

Third Audit Cycle of the Quality Assurance Council

# Report of Quality Audit of The Education University of Hong Kong

February 2025

Quality Assurance Council



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Third Audit Cycle**

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The Quality Assurance Council is a semi-autonomous non-statutory body under the aegis of the University Grants Committee of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China.

# CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
<b>PREFACE</b>	<b>1</b>
Background	1
Conduct of QAC Quality Audits	1
<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b>	<b>3</b>
Summary of the principal findings of the Audit Panel	3
<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>8</b>
Explanation of the audit methodology	8
Introduction to the University and its role and mission	8
<b>1. REVIEW AND ENHANCEMENT OF THE UNIVERSITY'S FRAMEWORK FOR MANAGING ACADEMIC STANDARDS AND ACADEMIC QUALITY</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>2. REVIEW AND ENHANCEMENT OF THE UNIVERSITY'S ARRANGEMENTS FOR PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT AND APPROVAL, MONITORING AND REVIEW</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>3. REVIEW AND ENHANCEMENT OF TEACHING AND LEARNING</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>4. REVIEW AND ENHANCEMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING ASSESSMENT</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>5. REVIEW AND ENHANCEMENT OF THE UNIVERSITY'S ARRANGEMENTS FOR SUPPORTING STUDENTS</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>6. COLLECTION, ANALYSIS AND USAGE OF DATA</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>7. CONCLUSIONS</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>APPENDICES</b>	
APPENDIX A: THE EDUCATION UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG	36
APPENDIX B: INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSE TO THE AUDIT FINDINGS	39
APPENDIX C: ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS	41
APPENDIX D: EDUHK AUDIT PANEL	43
APPENDIX E: QAC'S MISSION, TERMS OF REFERENCE AND MEMBERSHIP	44

# **PREFACE**

## **Background**

The Quality Assurance Council (QAC) was established in April 2007 as a semi-autonomous non-statutory body under the aegis of the University Grants Committee (UGC) of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China.

The UGC is committed to safeguarding and promoting the quality of UGC-funded universities and their activities. In view of universities' expansion of their activities and a growing public interest in quality issues, the QAC was established to assist the UGC in providing third-party oversight of the quality of the universities' educational provision. The QAC aims to assist the UGC in assuring the quality of programmes (however funded) offered by UGC-funded universities.

Since its establishment, the QAC has conducted three rounds of quality audits, the first audit cycle between 2008 and 2011, the second audit cycle between 2015 and 2016 and the sub-degree (SD) audit cycle between 2017 and 2019. By virtue of the QAC's mission prior to 2016, the first and second audit cycles included only first degree level programmes and above offered by the UGC-funded universities. Following the Government's recognition of the need for greater systematisation and externality in monitoring the quality of SD level programmes, as well as the recommendations from a Working Group comprising representatives from the UGC, the Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications and the Heads of Universities Committee, the Government gave policy support for and invited the UGC to be the overseeing body of the quality audits of UGC-funded universities' SD operations with the QAC as the audit operator in 2016.

## **Conduct of QAC Quality Audits**

The QAC's core operational tasks derived from its terms of reference are:

- the conduct of universities' quality audits
- the promotion of quality assurance (QA) and enhancement and the spread of good practices

Audits are undertaken by Audit Panels appointed by the QAC from its Register of Auditors. An Audit Panel consists of four members, including two local members with a background in the Hong Kong higher education system and two non-local members with extensive and senior experience of quality and academic standards. Lay members may also be appointed where it is deemed appropriate.

The QAC's approach to quality audit is based on the principle of 'fitness for purpose'. Audit Panels assess the extent to which universities are fulfilling their stated mission and purpose and confirm the procedures in place for assuring the quality of the learning

opportunities offered to students and the academic standards by which students' level of performance and capability are assessed and reported. The QAC Audit also examines the effectiveness of a university's quality systems and considers the evidence used to demonstrate that these systems meet the expectations of stakeholders.

Full details of the audit procedures, including the methodology and scope of the audit, are provided in the QAC Third Audit Cycle Audit Manual which is available at <https://www.ugc.edu.hk/doc/eng/qac/manual/auditmanual3.pdf>.

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This is the report of a quality audit of The Education University of Hong Kong (EdUHK; the University) by an Audit Panel appointed by, and acting on behalf of, the QAC. The report presents the findings of the quality audit, supported by detailed analysis and commentary on the Audit Criteria below as well as the Audit Theme on ‘Collection, Analysis and Usage of Data’.

- How effectively does the university review and enhance its framework for managing academic standards and academic quality?
- How effectively does the university review and enhance its arrangements for programme development and approval, monitoring and review?
- How effectively does the university review and enhance teaching and learning?
- How effectively does the university review and enhance student learning assessment?
- How effectively does the university review and enhance its arrangement for supporting students?

The Audit Panel identifies its audit findings, including features of good practice, for further consideration by the University.

### **Summary of the principal findings of the Audit Panel**

#### **1. Review and enhancement of the University’s framework for managing academic standards and academic quality**

The Audit Panel confirmed that the University’s operations and activities are determined by, and clearly aligned with, its mission and Strategic Plan (2016-2025). At the heart of the University’s mission is the Education-plus approach which drives the University’s approach to offering a distinctive multi-disciplinary teacher education through a common core curriculum framework and via students taking second majors and/or minors in related disciplines. New programmes have been introduced in recent years to strengthen this model. The Education-plus approach is operationalised through the Graduate Attributes which underpin the framework for all the University’s programmes, regardless of level. To ensure the continued relevance of the Strategic Plan to the changing external environment as well as assessing the level of progress on strategic initiatives and key performance indicators (KPIs), it is reviewed every three years, most recently in 2019 and 2022. The Audit Panel observed that the periodic strategic review process is a comprehensive and inclusive process that has confirmed progress in KPIs and strategic areas. EdUHK maintains effective oversight of academic standards and quality and drives enhancement through a well-articulated and defined QA Framework, which derives from the Academic Board (AB) and its constituent committees and is supported by a nested, multi-layered and consistent committee structure at faculty, department and programme level. The distinctive and complementary responsibilities of committees from University to faculty, department

and programme levels are well-articulated. EdUHK regularly monitors the continuing effectiveness and appropriateness of the AB and its constituent committees' membership and terms of reference through annual and ad-hoc reviews. The Audit Panel found that these processes are working well with these reviews leading to amendments to terms of reference and membership to ensure the committees and system flex to meet the emerging needs of the University. The QA Framework is further undergirded by a clear leadership structure with appropriately designated roles and responsibilities. A strong feature of the University's approach to setting, maintaining and enhancing the academic standards of its programmes and student experience is found in its systematic and structured use of external benchmarking at University, programme and department levels.

## **2. Review and enhancement of the University's arrangements for programme development and approval, monitoring and review**

The Audit Panel was able to confirm that the University operates a clear framework underpinning its approach to programme development and approval, monitoring and review. This framework has been implemented via a comprehensive review of its programmes encompassing all levels of study over the previous five years. The process takes full account of both external and internal drivers, demonstrating foresight in terms of academic developments necessary for the currency of the programmes and, in line with its strategic aims, placing a strong focus on multi-disciplinarity, exemplified by its successful Education-plus approach. This has a highly valued focus on a transformational and multi-disciplinary student experience evidenced by a high level of take up of second majors and/or minors. The University's policies and guidelines on programme development are central to ensuring that all programmes closely observe external regulatory requirements, including the Education Bureau's (EDB) Guidelines on Teachers' Professional Conduct and Guiding Framework for Primary and Secondary Teacher Education Programmes, and the Hong Kong Qualifications Framework (HKQF), which are applied during programme development and checked through the monitoring and review processes. The institutional approach is underpinned by a comprehensive Quality Manual. The University takes full account of external benchmarking and external reference points for enhancement purposes when developing and considering new and existing programmes. The clear commitment to addressing EDB and other external requirements in order to meet changing societal needs is exemplified by the agility with which the University has incorporated into the curriculum timely topics such as National Security Education, entrepreneurship and innovation via experiential learning and Greater Bay Area activities via field experience. Constructive feedback from student surveys, external examiners (EEs) and external reviewers (ERs) is gathered regularly and taken into account as part of QA processes which have further benefited from external reviews and proactive and targeted benchmarking with partner universities.



### **3. Review and enhancement of teaching and learning**

The Audit Panel confirmed that EdUHK has a structured and effective approach for the review and enhancement of learning and teaching (L&T). The Learning and Teaching Plan is systematic and a reflection of the University Strategic Plan with KPIs at University, faculty and department levels. The Education-plus approach facilitates a multi-disciplinary learning experience for students with, as noted above, over 56% of the students on average doing a second major and/or minor. This cultivates a multi-disciplinary learning environment which enables students to interact academically and professionally across disciplines to enrich their learning experiences. The University has effective recruitment procedures with new faculty members completing induction programmes conducted by the Centre for Learning, Teaching and Technology (LTTC). At the core of a clear policy on staff development, the LTTC conducts a wide range of staff professional development activities. There is an evident institutional commitment to leadership and management of L&T with coordination across faculties. Staff performance is recognised in a wide range of teaching awards. Staff external engagement is encouraged with opportunities for development leave and sabbatical leave. There are obvious external beneficiaries of the University's knowledge transfer activities. The Audit Panel was able to confirm that the E-learning and Digital Competency Strategy promotes collaborative and blended learning while the one-course-one-online lesson initiative has played a major role in facilitating e-learning. In addition, the Future Classrooms project, which promotes the use of new technology in classroom teaching in the University and local schools, embraces innovative pedagogical models and advanced technology to enhance the L&T experience. The Audit Panel also noted the University's effective use of data for evaluation of teaching quality and research supervision, as well as wider strategic development.

### **4. Review and enhancement of student learning assessment**

The Audit Panel was able to confirm that the University has a comprehensive framework, guided by the Policy on Student Assessment, to facilitate assessment of student learning. Clear Generic Grade Descriptors are provided to ensure objectivity in criterion-referenced assessment. There is also a helpful course outline template available for academic/teaching staff to follow when they prepare for course delivery and assessment. The Policy on Student Assessment provides a framework for assessing student learning under the University's outcome-based approach and was updated in 2023 to embrace online/virtual assessment and also promote both the prominence of formative assessment and constructive and timely feedback to students on assessed work. The Guiding Principles on Alternative Assessment and the Principles and Guidelines on Assessment of Group Work demonstrate the capacity of the University to adapt its approach to assessment and be responsive to current developments. There is a strong correlation between assessment and learning outcomes, evidenced by feedback from ERs and EEs and underpinned by Departmental Review and other benchmarking exercises. The Panel found strong evidence of a tangible commitment to continuous improvement and innovation in assessment. This is exemplified in the

instigation of formative assessment as a tool for learning support and improved student attainment in taught programmes and in the deployment of folio assessment at research postgraduate (RPg) level, and in the prompt and appropriate action taken in reviewing procedures in relation to academic honesty and use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in 2020 and 2023. Departmental Assessment Panels play a critical role in monitoring grade distribution and verifying assessment outcomes across the University. Institutional oversight is further underpinned by a growing confidence in data analysis and insight into the impact of assessment strategies. Moodle is the University's central and secure learning management system, supporting virtual learning, teaching and assessment and is the main and highly valued repository for student learning materials and assignments.

## **5. Review and enhancement of the University's arrangement for supporting students**

The Audit Panel concluded that the University has a comprehensive and effective governance system in place for developing, enhancing and reviewing those functions which support students' academic, personal and professional growth. EdUHK has developed diverse support for undergraduate (Ug), taught postgraduate (TPg), and RPg students to meet their learning needs at different stages of their studies. Support services including orientations by the Student Affairs Office (SAO) and language support from the Centre for Language in Education help students to adjust to local University life more efficiently. Co-curricular activities to enhance students' personal, academic and professional development are diverse and effective. The University Life Planning Scheme (ULPS) assists new students to develop their personal path and integrate their non-formal learning experience. Personal and non-academic development programmes facilitated by Student Development Tutors, such as the Whole Person Development Inventory, help students to identify their strengths and weaknesses and develop plans for whole person development. Established channels effectively collect student feedback for programme enhancement. There is evidence of effective communication and coordination among the senior management and across the University, while collaboration between academic and support units is strong. Reflecting its mission and values, the University devotes energy to reviewing and enhancing its programmes and operations to rapidly address changing societal needs for enhancing students' professional competency and employability.

## **6. The Audit Theme – Collection, analysis and usage of data**

The Audit Panel found that the University makes wide-ranging use of data, drawn from a number of internal and external sources, to review and enhance its academic programmes and student experience. EdUHK adopts a University Data Strategy which sets out a common framework for both identifying and managing data assets related to L&T. The Task Force on Academic Management Information and Data Management System (TFAMIDMS) plays a central role overseeing the implementation and review of the Academic Management Information System (AMIS). This is chaired by the Vice

President (Academic) with membership from across relevant administrative offices as well as from each faculty and the Graduate School as well as specialists in statistics and survey methods. This ensures a strategic and co-ordinated approach to the management of data and the monitoring of progress against performance measures (PMs), KPIs, and performance indicators (PIs). Furthermore, the accessibility to AMIS across the University (300 to 400 users of the system) as well as the clarity of its output ensure widespread use of the system. Responsibility for the review and analysis of specific PMs, KPIs and PIs is assigned to committees as well as senior managers. Student-related data is routinely used in these processes. The identification of responsible managers and committees for the review, analysis and reporting of data ensures that there is integration with the QA/Quality Enhancement (QE) framework and mechanisms of the University and that data is used to inform deliberations and future developments, thus supporting an approach to continuous enhancement. The University makes effective and systematic use of data collected across the student lifecycle as well as different modes and levels of learning. The Audit Panel found that EdUHK makes effective use of data to underpin benchmarking in QA and QE processes.

# **INTRODUCTION**

## **Explanation of the audit methodology**

This is the report of a quality audit of EdUHK by an Audit Panel appointed by, and acting on behalf of, the QAC. It is based on a Self-Evaluation Report (SER) which was prepared by EdUHK and submitted to the QAC on 26 January 2024. Initial Private Meetings of Panel members were held on 26 and 27 March 2024 to plan for the audit visit and this was followed on 5 April 2024 by a Preparatory Meeting with the University to discuss the detailed arrangements.

The Audit Panel was able to scrutinise a range of relevant documentation provided by the University, including its SER and Appendices, the Core Information, Audit Trail documentation, and additional information provided before and during the Audit Visit.

The Audit Panel conducted an Audit Visit with EdUHK between 27 May 2024 and 6 June 2024. Panel members met with the President and his senior team; a representative group of students on taught programmes; a representative group of RPg students; academic managers including deans and heads of department; a group of academic staff including programme leaders; RPg managers and supervisors; external stakeholders; and staff from academic support services.

The Audit Panel evaluates:

- How effectively does the university review and enhance its framework for managing academic standards and academic quality?
- How effectively does the university review and enhance its arrangements for programme development and approval, monitoring and review?
- How effectively does the university review and enhance teaching and learning ?
- How effectively does the university review and enhance student learning assessment?
- How effectively does the university review and enhance its arrangement for supporting students?

The Panel identifies its audit findings, including features of good practice, for further consideration by the University.

## **Introduction to the University and its role and mission**

EdUHK is a publicly funded university dedicated to the advancement of L&T in teacher education and complementary disciplines of social sciences and humanities. EdUHK's historical roots can be traced back to 1881, with the establishment of the first Government Normal School. Four Colleges of Education and the Institute of Language in Education were founded from the 1930s to the 1980s to provide formal teacher education in Hong Kong. They were later amalgamated to become The Hong Kong

Institute of Education (HKIEd) in 1994. Following a successful university title review in 2015, HKIEd was retitled EdUHK in May 2016.

The University's vision is to enhance its role as a leading university in the Asia Pacific region and beyond, focusing on educational research, development and innovation. Its primary mission is to lead educational innovation and promote and support the strategic development of teaching, teacher education and disciplines complementary to education by preparing outstanding and morally responsible educators and professionals while supporting their lifelong learning. The University's vision and mission are articulated in the Strategic Plan 2016-2025.

As of 30 September 2023, the University across its UGC-funded and self-funded provision, was offering two SD programmes with 707 students enrolled, 44 Ug programmes with 6 154 students, 46 TPg programmes with 2 897 students, four professional doctorates with 365 students, and three RPg programmes with 150 students. In addition, the University was delivering 51 professional development programmes for a proposed intake of 1 549 serving local school teachers. In September 2023, the University had 268 academic staff, 173 teaching staff, 294 research support staff and 1 085 academic support and administrative staff.

## **1. REVIEW AND ENHANCEMENT OF THE UNIVERSITY'S FRAMEWORK FOR MANAGING ACADEMIC STANDARDS AND ACADEMIC QUALITY**

- 1.1 The EdUHK's mission states that its primary purpose 'is to lead educational innovation, and to promote and support the strategic development of teaching, teacher education and disciplines complementary to education by preparing outstanding and morally responsible educators and professionals while supporting their lifelong learning'. The University's education philosophy is encapsulated in its 'Education-plus' approach which seeks to provide students with multidisciplinary learning experiences. Whilst the Education-plus approach is known by different terms across the English-speaking and Cantonese/Chinese-speaking communities in Hong Kong – in Chinese it translates to 'excel more than education'- the Audit Panel confirmed that the educational philosophy is well understood across University stakeholders.
- 1.2 The Education-plus approach has been supported by the introduction of programmes in disciplines that are complementary to education and, under its common core curriculum framework, students are required to study at least one elective course from outside their home faculty, and can select to pursue a second major and/or minor outside their programme area. Between the 2019/2020 and 2022/2023 academic years, 56.25% of students on average studied a second major and/or minor. To strengthen its Education-plus approach the University has introduced nine new programmes in disciplines complementary to education, including creative industries, data science, AI, sports and recreation and applied language. New programmes were identified by harnessing the research potential

of faculty matched to changing needs of society and supported by detailed market research (e.g. the Bachelor of Science/Bachelor of Arts degrees in AI and Educational Technology, and Digital Chinese Culture and Communication). The Audit Panel found a strong commitment to this model at all levels of the University and that students felt they benefitted from it in that it equipped them well for their futures and importantly, created a platform for them to pursue different directions.

- 1.3 The Education-plus approach is operationalised through the Graduate Attributes, which are termed ‘PEER&I’, and are the underpinning framework of all the University’s SD, Ug, TPg, professional doctorate and RPg programmes. The PEER&I framework consists of three domains: **Professional Excellence, Ethical Responsibility & Innovation**. Specific descriptors of PEER&I are articulated for each programme level through the University’s seven Generic Intended Learning Outcomes (GILOs): problem solving skills; critical thinking skills; creative thinking skills; ethical decision making; oral and written communication skills; social interaction skills; and, global perspectives.
- 1.4 The Strategic Plan 2016-2025 sets out the three areas of focus, Academic Development, Research and Knowledge Transfer, and Management and Infrastructure. These are driven by the Education-plus approach and are intended to be mutually reinforcing. To support the achievement of its strategic priorities in each of the three areas, EdUHK has developed a number of supporting strategic ambitions. For Academic Development this includes such areas as ‘curriculum innovation’, ‘enhancing quality in education’, and ‘facilitating learning sans frontières’, amongst others. For Research and Knowledge Transfer they include ‘becoming the leading Research and Development Centre in Education, Humanities and Social Sciences under the Education-plus approach, amongst others. Finally, for Management and Infrastructure they include ‘working towards a sustainable infrastructure’ and ‘going beyond a caring organisation’, amongst others. The Audit Panel found evidence that the University’s QA and enhancement processes and policies are shaped by and aligned with its mission, vision and the three priorities set out in the Strategic Plan 2016-2025.
- 1.5 The Audit Panel found evidence of the review and enhancement of the Strategic Plan to ensure its continued relevance and attainment. Progress against the achievement of the Plan is reviewed every three years. Since the launch of the Strategy in 2016, two reviews have taken place, in 2019 and 2022. These reviews involved all Vice Presidents reviewing the progress under the respective Strategic Areas including Academic Development, Research and Knowledge Transfer, and Management and Infrastructure, with reference to institutional PIs. In addition, the process involved a wide range of consultations to generate feedback from different groups including students and staff members. There was also a Council retreat which involved a wide range of University stakeholders. The Audit Panel observed that the periodic strategic review process is a

comprehensive and inclusive process. It confirmed progress on KPIs and Strategic Areas including the launch of new programmes, technology-enhanced learning, support for student with special educational needs (SEN), mental health support for students and support for non-Chinese speaking local students, as well as a series of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Education initiatives and a series of enhancements to postgraduate education. In addition, a series of enhancements to the Education-plus vision are noted in the review ranging from enhancements to academic advising, career support, entrepreneurial skills, internship experience, STEM Education, Life and Values Education, and Basic Law and National Security Education, to enhancing RPg students' personal and professional development.

- 1.6 The Audit Panel found that EdUHK maintains effective oversight of its standards and quality and drives enhancement through its well-defined QA Framework which emphasises the distinctive and complementary responsibilities of committees and academic units from University-level through faculty to department and programme levels. There is a clearly nested multi-layered QA governance system. AB, the senior academic forum of the University with ultimate responsibility for the oversight and maintenance of academic quality and standards, is chaired by the President. AB and senior managers refer matters to, and advise Council on, a range of academic matters as stipulated in AB's terms of reference. AB has nine standing committees namely, Academic Committee, Academic Planning and Development Committee (APDC), Board of Graduate Studies (BGS), Committee on Research and Development, Committee on Scholarships and Prizes, Faculty Boards, Learning and Teaching Quality Committee (LTQC), Student Affairs Committee, and Student Disciplinary Committee. The three Faculty Boards for Education and Human Development, Humanities, and Liberal Arts and Social Sciences ensure the coordination and upward and downward reporting to and from AB via the Faculty Learning and Teaching Committees (FLTCs). Membership of AB and governance committees is drawn from across the University, with AB and Faculty Boards benefiting from the inclusion of elected student representatives.
- 1.7 An FLTC, reporting to each Faculty Board, is responsible for overseeing and enhancing the quality of teaching, learning and assessment of departments and units within each faculty. The Faculty Board oversees student assessment and progression through a Board of Examiners (BoE). In addition, each of the three faculties has a Faculty Development Advisory Committee whose main purpose is 'to advise the Faculty on its strategic role and medium-long term development in areas of programme development, research, knowledge transfer, internationalisation, teaching and learning and professional service for the community in alignment with the University's Strategic Plan'. This is comprised of external as well as internal members. The Audit Panel found that the Faculty Development Advisory Committees are functioning well and generate important conversations and insights that help shape the priorities, strategies and actions of faculties. At the department level each Head of Department is supported by a

departmental senior management team comprising Associate Heads and chairs of departmental committees. Similar committee structures are in place in each department, such as the Departmental Learning and Teaching Committee and the Departmental Assessment Panel (DAP).

- 1.8 EdUHK regularly monitors the continuing effectiveness and appropriateness of the AB and its constituent committees' membership and terms of reference through annual and ad-hoc reviews. The Audit Panel found that these processes are working well with reviews leading to changes to membership and terms of reference of the BGS and the Student Disciplinary Committee in recent years, as well as the refreshing of the membership in a number of governance committees.
- 1.9 The Audit Panel found that there is a clear leadership structure with appropriately designated roles and responsibilities overseeing and coordinating the QA framework. EdUHK senior management, headed by the President and three Vice Presidents (Academic, Research and Development, and Administration), oversees the strategic planning, academic development, research and resource management of the University. The Deans of Graduate School and the faculties are responsible for the quality of academic programmes, learning and teaching, and assessment. Associate Vice Presidents have been appointed to support specific areas such as QA, internationalisation and research. The Registrar and the Director/Executive Co-Director of LTTC assist the senior management in the formulation, monitoring and implementation of strategies, policies, plans related to academic standards, academic quality and learning and teaching matters. Each Faculty Dean is supported by Associate Deans and Heads of Departments/Centres. Faculty Deans chair their respective Faculty Boards, which report to the AB on faculty academic matters, and to AB Committees on specific matters such as L&T, programme planning, academic standards and quality. At programme and department levels, programme committees (PCs) chaired by Associate Deans/programme leaders and Heads of Department assisted by Associate Heads are accountable to Deans for the quality of programmes and courses respectively.
- 1.10 These reviews are complemented by an annual review of the Quality Manual. This process involves seeking feedback from faculties and departments who may identify areas where changes are required. In addition, the University has undertaken a more holistic review of the committee structure underneath AB. This examined the Academic Policy and Review Committee and the Committee on Learning and Teaching and decided to streamline, focus and combine the work of these two committees as LTQC.
- 1.11 The comprehensive Quality Manual, which applies to all award-bearing programmes, contains the principles of QA/QE at EdUHK, and collects together policies and procedures governing programme planning and development, review and revision, external review, assessment of student learning, student feedback, benchmarking for academic standards. The Quality Manual is made



accessible to staff and students on the University's intranet, and updates are disseminated via email. At the core of this is the interconnected QA governance system and flows of downward and upward reporting referred to in paragraphs 1.6-1.7 above.

- 1.12 The University uses a set of PIs to monitor and evaluate its progress against the Strategic Plan. These are divided into sector-wide PMs, University-specific KPIs (UKPIs) and Internal KPIs/PIs (IKPIs/IPIs) across five activity domains. These are quality of student experience of teaching and learning, research performance and RPg experience, knowledge transfer and wider engagement, enhanced internationalisation and engagement with the Mainland, and financial health, institutional social responsibilities and sustainability. The PMs, UKPIs and IKPIs/IPIs are in turn cascaded to the Graduate School, faculties, departments, units and programmes to support the formulation of strategies and monitor performance in areas including L&T, research, knowledge transfer, internationalisation and institutional sustainability. The AMIS provides senior management as well as heads of units and programmes with real-time management data of PMs, UKPIs and IKPIs/IPIs. The Audit Panel found that access to AMIS is widespread with between 300 and 400 users across the University. Clear presentation of the data facilitates ease of access and the analysis of relevant data for users. The Audit Panel found that the comprehensive framework of KPIs and PIs allows the University as a whole, as well as different levels (AB, faculties, departments, programmes), to regularly monitor performance. In addition, there is evidence that chairs of key committees and management staff have a high awareness of the PIs for which they are responsible, regularly reviewing them and making changes to curriculum, programmes and aspects of the student experience drawing their analysis.
- 1.13 Monitoring and review of academic standards occurs through related benchmarking processes at University, programme, and departmental levels. Each of these levels of review use external reference points to ensure that the University's KPIs and PIs, as well as the academic standards and quality of programmes are appropriately benchmarked externally. University-level benchmarking exercises were undertaken in the 2018/19 and 2022/2023 academic years with each exercise using a different set of benchmark institutions. External institutions are selected in part based on their historic relationship with EdUHK but also dependent on the specific themes of the review, e.g. their experience with SEN students, teacher ethics, or the National Security Law. To manage the complexity of the benchmarking exercise the number of comparator institutions is limited to three or four. In the most recent University-level benchmark review, the comparators were the University of Lapland (Lapland University), Finland, The Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT), Australia and The East China Normal University, China. This exercise focused on: (a) use of data in enhancing L&T; (b) teacher ethics education in relevant programmes; (c) L&T under 'the new normal' in the post-pandemic era; and, (d) virtual learning and teaching, including virtual assessment. The Audit Panel

found that this review helped identify areas of common good practice as well as areas of difference and has informed the development of programmes, policies and practices in the University.

- 1.14 For programme-level benchmarking, feedback is sought from external subject experts and academics, via periodic programme review (PPR), and the EE system, to benchmark academic standards against international institutions. Both PPR and EE require programmes to appoint senior academics from other higher education institutions to undertake detailed reviews of programmes and comment on their quality and standards and how they compare to other universities. The Audit Panel found that this system is working well with detailed comments provided by ERs and EEs that identify where programmes are equivalent to, or differ and improve on those elsewhere.
- 1.15 Policy and procedures for Departmental Review and Benchmarking are detailed in the Quality Manual. The APDC oversees the process for Departmental Review and Benchmarking, including the responses and follow-up actions. Faculties propose the schedule for departmental review and departmental benchmarking with APDC ensuring that departments are reviewed every six years. The review is a three-stage process comprising a self-evaluation by the department under review, a report produced by the review panel, and a departmental action plan addressing the recommendations of the report. The Audit Panel formed the view that the process is working well with the department self-evaluation report linked to PMs, UKPIs, and IKPIs/IPIs, full engagement from ERs, and departmental action plans flowing up the governance system from department management committees to faculty boards, to APDC and then on to AB. There is therefore a whole system consideration of individual Departmental Reviews to promote the cross-fertilisation of recommendations and lessons learned. In addition, ERs reported that they are well-briefed with detailed documentation on their role, had access to all relevant documents, could meet with students and felt their advice was listened to with their feedback taken seriously and acted-on. They also considered University academic standards to be equivalent to their own universities.
- 1.16 Through its analysis of processes at various levels (see paragraphs 1.13-1.15), the Audit Panel concluded that **the interlinked, systematic and effective use of benchmarking in QA and enhancement through institutional, departmental and programme benchmarking is a feature of good practice.**
- 1.17 The Admissions Strategy each year is first deliberated at APDC in relation to the UGC intake quotas for Ug and SD programmes, as well as the Postgraduate Diploma in Education (PGDE), and internal planning for TPg students. The LTQC oversees and monitors policies, strategies and schemes for student admissions to Ug and SD programmes, and the PGDE, to ensure the University admits its desired balance across different student groups (e.g. local and international). The Audit Panel noted that LTQC conducts a review after each

admission cycle, drawing on relevant data, and makes recommendations for the next cycle. These recommendations have clear action owners, including faculties and programme teams. BGS oversees and monitors admissions policies and procedures for postgraduate programmes (excluding the PGDE).

- 1.18 The Audit Panel confirmed that University's operations and activities are determined by, and clearly aligned with, its mission and Strategic Plan (2016-2025). At the heart of the mission is the Education-plus approach which drives the EdUHK's offer of a distinctive multi-disciplinary teacher education through a common core curriculum framework and via students taking second majors and/or minors in complementary disciplines. New programmes have been introduced in recent years to strengthen this model. The approach is operationalised through the PEER&I Graduate Attributes which underpin the framework for all the University's programmes regardless of level. The Audit Panel found that the Strategic Plan is reviewed every three years to take account of the changing external environment and to assess the level of progress on strategic initiatives and PIs. The Panel further observed that the periodic strategic review process is comprehensive and inclusive and has confirmed progress in KPIs and Strategic Areas. Effective oversight of academic standards and enhancement of quality is maintained through a well-articulated and defined QA Framework which derives from AB and its constituent committees and is supported by a nested, multi-layered and consistent committee structure at faculty, department and programme level. The distinctive and complementary responsibilities of committees from University to faculty, department and programme level are well-articulated. The continuing effectiveness of AB and its constituent committees is monitored through annual and ad-hoc reviews. The Audit Panel established the clear effectiveness of these processes in amendments to committee terms of reference and memberships ensuring that committees and the system flex to meet emerging University needs. The QA Framework is further undergirded by a clear leadership structure with appropriately designated roles and responsibilities. A strong feature of the University's approach to setting, maintaining and enhancing the academic standards of its programmes and student experience is found in its systematic and structured use of external benchmarking at University, programme and department levels.

## **2. REVIEW AND ENHANCEMENT OF THE UNIVERSITY'S ARRANGEMENTS FOR PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT AND APPROVAL, MONITORING AND REVIEW**

- 2.1 The University has a well-defined and comprehensive framework underpinning its approach to programme development and approval, monitoring and review and has implemented this via a comprehensive review of its programmes, encompassing all levels of study over the previous five years. The process takes full account of both external needs and influences in terms of academic developments necessary for the currency of the programmes. The PEER&I framework, actively deployed since 2017, uses specific descriptors, articulated

through the seven GILOs, for each individual programme level. The mapping between GILOs, Programme Intended Learning Outcomes (PILOs) and Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs), points to a cohesive and clearly articulated approach to ensuring constructive alignment between learning outcomes and student assessment. The rigour with which the University effects its procedures is demonstrated in examples of programme monitoring, where the three domains of the PEER&I framework, professional excellence, ethical responsibility and innovation, are clear.

- 2.2 The University's Quality Manual and accompanying appendices and templates set out the framework and principles of the institutional approach to QA and QE. PCs review all award-bearing programmes at the University on an annual process during which they consider data and quality outcomes in order to confirm the satisfactory operation of programmes. Programme Leaders analyse data and stakeholder feedback related to the operation and progress of the programmes, and PCs are empowered to make interventions to address challenges and to effect continuous improvement. During the development stage of new programmes, the University deploys a robust external review process that considers the validity of the academic aims and objectives and whether there is sufficient market demand. The Periodic Review process aims principally to enhance the quality of existing programmes, and is conducted as a two-stage process, initial and follow up (the latter stage on a quinquennial basis), with input from external review panels with a focus on academic standards and the implementation and management of provision.
- 2.3 As noted at paragraph 1.2, the Education-plus approach lies at the core of the University's approach to programme development. Its development can be traced back to 2008 when EdUHK's initial application for university title pledged to enlarge and enrich its education portfolio and it has continued as an integral component of the University's mission and new Strategic Plan 2016-2025. Its central aim is to create multidisciplinary learning experiences for students to enhance teacher education. The Triennium Planning Exercise Proposal 2022-2025 strengthened the University's portfolio through the offering of nine new programmes in disciplines complementary to education, including creative industries, data science, AI, sports and recreation and applied language. The development of complementary discipline areas has broadened opportunities for students to take a second major and/or minor drawing on the new disciplinary base and the average take up rate over the previous four years has held strong at over 56%. The Audit Panel noted that students and alumni understand and appreciate the University's ambition to expose them to wider interdisciplinary learning so that their experiences render them more rounded as graduates.
- 2.4 The Staff Handbook on Programme Quality Assurance, accessible via the University's intranet, is a comprehensive document which offers both theoretical and practical guidance to key processes around programme development and

approval, monitoring and review, as well as providing academic and professional staff with a critical source of support in QA matters. The University makes available a large variety of staff professional development activities for capacity building and skill development of academic/teaching staff including with respect to core QA and QE processes. An ‘Induction – Introduction to Teaching in Higher Education Settings’ is organised by the LTTC and forms part of the Certificate Course on ‘Introduction to Teaching in Higher Education’. Academic staff confirmed that the induction process was valuable and timely in preparing them sufficiently for their roles.

- 2.5 APDC and its subcommittee, the Common Core Curricula Committee for Ug and SD Programmes, renamed as Common Core Curricula Committee in January 2024, play a critical role in exercising oversight of curriculum for Ug, SD and professional development programmes, the PGDE, as well as the common core curriculum. The BGS reviews and ensures the alignment of postgraduate programmes to the University Strategic Plan. These various committees also perform an important self-reflective function that supports continuous refinement and enhancement of the curriculum. APDC is also critical in ensuring that portfolio development is actively informed by external developments and requirements, ensuring that new programmes are relevant, current and pay due regard to societal and economic needs, government policies and development strategies.
- 2.6 In respect of teacher education, alignment with EDB’s requirements is critical, an example being the evident societal demand for sports science and coaching programmes. Internal drivers include an institutional commitment to harnessing the research potential of colleagues. For TPg provision, the BGS takes account of government’s priorities as well as provision offered by competitors. For example, the Audit Panel learned that this approach has recently prompted the establishment of a research facility for educational neuroscience.
- 2.7 The University’s policies and guidelines on programme development provide the framework to ensure that all programmes observe external regulatory requirements, including EDB’s Guidelines on Teachers’ Professional Conduct and Guiding Framework for Primary and Secondary Teacher Education Programmes, and the HKQF which is applied during the programme development process and evaluated through programme monitoring and review processes. The Audit Panel observed ways in which evolving societal needs have been addressed by developing multidisciplinary (see paragraph 2.3) and incorporating timely topics, such as National Security Education, an experiential learning course on entrepreneurship and innovation as well as Greater Bay Area activities in field experience, within the curriculum and concluded that **the University’s responsiveness to adapting its portfolio to address evolving societal needs is a feature of good practice.**

- 2.8 To further inform programme development, EdUHK conducts market research studies to shape planning of new programmes and refinement of existing ones. This approach is evidenced in the Planning of the New Undergraduate Programmes for Planning Exercise Proposals. The University proactively seeks stakeholder views on programme development through student feedback on programmes and student performance from placement and internship providers. Furthermore, for programme review, the University has actively sought the views of students and employers in order to strengthen employability skills in Ug programmes, which has resulted in more work-related training. The Audit Panel reviewed audit trails of programme monitoring which indicate how data and feedback is used to monitor performance and provide indicators for curriculum review.
- 2.9 Programme Outcomes Assessment (POA) provides an effective means of measuring student attainment of programme learning outcomes and enables programmes to make improvements in response to assessment outcome data. The impact of POA is bearing fruit in that the institution's growing use of data analytics has enabled it to identify the criteria in which students have performed less well against key learning outcomes and make appropriate interventions to raise student achievement of the learning outcomes concerned. Further insight is garnered from the Grade Point Average (GPA) analysis of programmes and courses and this has been a feature of annual programme review, from 2019 with both qualitative and quantitative data actively employed for programme enhancement.
- 2.10 The Audit Panel learned of instances where programme monitoring had indicated that more immediate intervention was required to address challenges and get the programme 'back on track'. This was particularly evident during the pandemic with changes in delivery mode on the Bachelor of Education and deeper investment in e-learning initiatives, such as the Blended Learning for University Enhancement (BLUE) project. The Panel also noted that through consideration of data and feedback by the faculty and departmental level Learning and Teaching Committees, the University had responded to a drop in student satisfaction levels with timely and appropriate interventions that resulted in satisfaction returning to previous levels.
- 2.11 EdUHK works within a supportive framework which seeks to identify good practice on a number of projects with its three current benchmarking partners, e.g. language education (Lapland University), EEs (RMIT) and teacher ethics and the National Security Law (East China Normal University). The Audit Panel noted a clear institutional-wide commitment to the positive principles and benefits of external benchmarking, also evident for professional services, where it is clear that due account is taken of Library and IT developments in external partners.

- 2.12 The University takes full account of external benchmarking and external reference points for enhancement purposes when developing and considering new and existing programmes. For example, expert views are gathered through a panel comprising scholars and professionals from a range of comparable institutions and other countries and the Audit Panel found clear evidence of feedback from external review and benchmarking leading to programme improvements. Similarly, constructive feedback from EEs and ERs is gathered regularly and taken into account as part of the review processes. The Panel concluded that the University's use of benchmarking within programme development and approval, monitoring and review contributes to the feature of good practice identified at paragraph 1.16.
- 2.13 The Audit Panel found that there is a serious commitment to consistency, self-reflection and continuous improvement in the University's approach to quality, maintained by various processes and formal bodies including annual programme reports, student views at Staff-Student Consultative Committees (SSCCs), marking schemes and DAPs.
- 2.14 The Audit Panel confirmed that the University has a clear framework underpinning its approach to programme development and approval, monitoring and review. It has implemented this framework via a comprehensive review of programmes encompassing all levels of study and has taken full account of both external and internal critical drivers. The successful Education-plus approach provides a strong focus on a transformational and interdisciplinary student experience. The University's policies and guidelines on programme development ensure that all provision meets external regulatory requirements. Further, full account is taken of external benchmarking and external reference points to meet societal needs and for enhancement purposes in developing new and reviewing existing programmes. Constructive stakeholder feedback is gathered regularly and fed into review processes, which have further benefited from external reviews and proactive and targeted benchmarking with partner universities.

### **3. REVIEW AND ENHANCEMENT OF TEACHING AND LEARNING**

- 3.1 EdUHK's approach is governed by the Learning and Teaching Plan (L&T Plan) which seeks to ensure that student learning outcomes are in line with the seven strategic key themes of: internationalisation; teacher education programme; UG curriculum development; postgraduate learning and teaching; students' learning outcomes; e-learning and digital competency; and capacity building. Progress against and attainment of milestones for each theme are annually evaluated using various measures and PIs. In addition, all programmes are designed under the PEER&I Graduate Attributes framework which identifies the University's GILOs (see paragraph 1.3). The University's well-established QA/QE mechanisms and committee structure enable effective use of data to make policy decisions relating to L&T.

- 3.2 The comprehensive E-Learning and Digital Competency Strategy focuses on three domains: professional development of academic/teaching staff and capacity building; e-learning and digital competencies development of students; and, smart learning environment for e-learning and digital competencies development, innovation and entrepreneurship. The Strategy is oriented to improving capacity building for both students and academic staff. For students, it does this by promoting collaborative and blended learning and the ability of learners to use various digital tools, so as to extend their e-learning and digital competencies in a self-directed e-learning habit through life. For academic staff, it supports the development of digital education skills through workshops and the BLUE initiative to promote 'One Course One Online Lesson'. LTQC has approved policies and guidelines setting out principles and procedures to ensure quality online L&T and guidance on online assessments for individual and group work. The University has opened an AI Education Laboratory to support potential AI applications in L&T. In addition, various learning analytics tools have been introduced and promoted by the LTTC to help teaching staff make informed pedagogical decisions based on student learning behaviours.
- 3.3 The Audit Panel was able to confirm that EdUHK ensures various PIs related to L&T are measured, assessed, and monitored according to the University's mission, vision and strategic aims. The Data Strategy has two domains, L&T and RPg Students, with 13 important data assets related to L&T. Student feedback on, and evaluation of, L&T is collected via the Student Evaluation of Teaching (SET), the Annual Programme Evaluation Questionnaire, the Student Research Experience Questionnaire (SREQ), and a Survey on Students' Online Learning Experience.
- 3.4 The SET is conducted online for every course each time it is taught and covers both course design and the lecturer's teaching practices. The Annual Programme Evaluation Questionnaire is administered across all programmes at the end of term to collect students' views on the curriculum and the effectiveness of L&T. The online SREQ assesses the quality of research training for RPg students who have completed their qualifying or viva examination and covers supervision, infrastructure and services, intellectual and research climate, generic skills, and goals and expectations. The Survey on Students' Online Learning Experience was implemented in 2020 in the context of the pandemic and aimed to better understand the online L&T experience for students. It then became the Survey on Students' Learning Experience focusing on hybrid class learning, fully online learning, learning support and assessments in the virtual environment. The Audit Panel noted the use of a wide range of surveys to drive changes and improvement.
- 3.5 The Audit Panel noted the role of the TFAMIDMS in overseeing the implementation and review of the AMIS. It develops, reviews, and updates measures and indicators, and monitors trend data. In turn, this feeds into the University's various QA/QE mechanisms and the committee structure to enable timely and effective policy decisions relating to L&T and RPg supervision.



Different data sources have been used to enhance L&T including PMs, UKPIs and PIs in the seven themes of the L&T Plan. Academic KPIs on L&T are reviewed by LTQC. Using one of the themes of L&T plan as an example, under the domain of Capacity Building academic staff are encouraged to use research findings to inform teaching. Data has shown that over 92% of academic staff have incorporated their research outputs to inform and enhance teaching. The incorporation of different data sources to evaluate the progress of programmes, departments and faculties in meeting L&T strategic objectives is effective in QA and QE. In this context, the Audit Panel was able to conclude that **the strategic and effective utilisation of data in the enhancement of teaching and learning and RPg supervision is a feature of good practice.**

- 3.6 The Audit Panel confirmed that EdUHK has a comprehensive approach to supporting staff development in L&T. There are clear procedural guidelines and expectations in terms of academic and professional qualifications for staff recruitment and appointment. All new academic/teaching staff are required to complete LTTC induction programmes. LTTC also offers a wide range of programmes for faculty covering academic writing, research supervision and e-learning and assessment. In addition, the Graduate School, faculties and departments offer different professional development activities for mentorships, teaching grants and co-teaching. The Peer Support of Teaching Scheme at LTTC has provided staff mentorship. Each faculty has an academic L&T coordinator and an associate assigned to departments to extend academic staff support on L&T throughout the academic structure.
- 3.7 The Audit Panel noted the extensive resources made available for staff development at EdUHK. These include University-wide staff development sponsorships to support staff attendance at conferences, seminars and workshops, as well as the sponsorship for PGDE to support academic staff on pedagogy and curriculum development. A two-tier award system for staff recognition operates at University level with the President's Award for Outstanding Performance in Teaching replicated by the Faculty Teaching Awards. Additional opportunities are facilitated by the Faculty Caring Teacher Award and the Caring Teacher Commendation Scheme, as well as the award for Excellent Field Experience Supervision. As a means of rewarding and retaining teaching staff, EdUHK has implemented an Enhanced Teaching Track Structure to recognise teaching fellows and other senior teaching posts with noteworthy teaching achievement and a track record in knowledge transfer activities.
- 3.8 The Audit Panel observed that EdUHK encourages staff external engagement by allowing them to take development leave and/or sabbatical leave. The Policy on Sabbatical Leave was updated in 2023 and set prerequisites on eligibility. Development leave can be used for research and various types of scholarly activities, training and development purposes. It was noted that comparatively low numbers of academic staff have taken sabbatical leave because of commitment to students and teaching, but that development leave can also be

used for research. The Audit Panel heard that the University is continuing to work with various staff stakeholders in evaluating different work patterns as a means of making it easier for staff to take sabbatical leave. Academic/teaching staff are engaged as professional consultants or members of external advisory bodies such as government or government-related, educational and non-governmental organisations. The Audit Panel found clear evidence of beneficiaries of the University's knowledge transfer activities.

- 3.9 The Audit Panel found clear evidence of a senior commitment to leadership and management of L&T. AB oversees and advises on the formulation of policies relating to L&T, while Faculty Boards oversee the faculties' academic provision, L&T and research to ensure that constituent departments meet their academic goals. Staff members are supported in leading and managing L&T projects while the Teaching Development Grant (TDG) provides opportunities for academic and teaching staff, with 25% of the budget reserved for teaching staff and new academic staff.
- 3.10 The University's various academic support units, including LTTC, the Library, the Office of the Chief Information Officer and the Estates Office, provide quality infrastructure and effective resource utilisation to support student learning in both physical and virtual environments. LTTC offers a wide range of programmes for faculty to support online teaching, covering topics include online/hybrid learning, Moodle, educational tools, AI, coding, augmented reality/virtual reality, animation and video editing, and STEM education. The courses and workshops help prepare academic/teaching staff for popular online applications and education tools with the aim of enlivening online L&T.
- 3.11 The Audit Panel noted that the Library has enhanced its collections, facilities and study environment with the help of timely feedback from various stakeholders and from benchmarking with other local and overseas libraries. It also offers induction training on all platforms for new academic/teaching staff. In 2018, the Library embarked on a new Future Classrooms project, established jointly with LTTC, the Estates Office and the Office of the Chief Information Officer, to support change of the L&T environment with educational technology. The project aims to promote an innovative approach to L&T by integrating technology, pedagogy and interactive learning. In addition to supporting teachers and students within EdUHK, for example by enabling academic staff to apply for TDG to develop initiatives across programmes, school principals, teachers and students from kindergartens, primary and secondary schools are invited to explore innovative pedagogical models with the Future Classrooms Project. The initiative has also led to collaborative projects with other UGC-funded universities. The Panel learnt that EdUHK has plans to expand the Future Classrooms project in a new academic building which is under construction, so that the facilities will be more readily available to students. The Audit Panel was of the view that **the Future Classrooms project, which promotes the use of new technology in classroom teaching in the University and local schools,**

**and embraces innovative pedagogical models and emerging technologies to enhance teaching and learning experience, is a feature of good practice.**

- 3.12 The Audit Panel concluded that EdUHK has a structured and effective mechanism to review and enhance L&T. Comprehensive policies and strategies are in place to support L&T. The E-Learning and Digital Competency Strategy promotes collaborative and blended learning. There are effective policies and procedures for staff professional development. The Future Classrooms project promotes the use of new technology in classroom teaching in schools and the University, embracing innovative pedagogical models and advanced technology to enhance the L&T experience. The use of data for evaluation of teaching quality and research supervision as well as strategic development is effective and robust.

#### **4. REVIEW AND ENHANCEMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING ASSESSMENT**

- 4.1 The Audit Panel found that the University has an innovative approach to assessment which takes full account of external and student feedback, is increasingly data informed and, through effective deployment of formative assessment, deploys assessment as an effective tool for learning. This approach to assessment aligns with the institutional drivers to enhance teaching and learning and the holistic overview of ‘whole person development’ of the student experience to meet wider societal needs. EdUHK has a comprehensive framework guided by its Policy on Student Assessment to facilitate assessment of student learning with clear Generic Grade Descriptors to ensure objectivity in criterion-referenced assessment. The Audit Panel noted the clear course outline template to guide academic/teaching staff when they are developing new programmes and the accessibility of the assessment regulations and procedures via the University website.
- 4.2 The Policy on Student Assessment provides a framework for assessing student learning under the University’s outcome-based approach and was updated in 2023 to embrace online/virtual assessment and also promotes the prominence of formative assessment. Guiding Principles on Alternative Assessment and the Principles and Guidelines on Assessment of Group Work demonstrate the capacity of the University to adapt its approach to assessment and be responsive to current pedagogic and technological developments, such as the implementation of the Future Classrooms project (see paragraph 3.12). Similar innovations in RPg assessment have been embraced, as evidenced by BGS approval of the decision to introduce folio submission in lieu of the traditional thesis.
- 4.3 The University’s Graduate Attributes frame the development of GILOs, PILOs and CILOs at the programme and course levels alongside the Generic Grade Descriptors which provide description of achievement for specific standards.

CILOs and assessment criteria are defined within course outlines and shared with, and explained to, students who clearly understand assessment expectations and requirements. The University acted swiftly to address the challenges of assessment during the pandemic, for example in modifying course assignments and providing guidance on online assessment, thus mitigating disruption to the student experience without a detrimental effect on academic standards.

- 4.4 There is strong external confirmation of the alignment between assessment and Learning Outcomes and articulation with criterion-referenced assessment from ERs and EEs contributing to Departmental Review and Benchmarking exercises and external examining reports. Although changes were made to the assessment mode, academic standards and approaches to criterion-referenced assessment remained unaffected. There are clearly accessible course outlines and CILOS as well as operational practices and guidelines disseminated to staff and students relating to assessment criteria covering key assessment processes such as moderation, double marking, late submissions, appeals and academic integrity as articulated in the Quality Manual.
- 4.5 The evaluation of 91 programmes conducted by 89 EEs in the 2021/22 academic year indicate that assessment design and practice is appropriately structured and comparable with other institutions. The Audit Panel saw evidence of improvements effected to assignment design and activities in response to the views of ERs and EEs. Examples from EEs' reports indicate positive feedback on the structure and comparability of assessment design, particularly with regard to the constructive alignment between learning outcomes and assessments.
- 4.6 EdUHK benchmarks its assessment practice and outcomes against comparator institutions. A University-level benchmarking exercise in 2019 confirmed the comparability of EdUHK's grading system and honours classification systems with those of its benchmarking partner institutions. The Audit Panel noted evidence demonstrating the standard and quality of assessment design and practices in programmes and courses in the form of Departmental Review and Benchmarking reports from over the previous eight academic years, in which ERs testified that assessments aligned appropriately with the intended learning outcomes. Further evidence of improvements made to assignment design in response to the views of EEs and ERs was also reviewed by the Audit Panel.
- 4.7 Moodle is the University's central and secure learning management system, supporting virtual learning, teaching and assessment. It is the main repository for student learning materials and assignments and hosts interim guidelines on teaching, learning and assessment from AI-enabled generative tools. Important information relating to assessment is relayed to students, largely at induction with clarity regarding the specific assessment requirements during the outset of the programme and/or course. SET data substantiate this, revealing that students generally agree that they are fully informed of the assessment requirements early in their courses.

- 4.8 The 2023 revisions to the Policy on Student Assessment highlighted the positive and supportive role of formative assessment as an effective tool for learning. The Operational Guidelines supporting the General Academic Regulations state that course lecturers should provide timely feedback to students, which should be no later than one month after submission. This was confirmed by students on taught programmes who testified to the value of the feedback in improving their learning.
- 4.9 The Audit Panel noted effective review of procedures in relation to Academic Honesty and the use of AI in 2020 and 2023 and evidence that the impact of these reviews was embedded and understood across members of staff and students. Due to the rise of use of Generative AI and concerns among staff and students about the unmitigated use of AI-enabled generative tools, LTQC approved the first version of the interim guidelines for staff in March 2023 which were later updated in September 2023. While the University advised that its assessment regulations and procedures are reviewed as needed and this was confirmed in meetings with key staff, the Audit Panel would suggest that a more strategic approach to change could be managed through scheduled review timeframes for related policies and regulations.
- 4.10 A commitment to analysis of assessment outcomes and processes is evident in the work of DAPs. The Audit Panel noted their critical and enhanced role in ensuring fairness and consistency by careful monitoring of grade distributions and assessment outcomes as well as in reviewing and monitoring assessment procedures to identify good practice and areas of improvement. The DAPs consider standard and outlier results against established University norms and further examine and seek to verify justification for examples of deviation. At the end of every semester DAPs review grade patterns and check that all fails and top grades are submitted for moderation. Where irregularities are identified, the relevant academic colleagues, such as module and course leaders, are asked to provide an explanation for the pattern. DAPs also play a critical role in the promotion of good practice in the moderation of assessment where all colleagues delivering the same course mark the same selection of scripts to confirm a uniform approach.
- 4.11 BoEs make recommendations on the overall performance of students, including with regard to graduation, award classification and approval of discontinuation. They consider award classifications and GPA to ensure consistency, monitor patterns and advise programme directors to discuss salient performance issues with their teaching teams. LTQC also considers annual reports on the distribution of award classification, an analysis which is both qualitative and quantitative in nature. In addition, the role and remit of EEs in reviewing samples of assessed work is clearly articulated and understood.
- 4.12 The Audit Panel found that the University has a comprehensively evaluative approach to student learning assessment in terms of processes and outcomes.

This is exemplified in the following initiatives: the instigation of formative assessment as a tool for learning support and improved student attainment in taught programmes, in the deployment of folio assessment at RPg level, and in the prompt and appropriate action taken to review procedures in relation to Academic Honesty and the use of AI. In this context, the Audit Panel was able to conclude that **the University's tangible commitment to continuous improvement and innovation in assessment is a feature of good practice.**

- 4.13 The Audit Panel confirmed that the University has a comprehensive framework to facilitate assessment of student learning. Clear Generic Grade Descriptors ensure objectivity in criterion-referenced assessment and the course outline template ensures consistency in approach to course delivery and assessment. The Policy on Student Assessment provides the framework for assessing student learning under an outcome-based approach which embraces online/virtual assessment, formative assessment and the value of constructive and timely feedback to students. The approach to assessment responds effectively to current developments and the strong correlation between assessment and learning outcomes is evidenced by feedback from ERs and EEs and in Departmental Review and Benchmarking exercises. The tangible commitment to continuous improvement and innovation in assessment is exemplified in the application of formative assessment as a tool for learning support and in the deployment of folio assessment at RPg level. DAPs monitor grade distribution and verify assessment outcomes. A growing confidence in data analysis and insight into the impact of assessment strategies has strengthened institutional oversight.

## **5. REVIEW AND ENHANCEMENT OF THE UNIVERSITY'S ARRANGEMENTS FOR SUPPORTING STUDENTS**

- 5.1 EdUHK is committed to providing comprehensive support for students preparing them to become outstanding and morally responsible educators and professionals while also supporting their lifelong learning. The University aims to achieve these goals by offering a range of support measures. These include coordinating different units to offer orientation for freshmen and postgraduate students, offering the ULPS to assist new students in developing their personal path and integration of non-formal learning experience in their academic journey, and using the Whole Person Development Inventory (WPDI) to facilitate Student Development Tutors (SDTs) guiding new SD and Ug students in development of their whole person development plan. For postgraduate students, the University provides the Postgraduate Holistic Development Inventory (PHDI) to help them identify strengths and weaknesses as well as learning activities that facilitate whole person development. Comprehensive support from the Graduate School covering individual consultations, workshops and seminars on research, grants for conference attendance and virtual research training are offered to improve students' generic and transferable skills as preparation for their careers. Student progress is monitored effectively through different channels, including the Longitudinal Study on Mean Programme GPA for Ug students, and the

SREQ for RPg students. Data for Ug student progress, attainment and retention are reviewed and monitored by LTQC.

- 5.2 Orientation programmes, effectively planned and organised by the Working Group on Full-time Ug and Higher Diploma (Early Childhood Education) Programme Registration working with the SAO, offer practical information that helps new students to feel more confident in adjusting to university life thereby enhancing social interaction. There is a hub and spoke model with central 'New Student Orientation' and faculty-based activities. These orientation events are positively received by students who appreciate the boost to their confidence at the outset of their university life. Orientation is conducted at programme level for TPg, RPg and Doctor of Education (EdD) students at the commencement of an academic year. The Audit Panel learnt that students are assigned to Academic Advisors at the outset of their programmes while RPg students receive detailed information regarding their programmes and learning support facilities during their orientation.
- 5.3 LTQC plays an integral role in reviewing data to monitor student progress, attainment and retention across Ug programmes. Effective tools, including a longitudinal study of Mean Programme GPA for monitoring student performance from year 1 to year 5 of their study and analyses of major course mean GPA to inform course design and improve student support, are used. RPg and EdD student feedback on research supervision is collected through the SREQ. An upward trend in RPg student feedback on the quality of research supervision is shown between the 2018/19 and 2022/23 academic years. The average completion time for PhD students (without MPhil degree) has shortened from 4.4 years for the 2014/15 cohort to 3.9 years for the 2017/18 cohort.
- 5.4 There are diverse and effective co-curricular activities to enhance students' personal, academic and professional development. The ULPS assists new students to develop their personal path and integrate their non-formal learning experience to nurture their all-round development. The WPDI is a questionnaire used by SDTs to help guide Ug and SD students in developing personal development plans. SDTs also play a crucial role in helping the SAO to gain insights into students' needs, concerns and expectations regarding campus support, non-formal learning activities, and other non-academic matters that are useful for continuous service enhancement. Students appreciate the personal support of SDTs and are aware of the University's comprehensive support for language enhancement, experiential learning and other non-formal activities which provide a rich learning environment for students to achieve their whole person development goals.
- 5.5 Similarly, the PHDI, which asks postgraduate students to identify and work on their strengths and weaknesses, informs cross-unit enhancement activities, designed by the SAO and the Global Affairs Office (GAO), and endorsed by the BGS, to nurture whole student development. Under the PHDI, domains with the

lowest average score, such as problem-solving skills, self-management behavior and resilience, are identified so that TPg programmes can develop enhancement activities. Such activities are also available to and being introduced to RPg students through emails from the Graduate School and SAO. Well-designed programmes are coupled with enabling policies to provide a quality learning experience to students at all levels from day one of their studies.

- 5.6 Monitoring and enhancement measures for non-formal programmes are effectively integrated and implemented by the SAO for different levels of study and programmes. Effectiveness and student satisfaction rates of non-formal programmes organised by the SAO and GAO are evaluated through pre- and post-course questionnaires. Skill attainment in GILOs including problem solving, communication and social interaction are measured through these instruments. Evaluation of student learning outcomes for non-local learning programmes conducted by the GAO shows that students feel they have learned significantly in areas such as ethical responsibility and personal development.
- 5.7 EdUHK offers a full spectrum of services to support students' academic, personal and professional development. Academic advising affords Ug and postgraduate students opportunities to critically explore their academic, career and life goals with the help of their personal advisor. The LTTC and the Library offer a range of resources and services designed to enhance student learning outcomes through the provision of a conducive environment for learning, teaching, research and knowledge exchange. The LTTC regularly conducts workshops to help students to create their ePortfolios and reflect on their learning process. Support for SEN students includes bursaries and scholarships, peer support, counselling and career services, campus facilities, examination arrangements, and academic support. Two alternative pathways, namely the 'Student Teacher Education Program' and 'Artificial Intelligence Literacy' are being developed to enhance students' digital competency. The Centre for Language in Education (CLE) offers essential language enhancement support for local and overseas students. The Audit Panel heard that taught degree students find the CLE's workshops on reading and writing in English and Cantonese very helpful. Similarly, RPg students have used CLE's diverse services to enhance their Cantonese for research interviews and learn about AI in academic writing. The SAO provides a wide range of services and activities to facilitate students' career planning and enhance their employability. The Graduate Employment Survey, conducted annually by the SAO, is used to understand graduates' employment status and details of their job-seeking experience.
- 5.8 SDTs play an integral role in the ULPS. This well-designed pastoral care service affords students personalised guidance to understand their current state of development, identify future goals and construct action plans. The University provides suitable training, including basic counselling skills and mental health first aid, to prepare SDTs to work effectively with local and international students.



- 5.9 For RPg students, the Graduate School offers comprehensive support, including individual consultations, workshops and seminars on research, grants for conference attendance and virtual research training to improve students' generic and transferable skills as preparation for their careers. The Graduate School and academic advisors also provide support for RPg students to develop their academic networks for research collaborations and career preparation, enabling them to prepare and attend as many as four conferences as well as publish papers. Students can follow tailor-made modules in the Virtual Research Training Hub to enhance their academic writing, publication techniques, conference presentation skills, and other essential academic research skills.
- 5.10 The Audit Panel noted that EdUHK has devoted significant effort to enhancing competitiveness of the University and its graduates in understanding and use of AI. To strengthen student employability, the University revamped the Information Technology Competency in Education requirement for Ug, SD in education and PGDE students to add more AI elements in its 'IT ePortfolio Checking' and two alternative pathways, in 'Student Teacher Education Program' and 'Artificial Intelligence Literacy'. New Digital Competency courses will also be added to keep students abreast of latest developments in AI and data security. The Audit Panel was able to observe that EdUHK has comprehensively engaged with the challenge of AI in seeking to incorporate it appropriately in learning, teaching and assessment and consider its impact in the University's core business and operations. In general, it was evident that faculty, staff and students are embracing the change thoughtfully and productively.
- 5.11 Student feedback on programme and course quality is collected regularly through various channels, including the SET, SSCCs, the Annual Programme Questionnaire, and the Graduate Employment Survey, with results clearly reviewed for enhancement purposes. The Graduate School also uses a post-orientation survey to collect information on student needs. Both Ug and postgraduate students may also provide feedback through committees at university, faculty and department levels. Student members from diverse backgrounds in terms of study level, mode and programme attend Council, AB and 12 University-level committees to facilitate participation in governance and policy making. Student feedback on non-academic services is collected through surveys by relevant support units including the Library, the Estates Office, the Office of the Chief Information Officer and the SAO, and through designated committees, to understand ways in which the student experience could be improved.
- 5.12 Two new academies, the Academy for Educational Development and Innovation, and the Academy for Applied Policy Studies and Education Futures, were established in August 2023 to support interdisciplinary initiatives, such as educational development, innovation and entrepreneurship that would offer more practicum and career development opportunities for RPg students.

- 5.13 Overall, the Audit Panel concluded that the University has a comprehensive and effective governance system in place for developing, enhancing and reviewing those functions which support students' academic, personal and professional growth. EdUHK has developed diverse support for Ug, TPg, RPg and SEN students to meet their learning needs at different stages of their studies. Support services including orientations by SAO and language support from the CLE help students to adjust to local University life. Personal and non-academic development programmes facilitated by SDTs, such as the ULPS, WPDI, and PHDI, help students to identify their strength and weakness and develop plans for whole person development. Established channels, such as the SET, SSCCs, the Annual Programme Questionnaire, and the Graduate Employment Survey effectively collect student feedback for programme enhancement. There is evidence of effective communication and coordination among the senior management and across the University, while collaboration between academic and support units is strong. Reflecting its mission and values, the University devotes energy to reviewing and enhancing its programmes and operations to rapidly address changing societal needs for enhancing students' professional competency and employability.

## **6. COLLECTION, ANALYSIS AND USAGE OF DATA**

- 6.1 The University makes wide ranging use of data drawn from a number of internal and external sources to review and enhance its Strategic Plan, academic programmes and student experience. The Data Strategy outlines the framework for both identifying and managing data assets related to L&T. It ensures that the University adopts a structured framework with respect to the identification, quality and validity of its L&T data assets and comprises seven elements, namely: data acquisition; data governance; data quality; data access; data usage and literacy; data extraction and reporting; and, data analytics. 13 data assets are categorised into 'L&T' and 'RPg Students'. The Data Strategy also links the responsibilities for analysis and feedback of data directly to the committee structure and flowchart of QA/QE and establishes standardised procedures for handling feedback data and ensuring that appropriate follow-up actions are taken and completed.
- 6.2 PMs, UKPIs and PIs in the University's L&T Plan 2021-2024 are embedded in the seven key themes, with clear targets set to monitor progress and outcomes. The relevant datasets are identified for each PM/KPI/PI under each 'activity domain' with indicators to assess the achievement of milestones and targets. The PMs, UKPIs and PIs are cascaded across faculties and departments who apply the same set of targets and indicators in their own L&T plans and report their progress to LTQC. The KPIs related to RPg student experience and internationalisation are monitored by BGS and the International and Greater China Affairs Committee (IGCAC) respectively.

- 6.3 As noted in Criterion 3, the TFAMIDMS plays a central role overseeing the implementation and review of AMIS. It is a forum chaired by the Vice President (Academic) with membership from across relevant administrative offices, from each faculty and the Graduate School and with specialists in statistics and survey methodology.
- 6.4 Responsibility for the review and analysis of specific PMs/KPIs/PIs is assigned to committees as well as senior managers. For example, academic KPIs are mainly reviewed by LTQC, while those that relate to RPg students and internationalisation are monitored by BGS and IGCAC. There are established procedures for updating, monitoring and reporting PMs/KPIs/PIs with each having an assigned time-point of annual update. The identified responsible parties review progress made towards set targets and provide comments, share observations, and discuss recommendations and follow-up actions at meetings. At TFAMIDMS meetings members may also receive feedback and suggestions about data trends and observations within their purview. Following this input they are expected to consider and implement plans and follow-up actions within their respective boards/committees/programmes. Annual and regular reports from the AB committees and those below them, ensure the flow of information to relevant committees in the QA framework and eventually to AB. For example, admissions data, the results of annual programme evaluation questionnaires, students' self-assessment of GILOs attainment and Institutional Research on Graduates (IRG) are discussed at LTQC; data on the new student survey, the WPDI and participation in experiential learning activities are considered by the Student Affairs Committee. A comprehensive analysis of sector-wide PMs and UKPIs, which includes comparisons with other universities as well as longitudinal trends within EdUHK, is prepared annually as part of the preparation for the University Accountability Agreement. The Audit Panel noted that the identification of responsible managers and committees for the review, analysis and reporting on feedback of data ensures that there is integration with the institutional QA/QE framework and that data is used to inform deliberations and future developments, thus supporting an approach to continuous enhancement.
- 6.5 AMIS provides an accessible and reliable central platform for the provision of data on the PMs/KPIs/PIs to responsible parties and underpins a data-informed approach to decision making with respect to programme development and student experience. AMIS has been through a series of upgrades since December 2013 and the Audit Panel noted that EdUHK is in the process of introducing a new portal/dashboard to extend data analysis to a wider group including programme leaders. The output of AMIS is presented in a clear and accessible manner which aids access to data and its analysis. This is further facilitated by an inclusive approach to access with 300 to 400 users of the system across the University.

- 6.6 The University deploys a number of surveys and other data sources to understand admissions, quality of teaching including the SET, the Annual Programme Evaluation Questionnaire, the SREQ, the WPDI, external reviews, and EE reports etc. Reports of these surveys and datasets inform discussion at University, faculty, school and programme level and underpin initiatives to enhance the development of programmes and the student learning experience.
- 6.7 Data are collected from students (e.g. the new student survey, SET, Annual Programme Evaluation Questionnaire, the Student Evaluation of Field Experience, WPDI, students' evaluation of GILOs, the student survey on online L&T), staff (e.g. field experience supervisors, staff survey on online L&T), employers (e.g. IRG), graduates (e.g. the Graduate Employment Survey, IRG), internship/field experience partners, and ERs and EEs. These sources include feedback and management data from the different stages of the student life cycle, and cover formal learning, non-formal learning, and student services offered by academic support units.
- 6.8 There is clear evidence that the University collects, analyses, discusses and acts on data from a wide range of sources to monitor, inform and improve admission strategies, retention/attrition of full-time Ug students, student achievement of intended learning outcomes, the student face-to-face and online learning experience, the employability of its graduates as well as employers' views of the competencies of its graduates, the quality of RPg training, and whether there are differences between full-time and part-time students.
- 6.9 The Audit Panel found that the University makes wide-ranging use of data, drawn from a number of internal and external sources, to review and enhance its academic programme and student experience. The University Data Strategy sets out the framework for both identifying and managing data assets related to L&T and ensures that University adopts a common framework. The TFAMIDMS plays a central role overseeing the implementation and review of the AMIS. Membership from across the University ensures a strategic and co-ordinated approach to the management of data and the monitoring of progress against PMs/KPIs/PIs. Responsibility for the review and analysis of specific PMs/KPIs/PIs, including student related data, is assigned to committees as well as senior managers. The identification of responsible managers and committees for the review, analysis and reporting of data ensures that there is integration with the QA/QE framework and mechanisms of the University and that data is used to inform deliberations and future developments, thus supporting an approach to continuous enhancement. The University makes effective and systematic use of data collected across the student lifecycle as well as different modes and levels of learning. The Audit Panel found that EdUHK makes effective use of data to underpin benchmarking in QA and QE processes.

## **7. CONCLUSIONS**

- 7.1 The Audit Panel confirmed that the University's operations and activities are clearly aligned with its mission and Strategic Plan (2016-2025). The Education-plus approach drives the University's approach to offering a distinctive multi-disciplinary teacher education. It is operationalised through the Graduate Attributes which underpin the framework for all EdUHK's programmes. The Strategic Plan is reviewed every three years to ensure its continued relevance and to assess progress on strategic initiatives and KPIs. EdUHK's QA Framework maintains effective oversight of academic standards and quality and drives enhancement. The distinctive and complementary responsibilities of AB and its constituent committees are supported by a multi-layered and consistent committee structure at faculty, department and programme level. The membership and terms of reference of senior committees are subject to annual and ad-hoc reviews which ensure that the committees and system flex to meet emerging institutional needs. The QA Framework is reinforced by a clear leadership structure with appropriately designated roles and responsibilities. The approach to setting, maintaining and enhancing the academic standards of programmes and the student experience is characterised by systematic and structured use of external benchmarking.
- 7.2 The Audit Panel concluded that there is a clear framework for programme development and approval, monitoring and review. Processes are attentive to both external and internal drivers, ensuring that academic developments maintain the currency of programmes and ensure a strong focus on multi-disciplinarity, exemplified by the Education-plus approach with its focus on a transformational and multi-disciplinary student experience. Policies and guidelines on programme development, set out in the comprehensive Quality Manual, enable close attention to external regulatory requirements including EDB's guidelines for teacher education and the HKQF. Full account is taken of external benchmarking and external reference points for enhancement purposes when developing and considering new and existing programmes. The clear commitment to addressing external requirements to meet changing societal needs is exemplified by the agility with which the University has adapted and developed the curriculum. Constructive feedback from student surveys, EEs and ERs is gathered regularly and taken into account as part of QA processes which have further benefited from external reviews and proactive and targeted benchmarking with partner universities.
- 7.3 The Audit Panel established that EdUHK has a structured and effective approach for the review and enhancement of L&T. The systematic L&T Plan reflects the University Strategic Plan with KPIs at University, faculty and department levels. The Education-plus approach facilitates a multi-disciplinary learning experience for students which enables students to interact academically and professionally across disciplines to enrich their learning experiences. Effective staff recruitment procedures are complemented by induction programmes conducted by LTTC. At

the core of a clear policy on staff development, the LTTC undertakes a wide range of staff professional development activities with an evident institutional commitment to leadership and management of L&T. Staff performance is recognised in a wide range of teaching awards while staff external engagement is encouraged with opportunities for development leave and sabbatical leave. The E-learning and Digital Competency Strategy promotes collaborative and blended learning while the one-course-one-online lesson initiative has played a major role in facilitating e-learning. The Future Classrooms project, which promotes the use of new technology in classroom teaching in the University and local schools, embraces innovative pedagogical models and advanced technology to enhance the L&T experience. There is an effective use of data for evaluation of teaching quality and research supervision.

- 7.4 The Audit Panel confirmed that the University has a comprehensive framework to facilitate assessment of student learning. Generic Grade Descriptors ensure objectivity in criterion-referenced assessment. The course outline template used in preparing for course delivery and assessment promotes consistency. The Policy on Student Assessment provides a framework for assessing student learning under the University's outcome-based approach. It was updated in 2023 to embrace online/virtual assessment and to promote the prominence of formative assessment and constructive and timely feedback to students on assessed work. Guidance on alternative assessment and the assessment of group work demonstrate institutional capacity to adapt the approach to assessment and be responsive to current developments. There is a strong correlation between assessment and learning outcomes, evidenced by feedback from ERs and EEs and underpinned by Departmental Review and other benchmarking exercises. A tangible commitment to continuous improvement and innovation in assessment is exemplified in the prompt and appropriate review of procedures in relation to academic honesty and use of AI, and in the deployment of folio assessment at RPg level. DAPs play a critical role in monitoring grade distribution and verifying assessment outcomes. Institutional oversight is further underpinned by a growing confidence in data analysis and insight into the impact of assessment strategies.
- 7.5 The Audit Panel concluded that the University has a comprehensive and effective governance system in place for developing, enhancing and reviewing those functions which support students' academic, personal and professional growth. EdUHK has developed diverse support for Ug, TPg and RPg students to meet their learning needs at different stages of their studies. Support services including orientations by the SAO and language support from the CLE help students to adjust to local University life more efficiently. Co-curricular activities to enhance students' personal, academic and professional development are diverse and effective. The ULPS assists new students to develop their personal path and integrate their non-formal learning experience. Personal and non-academic development programmes facilitated by SDTs, such as the WPDI, help students to identify their strengths and weaknesses and develop plans for whole person

development. Established channels effectively collect student feedback for programme enhancement. There is evidence of effective communication and coordination among the senior management and across the University, while collaboration between academic and support units is strong. Reflecting its mission and values, the University devotes energy to reviewing and enhancing its programmes and operations to rapidly address changing societal needs for enhancing students' professional competency and employability.

- 7.6 The Audit Panel found that the University makes wide-ranging use of data, drawn from a number of internal and external sources, to review and enhance its academic programmes and student experience. The University Data Strategy sets out a common framework for both identifying and managing data assets related to L&T. The TFAMIDMS plays a central role overseeing the implementation and review of the AMIS and has membership from across relevant administrative offices, each faculty and the Graduate School as well as specialists in statistics and survey methods. There is a strategic and co-ordinated approach to the management of data and the monitoring of progress against PMs, KPIs, and PIs, responsibility for which is assigned to committees as well as senior managers. This ensures integration with the QA/QE framework and that data is used to inform deliberations and future developments, thus supporting an approach to continuous enhancement. The University makes effective and systematic use of data collected across the student lifecycle as well as different modes and levels of learning to underpin benchmarking in QA and QE processes.

## **APPENDIX A: THE EDUCATION UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG** *[Information provided by the University]*

### **History**

The Education University of Hong Kong (EdUHK) is a publicly funded tertiary institution dedicated to the advancement of learning and teaching, through a diverse offering of academic and research programmes on teacher education and complementary social sciences and humanities disciplines. EdUHK's historical roots can be traced back to 1881 with the establishment of the first Government Normal School in Hong Kong. Four Colleges of Education and the Institute of Language in Education were founded from 1930s to 1980s to provide formal teacher education in Hong Kong. They were later amalgamated to become The Hong Kong Institute of Education (HKIEd) in 1994. Following a successful university title review in 2015, HKIEd was officially renamed EdUHK in May 2016.

### **Vision and Mission<sup>#</sup>**

#### *Vision*

We will further enhance our role as a leading university in the Asia Pacific region and beyond, with a focus on educational research, development and innovation. We will continue to raise our profile and impact locally, regionally and internationally through our high quality research and scholarship. We are committed to nurturing outstanding and caring educators and professionals who contribute constructively to sustainable social and economic development in Hong Kong and beyond.

#### *Mission*

Committed to the Education-plus approach, our primary mission is to lead educational innovation, and to promote and support the strategic development of teaching, teacher education and disciplines complementary to education by preparing outstanding and morally responsible educators and professionals while supporting their lifelong learning.

We will

- provide a multidisciplinary learning and research environment beyond education that is conducive to intellectual pursuits, free thinking and speech, advocacy of policy and practice, and the promotion of collaboration and diversity;
- enhance professional teacher and teaching education programmes and programmes in disciplines complementary to education with innovative

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<sup>#</sup> The University Vision and Mission statements will be updated following the introduction of the Strategic Plan 2025-31 in the first quarter of 2025. Please visit the University's website (<https://www.eduhk.hk/en/about/vision-and-mission>) for details nearer the time.



curricula which will enrich students' experiences and enable them to realise their personal potential as well as their educational and career goals;

- prepare our students to become educators and professionals who can integrate theory and practice, and who are creative, innovative, intellectually active, entrepreneurial, socially caring and globally aware;
- foster a vibrant research culture and environment which contributes to the advancement of knowledge, scholarship and innovation, with a sustainable impact on social progress and human betterment; and
- engage in knowledge transfer activities which contribute to the development of the University and the wider community while serving the needs of educational and social development locally, regionally and internationally.

## **Role Statement**

EdUHK:

- (a) offers a range of programmes leading to the award of certificates, first degrees and postgraduate diplomas, which provide suitable preparation for a career in education and teaching in the pre-school, school and vocational training sectors;
- (b) also offers a series of programmes which provide professional education and development for serving teachers in these sectors;
- (c) nurtures through all its programmes knowledgeable, caring and responsible teachers who will serve the needs of Hong Kong schools;
- (d) pursues the delivery of teaching at an internationally competitive level in all the taught programmes that it offers;
- (e) delivers degree programmes relating to secondary education whenever possible through strategic collaborations with other local tertiary institutions;
- (f) provides a source of professional advice and development, and of research in education, as appropriate, to support the pre-school, school and vocational training sectors in Hong Kong;
- (g) maintains strong links with the community, and in particular the schools and the teaching profession;
- (h) pursues actively deep collaboration in its areas of strength with other higher education institutions in Hong Kong or the region or more widely so as to enhance the Hong Kong higher education system; and
- (i) manages in the most effective and efficient way the public and private resources bestowed upon the institution, employing collaboration whenever it is of value.

## **Governance and Management**

The Council is the executive governing body of the University and has general control over the administration of the University and the conduct of its affairs. The Academic Board is the chief academic forum responsible for planning, reviewing and advising the Council on the regulation of academic programmes, examinations and conferment of academic awards; and admission of students and academic matters of the University.

The Council has established five Committees, namely the Audit Committee, the Campus Development Committee, the Finance Committee, the Staffing Committee and the Honorary Awards Committee; and The Education University of Hong Kong Foundation. These Committees are delegated with specific roles and responsibilities by the Council.

The President is assisted by three Vice Presidents (Academic, Research and Development, and Administration including the Secretary to Council) and four Associate Vice Presidents who are responsible for institutional advancement, internationalisation, research and quality assurance.

### **Academic Organisation and Programmes of Study**

The University has a Graduate School; three faculties, namely the Faculty of Education and Human Development, Faculty of Humanities and Faculty of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences; and two academies, namely the Academy for Applied Policy Studies and Education Futures and Academy for Educational Development and Innovation. Altogether they offer sub-degree, undergraduate and postgraduate programmes.

### **Staff and Student Numbers**

In 2023/24, the University enrolled 707 sub-degree, 6 154 undergraduate, 2 897 taught postgraduate, 365 professional doctorate and 150 research postgraduate students. Academic/teaching staff comprises 427 regular and 14 short-term contract staff to give a total of 441.

### **Revenue**

Consolidated income for the year 2022/23 was HK\$2,235 million of which HK\$1,331 million (60%) came from government subvention and HK\$904 million (40%) from tuition, programmes and other fees, interest and net investment income, donations and benefactions, auxiliary services, and other income.

## **APPENDIX B: INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSE TO THE AUDIT FINDINGS**

The Education University of Hong Kong (EdUHK) would like to express its sincere gratitude to the Quality Assurance Council and the Audit Panel for conducting the third round of quality audit, which has enabled the University to engage in self-reflection on the quality of educational experiences it provides to its students, as well as the related provisions. The positive findings, with five features of good practice identified from the audit, affirm the University's unwavering commitment to upholding rigorous academic standards and enhancing the quality of learning and teaching.

The Audit Panel found that the University's operations and activities are clearly aligned with its mission and Strategic Plan 2016-2025 (paragraph 1.18) and that it has a strong commitment to the Education-plus approach, which provides students with more rounded experiences through multidisciplinary/interdisciplinary learning opportunities (paragraphs 1.2 and 2.3). The quality of students' learning and teaching has always been at the heart of the University's core mission. Therefore, the University is particularly delighted that the Audit Panel considered the "interlinked, systematic and effective use of benchmarking in QA (quality assurance) and enhancement through institutional, departmental and programme benchmarking" as a feature of good practice (paragraph 1.16). It also recognised the University's well-defined Quality Assurance framework in maintaining effective oversight of its academic standards and quality and in driving enhancement (paragraph 1.6), underpinning its approach to programme development and approval, monitoring and review (paragraph 2.1).

The University understands the importance of reviewing its curriculum and provisions continuously to provide up-to-date educational experiences to students. It is encouraging to learn that the Panel recognised the University's efforts in this respect and considered EdUHK's "responsiveness to adapting its portfolio to address evolving societal needs" as another feature of good practice. This adaptiveness is evident from the development of multidisciplinary and the incorporation of timely topics into the curriculum (paragraph 2.7). In the face of the ever-changing societal and educational landscape, the University will continue its work in revamping its programmes and curriculum as necessary to ensure they remain relevant to and impactful on students' future career and societal contributions.

We appreciate the Panel's acknowledgement of the University's structured and effective mechanism for reviewing and enhancing learning and teaching (paragraph 3.12), and its comprehensive and effective governance system, which supports students' academic, personal and professional growth (paragraph 5.13). The University has been actively embracing advanced and emerging technologies to build capacity for both students and academic staff. Such commitment is evident in our E-Learning and Digital Competency Strategy, related initiatives, and the development of advanced facilities such as the AI Education Laboratory (paragraph 3.2). The benefits of the University's Future Classrooms project, which is recognised as another feature of good practice (paragraph 3.11), will be extended to the new eight-storey academic building. This

building, upon completion, will offer a range of facilities to support the application and integration of education technology, innovative pedagogy and interactive learning.

With regard to student learning assessment, we are pleased to note the Panel's observation that the University has an innovative approach to assessment that takes full account of external and student feedback and is informed by data (paragraph 4.1), and its further highlighting of "the University's tangible commitment to continuous improvement and innovation in assessment" as another feature of good practice. This commitment was evidenced by our prompt review of assessment procedures related to academic honesty and the use of artificial intelligence, instigation of formative assessment as a tool for learning support and improved student attainment in taught programmes (paragraph 4.12). Such practices will continue to be upheld in the future through ongoing reviews and enhancements as necessary. The Panel's suggestion for the University to adopt a more strategic approach to review assessment policies and regulations through scheduled timeframes (paragraph 4.9) is greatly appreciated; the University has already taken this on board and will devise plans to enhance these processes.

The University is encouraged by the Audit Panel's recognition of "the strategic and effective utilisation of data in the enhancement of teaching and learning and RPg (research postgraduate) supervision" as another feature of good practice (paragraph 3.5). As a university that places great emphasis on quality enhancement, we systematically use data from a wide range of internal and external sources to inform strategies, policies and improvement plans. We will continue our proactive approach to promoting continuous enhancement in the quality of our teaching and learning, research supervision practices and academic support services.

The University is gratified by the Audit Panel's positive assessment and recognition of our strategic practices. We look forward to building on these strengths to drive academic excellence and the holistic development of our students and staff. As a university dedicated to its vision of nurturing outstanding and caring educators and professionals, we will continue to adopt evidence-based strategies and data-driven insights to ensure the provision of an optimal learning environment for students, and to meet future challenges and advance our educational goals.

## **APPENDIX C: ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

AB	Academic Board
AI	Artificial Intelligence
AMIS	Academic Management Information System
APDC	Academic Planning and Development Committee
BGS	Board of Graduate Studies
BLUE	Blended Learning for University Enhancement
BoE	Board of Examiners
CILO	Course Intended Learning Outcome
CLE	Centre for Language in Education
DAP	Departmental Assessment Panel
EDB	Education Bureau
EdD	Doctor of Education
EdUHK	The Education University of Hong Kong
EE	External Examiner
ER	External Reviewer
FLTC	Faculty Learning and Teaching Committee
GAO	Global Affairs Office
GILO	Generic Intended Learning Outcome
GPA	Grade Point Average
HKIED	The Hong Kong Institute of Education
HKQF	Hong Kong Qualifications Framework
IGCAC	International and Greater China Affairs Committee
IKPI	Internal Key Performance Indicator
IPI	Internal Performance Indicator
IRG	Institutional Research on Graduates
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
L&T	Learning and Teaching
LTQC	Learning and Teaching Quality Committee
LTTC	Centre for Learning, Teaching and Technology
PC	Programme Committee
PEER&I	Professional Excellence, Ethical Responsibility & Innovation

PGDE	Postgraduate Diploma in Education
PHDI	Postgraduate Holistic Development Inventory
PI	Performance Indicator
PILO	Programme Intended Learning Outcome
PM	Performance Measure
POA	Programme Outcomes Assessment
PPR	Periodic Programme Review
QA	Quality Assurance
QAC	Quality Assurance Council
QE	Quality Enhancement
RPg	Research Postgraduate
SAO	Student Affairs Office
SD	Sub-degree
SDT	Student Development Tutor
SEN	Special Educational Needs
SER	Self-Evaluation Report
SET	Student Evaluation of Teaching
SREQ	Student Research Experience Questionnaire
SSCC	Staff-Student Consultative Committee
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics
TDG	Teaching Development Grant
TFAMIDMS	Task Force on Academic Management Information and Data Management System
TPg	Taught Postgraduate
Ug	Undergraduate
UGC	University Grants Committee
UKPI	University-specific Key Performance Indicator
ULPS	University Life Planning Scheme
WPDI	Whole Person Development Inventory

## **APPENDIX D: EDUHK AUDIT PANEL**

The Audit Panel comprised the following:

Professor Timothy CLARK (Panel Chair)  
Provost, Singapore Management University

Professor Albert KO  
Director of Service-Learning and Lingnan Entrepreneurship Initiative, Office of Service-Learning, Lingnan University

Professor Vivian LEE  
Associate Professor of Centre for Learning Enhancement And Research, The Chinese University of Hong Kong

Ms Maureen McLAUGHLIN  
Director of Operations, Medical School, University of Manchester

### **Audit Coordinator**

Dr Neil CASEY  
QAC Secretariat

## **APPENDIX E: QAC'S MISSION, TERMS OF REFERENCE AND MEMBERSHIP**

The Quality Assurance Council (QAC) was formally established in April 2007 as a semi-autonomous non-statutory body under the aegis of the University Grants Committee (UGC) of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region.

### **Mission**

The QAC's mission is:

- (a) To assure that the quality of educational experience in all programmes at the levels of sub-degree, first degree and above (however funded) offered in UGC-funded universities is sustained and improved, and is at an internationally competitive level; and
- (b) To encourage universities to excel in this area of activity.

### **Terms of Reference**

The QAC has the following terms of reference:

- (a) To advise the UGC on quality assurance (QA) matters in the higher education sector in Hong Kong and other related matters as requested by the Committee;
- (b) To conduct audits and other reviews as requested by the UGC, and report on the QA mechanisms and quality of the offerings of universities;
- (c) To promote QA in the higher education sector in Hong Kong; and
- (d) To facilitate the development and dissemination of good practices in QA in higher education.



**Membership** (as at February 2025)

Professor Jan THOMAS (Chair)	Vice-Chancellor, Massey University
Professor Simon BATES	Vice Provost and Associate Vice President, Teaching and Learning, The University of British Columbia
Dr Benjamin CHAN Wai-kai, MH	Chief Principal, Hong Kong Baptist University Affiliated School Wong Kam Fai Secondary and Primary School
Professor Jimmy FUNG Chi-hung	Associate Provost (Teaching & Learning), The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology
Professor Julie LI Juan	Associate Vice-President (Mainland Strategy), City University of Hong Kong
Professor Marilee LUDVIK	Director, Academic Effectiveness, Office of the Provost and Professor of Practice, School of Leadership and Education Sciences, University of San Diego
Ms Phoebe TSE Siu-ling	General Manager, Commercial Banking Department, Bank of China (Hong Kong) Limited
Dr Carrie WILLIS, SBS, JP	Former Chairperson, Committee on Professional Development of Teachers and Principals

**Ex-officio Member**

Professor James TANG Tuck-hong	Secretary-General, UGC
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**Secretary**

Mr Louis LEUNG	Deputy Secretary-General (1), UGC
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