

8. Quality Assurance

8.1 External assessment of taught postgraduate programmes

External examiners, normally persons of high academic qualifications with considerable and recent experience in university teaching at Senior Lecturer/Associate Professor rank, shall be appointed for postgraduate programmes for an initial three years or for a longer duration on a need basis. Normally no visit to Hong Kong will be required. However, for some programmes, external examiners may be required to visit the University. One external examiner is normally appointed per programme, but for a programme with more than one specialisation, two or more external examiners may be appointed.

The external examiner will take part in the assessment of marked scripts/assignments/projects, etc. of courses selected for review. After reviewing the selected courses for each term, the external examiner will send his/her comments and recommendations to the Dean of the Graduate School. In addition, the external examiner is required to submit an overall report to the Dean of the Graduate School at the end of the year on the performance of the students and the standard of the programme, and if possible, to give views on the development of the programme.

8.2 Taught postgraduate programme review

According to the *Integrated Framework for Curriculum Development and Review (IF): II. Taught Postgraduate Programmes*, each TPg programme should conduct its own programme self-evaluation and be subject to a formal external programme review. The self-evaluation report of the programme should be considered by an external review panel appointed by the Faculty Board.

The programme review report consists of both self-evaluation and external review components, and should be submitted to the Faculty Board for approval and discussion of follow-up actions and formation of an action plan to address any issues for which there is potential for improvement. The review report and action plan should then be forwarded to the Graduate School for submission to the Senate Committee on Teaching and Learning (SCTL) and the Visiting Committee concerned, as appropriate.

8.3 Committee on Re-approval of Self-financed Taught Postgraduate Programmes

All self-financed TPg programmes, including programmes offered jointly with a partner institution, should have a maximum validity of six years, after which re-approval for continuation of the programme will be considered from both academic and resource angles. The Committee on Re-approval of Self-financed Taught Postgraduate Programmes considers the continuation or otherwise of all programmes after such six-year period or a shorter re-approval period as the case may be. The major sets of criteria for review are:

- (1) Academic quality;
- (2) Alignment with University/Faculty/Department strategic goals;
- (3) Sufficient student demand normally demonstrated by an annual intake of not less than 20 fte;
- (4) Provision of sustainable resources, such as adequate teaching support, normally offered by regular teaching staff, administrative support, classroom facilities, and other teaching and

learning facilities;

- (5) High quality of student intake normally demonstrated by the standing of the students' home institutions, GPAs, and English language proficiency and other credentials upon admission as well as upon graduation and employment statistics;
- (6) Observation of the no cross-subsidy principle; and
- (7) Financial viability evidenced by the programme budget as reviewed by the Resource Allocation Committee.