



European Association for
Quality Assurance in Higher Education

Dr. Albert Chow
Executive Director
Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications (HKCAAVQ)
10 Siu Sai Wan Road, Chai Wan, Hong Kong

Gloucester, 17 September 2021

Subject: Approval of review report for the external review of HKCAAVQ

Dear Dr. Albert Chow,

I am pleased to inform you that, at its meeting on 13-14 September 2021, the ENQA Board approved the HKCAAVQ review report. The Board concluded, following the proposal of ENQA's Agency Review Committee, that the external review against the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG 2015) was conducted in accordance with the Guidelines for ENQA Agency Reviews. The Board additionally notes that no decision upon the agency's membership in ENQA was to be made since the agency has not requested this, and moreover, the agency is not located in an EHEA member state, which is an admission condition following article 5 of the ENQA Statutes.

The Board would like to use this opportunity to provide a statement regarding standard 2.6 Reporting, where their judgement differs from that of the panel. The Board notes that decisions on 'non-approvals' from the accreditation procedures are not published. Following this, in the opinion of the Board, the standard can be considered only as substantially compliant with the ESG.

In regard to ESG 2.4 Peer-review experts, the Board shares the panel's call to involve students in review panels. Following the ESG, engagement of students in internal and external quality assurance is key to the development of a quality culture in higher education. The Board understands that adopting students in the agency's external quality assurance activities is a change to the existing practice, but this change can be implemented if carefully considered.

The Board would like to receive a follow-up report within two years of its approval of the review report, i.e. by September 2023.

The Board also encourages HKCAAVQ to take advantage of the voluntary progress visit – an enhancement-led feature in the review process. The visit would take place in about two to three years' time from this decision. The ENQA Secretariat will be in touch with you in about a year's time to discuss this possibility. The costs of this visit have already been included as part of the review fee and are non-refundable except for the travel costs of the experts. More information about the progress visit can be found in the Guidelines for ENQA Agency Reviews.



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If you have any further queries, please do not hesitate to contact the ENQA Secretariat.

Please accept my congratulations on the conclusion of the review process.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Douglas Blackstock', is written over a light grey rectangular background.

Douglas Blackstock
President

Annex: Areas for development

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As outlined by the review panel, HKCAAVQ is recommended to take appropriate action, so far as it is empowered to do so, on the following issues:

ESG 3.1 Activities, policy and processes for quality assurance

The agency is recommended to develop a culturally sound approach towards the inclusion of students in the work and governance of the agency.

The agency is recommended to complement its quality assessment activities represented by accreditations with quality enhancement activities.

ESG 3.4 Thematic analysis

The agency is recommended to advance and extend plans for the publication of the analysis of the findings of its external quality assurance activity, producing regular, timely reports that identify trends, areas of good practice, common challenges and persistent difficulty together with more detailed analysis of selected topics.

The agency is recommended to immediately develop ways to make fuller use of the findings of accreditation activity in advance of the extension of HKCAAVQ's sophisticated MIS.

ESG 2.1 Consideration of internal quality assurance

The agency is recommended to address student engagement in operators' internal quality assurance processes in the agency's accreditation standards.

The agency is recommended to include a standard on accessible learning resources and student support for a diverse student population more explicitly at stage 1 or 2 of the Process.

The agency is recommended to integrate relevant aspects of the Code into the accreditation standards of relevant stages in order to further align internal and external quality assurance, as well as the ESG Part I and the HKCAAVQ standards.

ESG 2.3 Implementing processes

The agency is recommended to implement consistent follow-up procedures or instruments in all accreditation procedures irrespective of the result.

ESG 2.4 Peer-review experts

The agency is recommended to involve students in review panels.