to be achieved on a half-yearly basis.)</i>		
Estimated start date of the project (month/year)		Sept 2014
Estimated end date of the project (month/year)		Feb 2017
Project duration (months)		30
<b>Month</b>	<b>Key milestones</b>	
	<b>In terms of project activities and deliverables</b>	<b>In terms of monitoring and evaluation</b>
1-6	<p><u>Activities</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Recruit an assistant project officer and a project assistant.</li> <li>2. Hold the first forum as a pilot to seek feedback from operators on the arrangement, format, theme, etc..</li> <li>3. Review feedback collected from the pilot forum.</li> <li>4. Review international trends by desktop research, literature review, and interviews with overseas experts, exchanges with local education and training providers to identify themes for future forums and the workshops.</li> <li>5. Liaise with local education and training providers and relevant speakers.</li> <li>6. Develop a master plan of the forums and workshops.</li> <li>7. Hold the second forum and the first workshop.</li> <li>8. Review the functionalities of good practices and other related databases and analyse the user requirements to develop a specification for the electronic knowledgebase.</li> </ol> <p><u>Deliverables:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A master plan of forums and worksops, including:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) A list of possible themes</li> <li>(b) A list of possible speakers</li> <li>(c) Preliminary schedules</li> </ol> </li> </ol>	<p>The master plan of forums and workshops should be finalized within 6 months after the project commences and will be evaluated in terms of relevancy of the themes to the local sector, experience and expertise of the potential speakers and the appropriateness of the timeline to ensure completion of all events within the project period.</p> <p>The number of attendees and participating operators will be evaluated against the targets of 40 participants in each forum and workshop. At least one member of the project evaluation team will monitor each event by direct participation, and to assess the response of the participants.</p> <p>The user specification of the knowledgebase will be evaluated in terms of the coverage and ease of use of the specified functionalities.</p>

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Completion of two forums and one workshop.</li> <li>3. Specification of the electronic knowledgebase.</li> </ol>	
<p>7-12</p>	<p><u>Activities</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Analyse and consolidate good practices subsequent to the first two forums and the first workshop.</li> <li>2. Review the completed forums and workshop to refine, if necessary, the master plan taking into account the number of attendance and participating operators, and the feedback collected from the participants.</li> <li>3. Liaise with local education and training providers and relevant local and overseas speakers to hold two forums and one training workshop.</li> <li>4. Analyse and consolidation of good practices subsequent to the forums and workshop.</li> <li>5. Liaise with and selection of a vendor for the knowledgebase.</li> </ol> <p><u>Deliverables:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Completion of two forums and one workshop.</li> <li>2. A list of draft good practices.</li> <li>3. Identify and award a vendor for knowledgebase development.</li> </ol>	<p>The number of attendees and participating operators will be evaluated against the targets of 40 participants in each forum or workshop. At least one member of the project evaluation team will monitor each event by direct participation, and to assess the response of the participants.</p> <p>The presentation and contents of the draft good practices will be evaluated in terms of their clarity, level of detail, relevancy and usefulness to the local sector.</p> <p>The contract with the knowledgebase developer should be signed within 12 months after the project commences and will be evaluated in terms of, among other things, the appropriateness of the delivery timeline and cost.</p>
<p>13-18</p>	<p><u>Activities</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Review the completed forums and workshops and to refine, if necessary, the master plan taking into account the number of attendees and the number of participating operators, the feedback collected from the participants.</li> <li>2. Liaise with local education and training providers and relevant local and overseas speakers to hold two forums and one workshop.</li> <li>3. Analyse and consolidate good practices</li> </ol>	<p>The number of attendees and participating operators will be evaluated against the targets of 40 participants in each forum or workshop. At least one member of the project evaluation team will monitor each event by direct participation, and to assess the response of the participants.</p> <p>The working prototype of electronic knowledgebase will be evaluated in terms of</p>

	<p>subsequent to each forum and workshop.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Liaise with the vendor for knowledgebase development.</li> <li>5. Test a working prototype of the electronic knowledgebase.</li> <li>6. Adapt draft good practices into a proper format for incorporation into the working prototype of the knowledgebase.</li> </ol> <p><u>Deliverables:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Completion of two forums and one workshop.</li> <li>2. A working prototype of the electronic knowledgebase with draft good practices.</li> </ol>	<p>its user-friendliness in retrieval, addition, editing of good practices and the layout of the webpage design.</p>
<p>19-24</p>	<p><u>Activities</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Liaise with the vendor for the refinement of the electronic knowledgebase.</li> <li>2. Gather other relevant information on QA good practices from other sources by conducting a desktop literature review.</li> <li>3. Enrich the database with relevant information collected from the literature review.</li> <li>4. Conduct final editing of the good practices and supplementing with relevant information such as illustrations, examples, links to references, etc.</li> <li>5. Conduct final testing of the electronic knowledgebase.</li> </ol> <p><u>Deliverables:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The completed electronic knowledgebase.</li> </ol>	<p>The completed electronic knowledgebase will be evaluated in terms of its user-friendliness in retrieval, addition and editing of good practices, and the comprehensiveness of the criteria for information retrieval.</p> <p>The good practices stored in the knowledgebase will be evaluated in terms of their coverage of all major QA operations of an educational institution, relevancy and usefulness to the local sector, and the clarity in presentation and level of details.</p>

25-30	<p><u>Activities</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Liaise with local education and training providers and relevant speakers to hold the last forum.</li><li>2. Hold the last forum during the summer break in 2016 to launch the database.</li><li>3. Analyse and consolidate good practices subsequent to the last forum.</li><li>4. Adapt draft good practices into a proper format for incorporation into the working prototype of the electronic knowledgebase.</li><li>5. Gather feedback on the electronic knowledgebase.</li><li>6. Review feedback and refine contents of the knowledgebase accordingly, and suggest further improvements on the electronic knowledgebase.</li><li>7. Prepare the final report of the project.</li></ol> <p><u>Deliverables:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Launch of the electronic knowledgebase during the summer break in 2016.</li><li>2. The electronic knowledgebase enriched with good practices gathered in the last forum and improved in response to users' feedback.</li></ol>	<p>All members of the project evaluation team (or their representatives) will participate in the last forum to monitor and ensure the success of the launching of the knowledgebase.</p> <p>The project evaluation team will review feedback collected from the database users and advise on further improvements as appropriate.</p>
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**Publicity Plan**

*(Please describe all the publicity activities to be organised and materials to be produced to acknowledge the support of Quality Enhancement Support Scheme. Please suitably reflect the publicity activities as key milestones in the implementation schedule above.)*

Acknowledgement to the Quality Enhancement Support Scheme will be clearly stated in the invitation to education and training providers, presentation materials of the forums and workshops, and the electronic knowledgebase.



Cash Flow and Budget				
Project Expenditure				
	Amount in HK\$			
Period	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total
Manpower	\$908,331	\$728,769	\$109,200	\$1,746,300
Equipment / Facilities				
Services	478,427	319,213	1,500	799,140
General Expenses	8,800	4,400	2,200	15,400
Others (e.g. auditor's fee)			12,000	12,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,395,558</b>	<b>\$1,052,382</b>	<b>\$124,900</b>	<b>\$2,572,840</b>
Project Income (if any, e.g. fees received)				
	Amount in HK\$			
Period	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
Grant Sought under the Quality Enhancement Support Scheme			\$1,978,940	
Funding from the Applicant			\$593,900	
Funding from Other Sources			0	
<b>Total Project Value</b>			<b>\$2,572,840</b>	
<i>(Please specify the amount to be funded by each funding source (e.g. donations, contributions from applicant / its parent organisation) and whether the funding has been secured. If not, please provide the plan to obtain the funding.)</i>				
HKCAAVQ is committed to contribute HK\$593,900 in kind through staff time to the project.				
<i>(Please provide the duty lists of manpower to be funded by this project.)</i>				
Post	Duties			
Assistant Project Officer (at the rank of Registrar in HKCAAVQ's full time	To assist in the implementation of the activities listed in the implementation schedule (except the first activity concerning the recruitment of the assistant project officer and project assistant) under the oversight of Dr. Eric Li and Mr. Wilbur Pang.			
	To provide professional support to the knowledgebase development and to assist the Assistant Project Officer in carrying out his/her duties.			

staffing structure)  Project Assistant (at the rank of Registrar in HKCAAVQ's full time staffing structure)	
<b>Project Sustainability</b> <i>(Please estimate the amount of recurrent expenditure and describe how you will commit the resources to ensure sustainability of the project. Please put supplementary information (e.g. proof of financial support) at appendix.)</i>	
The HKCAAVQ will commit resources for the hosting of the electronic knowledgebase which amounts to an annual expenditure of about \$10,000. The HKCAAVQ's regular staff will continue to enrich the content of the electronic knowledgebase from time to time.	