

Second Round Teaching and Learning Quality Process Reviews

Review Template

Goals

1. The UGC has established four goals for the second round of Teaching and Learning Quality Process Reviews (TLQPRs) as follows:
 - (a) to maintain the focus on teaching and learning as the primary mission of Hong Kong's tertiary institutions;
 - (b) to assist institutions in their efforts to continuously improve the quality of teaching and learning;
 - (c) to enable the UGC and the institutions to discharge their obligation to maintain accountability for the quality of teaching and learning; and
 - (d) to inform, in respect of UGC-funded institutions, the UGC's consideration of the triennial funding, on the basis of the review outcomes.
2. The UGC, the TLQPR Panel (the Panel), and the institutions share these goals and view the review as a collegial process.

Focus on Education Quality Work

3. The second round of TLQPRs will continue to focus on processes to assure and improve the quality of delivered education, i.e. on "education quality work", not on the quality of teaching and learning itself. For example, processes and activities aimed at improving assessment methods are subject to review, but the quality of the actual assessment of students is not.
4. Institutional, faculty and departmental education quality work will be reviewed on the basis of five domains, including "design of student assessment measures and use of assessment results", which will be given special consideration in the reviews.

Scope

5. The second round will cover taught degree and sub-degree programmes offered by the institution on its own or jointly with non-local universities, regardless of the funding source. (For example, self-funded degree programmes like the MBA will be included.)
6. It will also include degree and sub-degree programmes organized by continuing education units (CEUs) in the sole name of the UGC-funded institutions, but exclude those organized by non-local universities where the UGC-funded institutions only act as an agent. For the sub-degree programmes, they will be confined to programmes at associate degree, advanced diploma, higher diploma and equivalent levels. A separate template for review of CEU programmes is at [Appendix A](#).
7. A review of research postgraduate programmes will take place concurrently with the second round TLQPRs and be included as a section of each institution's TLQPR report. A small sub-panel will conduct this review using a separate protocol and visit schedule that will focus on the training and mentoring of research postgraduate students, not on the institution's research programme *per se*. A separate template is at [Appendix B](#).

Methodology

8. The review will involve three stages: a self-evaluation report prepared by the institutions; site visits by a review panel; and preparation of a report by the review panel.

Preparation of self-evaluation document

- Institutions will be given around two months to prepare a 20-page self-evaluation document for the Panel's consideration. Institutions will be invited to submit an outline of the document for consideration by the Panel before proceeding to the preparation of the full-length document.
- A guideline for preparation of the document (including a 4-page supplement for research postgraduate education and a supplement for CEU programmes at a maximum of 10 pages) is at [Appendix C](#).
- The document will be considered by the Panel before the site visit. Institutions will be requested to provide supplementary information as necessary.

The TLQPR panel

- An eleven-person TLQPR Panel will be formed¹. It will be headed by Professor Rosie Young (ex-Chairman of the Education Commission and currently Honorary Professor for Medicine in HKU), and composed of local higher education peers, overseas higher education experts (including those with experience in self-financed programmes) and overseas UGC members.

Site visit

- Each site visit will basically last for one and a half days, but the length could vary according to the different circumstances of the institutions. A general outline is at [Appendix D](#)².
- The review panel will meet with faculty/department/unit/student representatives.
- Each institution will nominate faculties/departments/units to be visited according to the guidelines at [Appendix E](#). The review panel will select from the list and add any at its discretion. Each institution will be informed by the UGC of the list of faculties/departments/units to be visited at least one month before the actual visit. Any special issues that will be raised will be conveyed to the institutions prior to the visit.
- Libraries or registries will not be reviewed as part of the TLQPR exercise, but support units for teaching and learning (including, for example, educational development centres and units providing programmes for general education) would be included in the site visits where appropriate.

Review report

- The format and guidelines for the content of the review report will be subject to further collaborative discussion when the review panel has been formed. However, as an overarching goal, the report will not emphasize the assessments of institutions. Rather, it will focus on areas for improvement, in keeping with the agreed focus on the TLQPR as a formative review process as opposed to a summative one.

¹ The finalized membership of the Panel consists of 14 persons.

² The original outline has been replaced by an up-to-date version at [Appendix D](#) reflecting the situation since the commencement of the exercise.

Review timetable

- The review timetable is at Appendix F³.

External agency

- No external agency will be involved in the reviews.

Review Protocol

A. Five domains subject to review

9. The review will cover five “domains” of education quality work.
 - (a) ***Design of curricula:*** processes/activities to design, validate/revalidate and improve programme curricula, including: the role of design inputs from staff, employers, students and others; work to bring inputs together into a coherent curriculum while providing a degree of flexibility appropriate to programme goals; assurance of the standard of academic awards offered by the institutions; and resolution of controversies.
 - (b) ***Design of teaching and learning processes:*** processes/activities to design, review and improve methods of teaching and learning, teaching materials, and students’ learning environment, including: forums for staff to discuss issues; consideration of desired and achieved learning outcomes; role of external inputs and student views; and support for innovation to improve/encourage student learning.
 - (c) ***Design of student assessment and use of assessment results:*** processes/activities to design, review and improve the assessment of students, the assessment of student learning and the relation of assessment to educational objectives, including: allocation of responsibility for assessment; mechanisms for feedback to improve assessment; and process/activities to enhance the linkage of assessment to educational objectives.
 - (d) ***Implementation quality:*** processes/activities to assure that the curricular, teaching, learning and assessment design and processes are being carried out coherently and effectively according to plan, including: staff recruitment and development; and promotion of teaching standard, processes/activities to assure and improve the quality of delivered teaching, learning and assessment day-in-day-out for all student groups, including: feedback from students; peer review; measures of the student learning experience outside the classroom; teacher-student interaction; and mechanisms to respond to these indicators.
 - (e) ***Commitment of resources to education quality work:*** how do institutions use resources to enhance, or inhibit, education quality work; are quality assurance processes/activities adequately funded; are incentives established to reward good performance in delivering quality education; do individual components of education quality work receive funding sufficient to perform their missions; do these principles of allocation filter down to the unit level?
 10. A diagrammatic presentation of the five domains is at Appendix G.
- ### B. Criteria to be used in the review exercise
11. In making its assessments of these domains and in making recommendations for improvement in the work of institutions, the review panel will consider the following principles for successful education quality work:

³ The original timetable has been replaced by an up-to-date version at Appendix F showing the dates of various site visits as subsequently agreed between the review panel and the institutions.

- (a) The efforts of units and institutions to improve their performance through **measuring the outcomes** of delivered education, and the commitment to ensuring that quality assurance processes are designed to take into account measured educational outcomes. While it is recognized that exact measurement of educational outcomes is often a difficult and controversial exercise, improvement cannot go forward without assessment.
- (b) The orientation of quality assurance processes and activities to the **process of student learning**. A focus on the learning process requires taking into account how students learn, the build up over time of learning skills, and students' self-learning capabilities.
- (c) The **degree of coherence** in the various quality processes operating at different levels in the institution. Education quality work will go forward more successfully when it is mutually reinforcing and appears coherent to staff and students. There should be an awareness of, and sensitivity to, those units that are less mature in terms of education quality work, and there should be a culture to disseminate good practice across the units and across the institution.
- (d) The degree to which staff, units and the institutions understand that the delivery of quality education to students is a **collaborative responsibility**. The design of quality assurance processes and the implementation of education quality work require a collective commitment to assessing outcomes and improving quality.
- (e) The role of inputs sought from outside units and institutions to assess performance against appropriate **benchmarks and good practice**. Experience gained in other units/institutions and the developing literature on student learning and quality management has a key role in the effectiveness of education quality work.
- (f) The **priority given to continuous improvement**, through education quality work, in the work of units and institutions. Success in improving quality relies on managers, staff and students understanding their own role in the quality process and following through on a continuing basis. The institution should, as a whole, show evidence of "seriousness of purpose" in maintaining and developing their work in this regard, with a commitment to following up recommendations for improvement.

C. Variations in education quality work

- The review exercise is therefore developed within the framework of a formative review, emphasizing a collaborative, rather than an evaluative, process designed to assist institutions in their ongoing efforts to improve the quality of education provided. It is not the intention of the review panel to provide a summary assessment of institutional or unit level performance in validating education quality work.
- Nevertheless, institutions, and units within institutions, will have developed different levels of accomplishment in moving towards the goals above, will have established to different extents the quality assurance processes/activities subsumed under this review, and will have embedded the culture of education quality work to a greater or lesser extent.
- At the lowest maturity level in units, traditional practices will override any consideration of further development of quality assurance activities. Better units may, however, have individuals who are concerned with such development, or may allow for individual initiatives. At a higher level of maturity, these ad hoc developments become organized at the unit level, becoming the focus of discussion and planning within the unit, the results of which may be tracked. A higher level of maturity exists when concern with education quality work is embedded as a central part of the unit's academic culture.
- Similarly, universities will vary in the extent to which higher levels of maturity within units have become the norm. They will also vary in terms of the degree to which they have institutionalized the development and tracking of education quality work, and they will vary in the extent to which education quality work has become a central element of the academic culture.
- By reference to the characteristics of education quality work to which all units and

institutions should aspire, the TLQPR can facilitate the spread of good practice throughout the institutions reviewed. In this way, the TLQPR will be a valuable and positive exercise for institutions and staff in the overall context of providing frameworks for the delivery of the highest quality of teaching and learning for Hong Kong students.

TLQPR of Programmes Offered by Continuing Education Units (CEUs)**A. Relationship with the main TLQPR**

1. The review of programmes offered by the continuing education units (CEUs) of institutions should have the same basic goals and the same focus on “education quality work” (EQW) as the main TLQPR. The same review protocol which sets out five domains of EQW for review and six review criteria should be followed. However, the actual conduct of the review should take into account the particular context in which each individual CEU operates.

B. Diversity between institutions

2. The fact that CEUs in different institutions vary considerably in their scales, modes of operation and stages of development should be recognized. Each institution should be allowed to work out with the Panel the most appropriate approach and logistics for the Review of its relevant CEU programmes. For example, the Panel may devote more time and attention to a large, semi-autonomous CEU than to a small unit that is completely integrated structurally and procedurally within the main body of the institution.

C. Programmes to be examined

3. The scope of CEU programmes to be covered in the review should include degree and sub-degree programmes organized by CEUs in the sole name of the UGC-funded institutions, but exclude those organized by non-local universities where the UGC-funded institutions only act as an agent. The sub-degree programmes should be confined to programmes at associate degree, advanced diploma, higher diploma and equivalent levels.

D. Self-evaluation document

4. The length of CEU supplements should not exceed 10 pages, and should vary with size of the CEUs and how far they are integrated with the main body of the institutions in terms of their operation and quality assurance processes. Institutions should include in their outlines a list of relevant programmes offered by CEUs, details intended to be covered in the CEU supplements and the intended length of the documents.

E. Site visit

5. In view of the highly varied scales of operation of CEUs in different institutions, institutions would be invited to indicate in their CEU supplements the need for site visits to their CEUs, and how they should be conducted. Details of CEU visits, if considered necessary, will be made available to the institution to be reviewed about a month prior to the actual visit to facilitate logistical and other arrangements.

F. Final report

6. A supplement to the TLQPR final report should be provided in respect of the relevant CEU programmes.

TLQPR of Research Postgraduate Education

A. Objective of the Review

1. The TLQPR for research postgraduate education has the same basic goals as the overall TLQPRs, in particular: to assist institutions in their effort to improve the quality of teaching and learning; and to enable the UGC and the institutions to maintain accountability for the quality of teaching and learning. However, the review is not an add-on to the main TLQPRs, but is intended to be a meaningful activity in its own right.

B. Focus of the Review

2. The review will not be concerned with the delivered quality of research postgraduate education, or the quality of research output. The focus of the review will be the “education quality work” undertaken by institutions and departments to assure and improve the quality of the formal and informal education of research students. The review will be particularly concerned with:
 - (a) Processes, activities, structures and resources to assure and enhance the quality of the student experience in the research environment;
 - (b) Supervisory, monitoring and advising practices, and the maintenance of academic standards;
 - (c) Processes, activities, structures and resources to support the career development of research students.

C. Criteria for Assessment

3. The criteria for assessing the work of institutions in assuring and improving research student education will be parallel to those employed for the main TLQPRs:
 - (a) The efforts of units and institutions to improve performance through measuring outcomes of delivered education (completion and attrition rates, routines for monitoring student progress, management of assessment, and evaluation of research standards are of particular interest).
 - (b) The orientation of quality assurance processes and activities to the process of student learning including: research methodology; critical thinking; self-learning; choice of research topics; thesis writing; and research use of libraries, laboratories, computation and information technologies.
 - (c) The degree of coherence in the various quality processes operating at different levels in the institution.
 - (d) The degree to which staff, units, and the institutions understand that the delivered quality of research education is a collaborative responsibility.
 - (e) The role of inputs sought from outside units and institutions to assess performance against benchmarks and good practice.
 - (f) The priority given to continuous improvement.

D. Arrangements for the Review

4. The timing of the review will be concurrent with that of the main TLQPRs. Institutions will be asked to prepare a four-page self-evaluation supplement to the TLQPR self-evaluation document assessing their policies, activities and resources directed at assuring and improving the quality of the education of research students.
5. A three-person Research Education Sub-Panel (RESP) will be appointed to look exclusively at research postgraduate education. The RESP will visit the institutions at the same time as the main TLQPR Panel, but will be concerned only with research education, visiting units such as the Graduate School/Faculty, academic staff of a sample of departments, a group of junior staff who supervise research postgraduate students, a group of research postgraduate students, and any other relevant groups. It is expected that the RESP will complete their visits in one day or less.
6. The RESP will provide a supplement to the TLQPR final report dealing with research education.

Revised Guidelines for the Preparation of Self-Evaluation Documents

1. The self-evaluation document (SED) should cover the mechanisms in place for maintaining and improving teaching and learning quality in the institution.
2. It should consist of a main document of 20 pages for undergraduate and taught postgraduate education, a 4-page supplement on research postgraduate education, and supplement on CEU programmes at a maximum of 10 pages.
3. There has been a developed understanding that the reviews in this round would be characterized by both uniformity (via a common core) and diversity (via customized elements). The uniformity is provided by the agreed framework, comprising the five domains subject to review and six criteria for assessing the success of education quality work (EQW). The diversity is derived from the different institutional philosophies, specialisms and goals, resulting in self-evaluations that better represent these individual perspectives, as reflected in their TLQ processes.
4. The introductory material to the SED would be a set of statements reflecting the institutional philosophies and derived framework for its EQW. They would also describe the nature of the quality assurance and improvement processes at that institution, and the extent to which these all interact and support each other.
5. The common core of the SEDs would mirror the framework or template for this round of TLQPRs. That is, there would be reference to all five domains of EQW and the criteria used in assessment of these domains of activity. These would be related back to the processes described earlier.
6. All SEDs would also discuss issues identified in the first round of TLQPR, the extent to which the institution has responded to these, and an evaluation of the outcomes from these changes.
7. There should be some concluding analytical and evaluative comments (for example, about the range, effectiveness, and integrity of the constituent processes, or about areas currently planned or under development).
8. The procedures for developing the SEDs are based on a consultative process between the institution and the Panel. Each institution will send to the UGC a summary document at the time specified in the timetable for preparation of SEDs, which will indicate the nature of the SED to be provided. This would make particular reference to areas where the SED departs from the common core described above. The Panel would then comment on the extent to which this SED would be expected to fulfil its own requirements, identify areas of omission, identify areas of redundancy, and offer suggestions for change.
9. Following the submission of the SEDs, the Panel would call for supplementary materials from the institutions to support or clarify parts of the SEDs as identified by the panel. These might include audit trails, minutes of meetings, and summary or other statistics. They could be provided by the institution in any convenient form (e.g. digital, paper, graphic, reference to a website).

General Outline of Second TLQPR Visits

First Day

Panel preparatory meeting	About 1.5 hours
Meeting with leadership group	45 minutes
Parallel unit level meetings – session 1	2 hours
Parallel unit level meetings – session 2	2 hours
Panel debriefing	1 hour

Second Day

Parallel unit level meetings – session 3	1 hour
Panel debriefing	45 minutes
Meeting with Faculty Deans ⁴	1 hour
Meeting with rank and file members of institution level QA&I groups	1 hour
Panel debriefing	1.5 hours
Closing session with leadership group	30 minutes

⁴ This was made a separate meeting after the visits to the first two institutions under review.

Second TLQPRs
Nomination of Faculties/Departments/Units to be Visited

Proposed Guidelines

For degree and sub-degree programmes of UGC-funded institutions

There should be a broad balance between traditional faculties/departments, faculties/departments geared towards professional training and units/departments which render support services to the university as a whole.

For research postgraduate education

Visits should cover graduate school/faculty, academic staff of a sample of departments, research postgraduate students and junior staff who supervise them.

CEU programmes

To be discussed between institutions and the Panel (Appendix A is relevant).

Visit Timetable of Second Round TLQPRs

Institution	Dates of Visit
The University of Hong Kong	3 and 4 June 2002
The Hong Kong Institute of Education	5 and 6 June 2002
The Chinese University of Hong Kong	16 and 17 September 2002
Hong Kong Baptist University	18 and 19 September 2002
The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology	13 and 14 January 2003
Lingnan University	15 and 16 January 2003
City University of Hong Kong	31 March and 1 April 2003
The Hong Kong Polytechnic University	2 and 3 April 2003

Framework of Education Quality Work

Education Quality Work refers to the processes of UGC institutions in assuring and improving the quality of 3 areas of education delivery, namely (1) Curriculum, (2) Teaching and Learning, and (3) Assessment.

In each area, quality assurance (QA) and quality improvement (QI) in relation to 3 selected aspects of EQW processes and activities, namely (a) Design, (b) Implementation, (c) Resource Allocation will be reviewed.

The relationships among the 3 areas of education delivery, the 3 aspects of EQW processes and the 5 EQW domains are illustrated in the diagram below.

