Project Overview	
Project Title (in English): Strengthening the System for Assurance and Enhancement of Educational Quality	Project Title (in Chinese): 強化教育素質的保證及改善系統

Executive Summary

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

The main objective of this project is to strengthen the quality assurance (QA) system of Caritas Institute of Higher Education (CIHE) and its sister institute, Caritas Bianchi College of Careers (CBCC). At present, the QA system of CIHE and CBCC comprises various schemes and mechanisms for supporting their academic and related activities, such as those for the design, development, review and approval of programmes and courses, the solicitation of opinions and advice from external parties, the moderation of assessment practice, the maintenance of academic standards, and the collection of students' feedback on course teaching and students' other learning experiences. It is expected that through this project the QA system can be strengthened by:

- Sharing experiences in QA arrangements with the local universities and other higher education institutions (HEIs) in Hong Kong, so that the improvement of the QA system of CIHE and CBCC can be informed by the good practices of other practitioners in the higher education and post-secondary education sectors.
- Tapping into the literature of QA and related matters in the relevant research fields, so that the implementation of various schemes and mechanisms in the strengthened QA system will be evidence-based and research-informed.
- Involving the relevant staff in the strengthening of the QA system, so that the ownership of the system by staff can be improved, and an appropriate quality culture (encompassing both quality assurance and quality enhancement) can be promoted at different levels within CIHE and CBCC.
- Improving the documentation system in association with various QA practices (which is an important supportive measure of the QA system), so that the communication among different parties in these practices will be smooth and effective, and that the review of current practice and the identification of areas for improvement will be facilitated.
- Enhancing the links with different stakeholders and the roles of these stakeholders in the QA system, in particular the following three groups of stakeholders: students, employers and alumni.

Besides strengthening the QA system and its related supportive measures, staff development is also an important aspect of the project. In this regard the relevant staff, in particular department heads, programme leaders and members of the Quality Assurance Committee (QAC) of CIHE and CBCC will, as deemed appropriate, be involved in the visits to the other universities and HEIs for discussion of QA issues. During the project period, various guest speakers from the other universities and HEIs will be invited to conduct talks and seminars on QA-related matters, and to share experiences in these matters with CIHE and CBCC staff. A website will also be established for the project to inform staff and students of the QA system and the progress in its revision, and as deemed appropriate, to also serve as a means for sharing information and experiences with the other external parties.

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

- A significant part of the current QA system of CIHE and CBCC was modelled after some previous practices of local universities, there is a need to update the schemes and mechanisms concerned, and to take reference from the good practices of other institutions.
- Many schemes and mechanisms in the current QA system (e.g. the course and teaching evaluation questionnaire) can be improved by exploiting the related research reported in the literature, so that their effectiveness and creditability can be promoted through an approach that is evidence-based and research-informed.
- The current QA system focuses mainly on the academic aspects of quality; as the non-academic aspects (e.g. collection of students' views to inform the improvement of various supportive services) have also become important matters to be considered, the QA system can be improved by the incorporation of new schemes and mechanisms that are based on an appropriate model of student satisfaction and/or service quality.
- Within the current QA system, systematic collection of student feedback currently focuses mainly on the teaching of courses; this practice can be improved by expanding the scope of feedback collection to encompass multiple levels (e.g. the institute, the programme and the course).
- For the promotion of an appropriate quality culture within CIHE and CBCC, the involvement of staff and students in the QA system and its related practices should be enhanced.
- The current documentation system in association with the QA practices within CIHE and CBCC is mainly paper-based, providing insufficient support for matters like the version control of different documents (e.g. proposals, review reports, etc) and the smooth flow of these documents among different parties to facilitate discussion, review, approval and follow-up actions. An IT-enhanced documentation system is therefore deemed as an important supportive measure for strengthening the QA system, both to address the insufficiency of the current system and to promote a green and environment friendly approach to these QA practices (by the conversion of their supportive platform from paper-based to IT-enhanced).
- To improve the involvement of different stakeholders in the QA and related affairs of CIHE and CBCC, the links with the alumni and the potential employers of graduates should be strengthened.

Project Objectives and Deliverables	
Measurable Objectives	**How it can be achieved**
1. To strengthen the QA system of CIHE and CBCC by revision of its various schemes and mechanisms	• Visiting the universities and other HEIs to take reference on good practices • Adopting an evidence-based and research-informed approach to QA practices
2. To strengthen the student feedback system within the QA system	• Re-designing the student feedback system and its data collection instruments (e.g. questionnaires) in light of research-informed advice from the literature and good practices of the other HEIs • Expanding the scope of feedback collection to encompass multiple levels

3.	To enhance the documentation system in association with QA practices	• Converting the documentation system from paper-based to IT-enhanced, so as to facilitate the QA practices (e.g. via automated flows of documents among users of the system, and improved version control of documents) • Promoting a green and environment friendly approach to handling documents generated from QA activities
4.	To promote within CIHE and CBCC a quality culture encompassing both quality assurance and quality enhancement	• Involving relevant staff (e.g. department heads, programme leaders and QAC members) in the strengthening of the QA system and its related supportive measures • Inviting guest speakers from universities and other HEIs to conduct talks and seminars, and to share experiences with staff • Encouraging students' participation in suitable QA activities
5.	To strengthen the links with alumni and employers	• Establishing networks with the alumni and the potential employers of graduates • Promoting suitable networking and QA activities to alumni / employers and encouraging their participation in these activities

Project Deliverables

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

	Deliverables	Sharing mechanism
1.	Revised Quality Assurance Handbook (containing the policy documents / specifications of the strengthened QA schemes and mechanisms)	The policy documents / specifications of the strengthened QA schemes and mechanisms can be shared with other institutions in hardcopy or softcopy (e.g. PDF files) upon request.
2.	Revised Student Feedback System (containing the policy documents / specifications of the system and data-collection instruments [e.g. questionnaires] for soliciting student feedback at different levels)	The policy documents / specifications of the system and the data-collection instruments can be shared with other institutions in hardcopy or softcopy (e.g. PDF files) upon request.
3.	IT-enhanced Documentation System for Supporting QA Practices	It is expected that important features of the system (e.g. the flow control and version control of documents) are specific for CIHE and CBCC, rendering the system not suitable for sharing with other institutions.

4.	Visits to universities and HEIs for discussion of QA matters and sharing of experiences	It is expected that this part of the project is specific for CIHE and CBCC; however, if the discussion and experience sharing will produce publishable results, they can be shared with other institutions, e.g. in the form of conference or journal articles.
5.	Results of literature review on relevant QA matters	It is expected that this part of the project is specific for CIHE and CBCC; however, if the literature review will produce publishable results, they can be shared with other institutions, e.g. in the form of conference or journal articles.
6.	Staff Development Workshops and Seminars	Colleagues from other institutions will, when deemed appropriate, be invited to attend these workshops and seminars.
7.	Network for Alumni	It is expected that this part of the project is specific for CIHE and CBCC, and is therefore not suitable for sharing with other institutions.
8.	Network for Employers	It is expected that this part of the project is specific for CIHE and CBCC, and is therefore not suitable for sharing with other institutions.
9.	One-Day Project-End Symposium	Invitation to the symposium will be extended to the colleagues from other institutions.

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

A website will be created for sharing the relevant information of the project; a link to this website can be uploaded onto the relevant EDB websites.

Beneficiaries

Expected type and number of beneficiaries of the project	**2,000 - 2,500 students**
	150 - 200 staff members

(Please provide justification to support the above estimation and explain how they can be benefited from the project.)

It is anticipated that within the project period there will be 2,000 – 2,500 students studying Bachelor's Degree, Higher Diploma, Associate Degree and other kinds of programmes in various disciplines at CIHE and CBCC. With the strengthened QA system and its related supportive measures, both the academic provisions offered by CIHE and CBCC and the educational experiences of the students concerned will be improved.

During the period, the deliverables of the project will also inform and facilitate 150 – 200 academic and non-academic staff members of CIHE and CBCC, in their teaching, academic activities and the provision of supportive services to the students.

The sharing of our experiences in the project with other institutions may also lead to improved academic provisions and student experiences in these institutions.

Implementation Schedule

(Please list out the implementation schedule and key milestones to be achieved on a half-yearly basis.)	
Estimated start date of the project (month/year)	1 September 2014
Estimated end date of the project (month/year)	31 August 2016
Project duration (months)	24 months

Month	Key milestones	
	In terms of project activities and deliverables	**In terms of monitoring and evaluation**
1-6	• Recruitment of Project Officer • Acquisition of hardware and software items for the project • Initiating contacts with universities and HEIs • Initiating contacts with alumni and employers • Conduct of staff development workshops / seminars • Design of the Student Feedback System	• To evaluate the results in contacting with universities and HEIs to inform the subsequent visits to them • To evaluate the results in contacting the alumni and employers to inform the subsequent development of networks for them • To evaluate the conducted workshops / seminars to inform the plan for subsequent staff development activities • To evaluate and accept the design of the Student Feedback System for approval by the Academic Board
7-12	• Recruitment of Programmer • Visits to universities and HEIs for discussion and experience sharing • Conduct of staff development workshops / seminars • Review and revision of QA schemes and mechanisms • Design of the IT-enhanced Documentation System • Design the Network for Alumni • Design the Network for Employers • Implementation of the Student Feedback System	• To evaluate the conducted workshops / seminars to inform the plan for subsequent staff development activities • To evaluate and accept the QA schemes and mechanisms revised in this period for approval by the Academic Board • To evaluate and accept the design of IT-enhanced Documentation System for approval by the Academic Board • To monitor the design of the Networks for Alumni and Employers • To monitor the implementation of the Student Feedback System

13-18	- Visits to universities and HEIs for discussion and experience sharing - Conduct of staff development workshops / seminars - Review and revision of QA schemes and mechanisms - Implementation of the Student Feedback System - Implementation of the IT-enhanced Documentation System - Implementation of the Network for Alumni - Implementation of the Network for Employers	- To evaluate the conducted workshops / seminars to inform the plan for subsequent staff development activities - To evaluate and accept the QA schemes and mechanisms revised in this period for approval by the Academic Board - To monitor the implementation of the Student Feedback System, the IT-enhanced Documentation System, and the Networks for Alumni and Employers
19-24	- Conduct of staff development workshops / seminars - Testing of the Student Feedback System - Testing of the IT-enhanced Documentation System - Network for Alumni in operation - Network for Employers in operation - Production of the Revised Quality Assurance Handbook - Finalization and documentation of the Student Feedback System - Finalization and documentation of the IT-enhanced Documentation System - Conduct of the One-Day Project-End Symposium	- Acceptance of the revised Quality Assurance Handbook - Acceptance of the Student Feedback System - Acceptance of the IT-enhanced Documentation System - Evaluation of the One-Day Project-End Symposium to inform future practice

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.)

Publicity of this project will mainly be conducted via the following means:

- A website will be established for the project to inform the staff and students of CIHE and CBCC (as well as the general public) about its progress, activities and deliverables
- A leaflet of the project will be produced for promotional purposes
- A one-day symposium (which will be open for participation from other institutions) will be conducted by end of the project
- As mentioned above, other deliverables such as the policy documents or specifications of various QA schemes and mechanisms and the Student Feedback System produced by the project can be shared with other institutions upon their request

If support from the Quality Enhancement Support Scheme (QESS) is received, the fact that the project is QESS-funded will be shown on the above-mentioned project deliverables / materials.

Cash Flow and Budget				
Project Expenditure				
	Amount in HK$			
Period	**Year 1**	**Year 2**	**Year 3**	**Total**
Manpower	787,500	970,200	-	1,757,700
Equipment / Facilities	450,000	0	-	450,000
Services	10,000	22,000	-	32,000
General Expenses	13,000	13,000	-	26,000
Others (e.g. auditor's fee)	0	5,000	-	5,000
Total	1,260,500	1,010,200		2,270,700
Project Income *(if any, e.g. fees received)*				
	Amount in HK$			
Period	**Year 1**	**Year 2**	**Year 3**	**Total**
Total				
Grant Sought under the Quality Enhancement Support Scheme	1,928,300			
Funding from the Applicant	342,400			
Funding from Other Sources	-			
Total Project Value	**2,270,700**			

(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.)

Post	Duties
(Please provide the duty lists of manpower to be funded by this project.)	
Project Officer	• Provide general administration of affairs for the project • Arrange visits to universities and other HEIs for discussion and experience sharing • Arrange staff development workshops and seminars • Keep record on all the discussion for the project • Assist in the conduct of literature review in research areas that are related to the project • Assist in the establishment of the Networks for Alumni and Employers • Assist in the implementation of the Student Feedback System • Assist in the arrangement for the One-Day Project-End Symposium • Conduct focus group meetings with staff/students on the testing of various QA schemes and mechanisms • Compile the finalized QA schemes and mechanisms to produce the Revised Quality Assurance Handbook • Conduct other relevant activities of the project as deemed appropriate
Programmer	• Assist in the design of the IT-Enhanced Documentation System for Supporting QA Activities • Implement the IT-Enhanced Documentation System • Create and maintain the website for the project • Provide IT support for the Student Feedback System • Provide IT support for the Network for Alumni • Provide IT support for the Network for Employers • Assist in the documentation of the above-mentioned systems • Conduct other relevant activities of the project as deemed appropriate

Project Sustainability

(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.)

After the completion of the project, the strengthened quality assurance system will still be subject to regular review and revision in the light of the changes in the relevant education sector, the internal reflection within CIHE and CBCC, and the sharing of good practices with other institutions.

It is also anticipated that appropriate system maintenance will be needed for the Student Feedback System and the IT-enhanced Documentation System. CIHE and CBCC will also continue to organize workshops and seminars on QA-related topics for the on-going development of their staff.

The recurrent expenditure for the above-mentioned activities is estimated at $10,000-30,000 per year, we are committed to absorbing the expenditure after the project has completed.