

# LINGNAN UNIVERSITY

## LINGNAN INSTITUTE OF FURTHER EDUCATION

### **Quality Audit of Sub-degree Operations of Lingnan University 7-month Progress Report (September 2020)**

The Report of a Quality Audit of Sub-degree Operations of Lingnan University was published by the Quality Assurance Council (QAC) in November 2019. Lingnan University (LU) would like to express its appreciation to the QAC for conducting the quality audit on the sub-degree operations of the Lingnan University and providing Lingnan Institute of Further Education (LIFE) with the opportunity for a self-review to enhance the teaching and learning quality. As a self-financing institution aiming at providing high quality education opportunities that meet the needs of learners, industries and Hong Kong society at large, and offering a well-established learning pathway for learners at different levels, LIFE welcomed the improvement opportunity offered by the QAC and took the QAC's comments seriously.

The quality audit significantly contributes to the continuous quality enhancement of our services and provides an excellent opportunity for us to review and improve the quality assurance mechanism and governance. The QAC audit report presents the findings of the quality audit, supported by detailed analysis and commentary on the following dimensions: 1. Governance, management, university planning and accountability; 2. Approach to programme quality assurance; 3. Curriculum design, programme development and approval processes; 4. Programme delivery, including pedagogical approaches, learning environments and resources, scheduling; 5. Support for teaching quality, including pedagogical development; 6. Student learning assessment; 7. Student participation and student support services; 8. Systems for acting on quality assurance data to make ongoing enhancements to student learning.

In response to the findings in the QAC audit report, LIFE formed a QAC Audit Follow-up Task Group in June 2019 to reflect and prepare an action plan to address the recommendations, affirmations and other suggestions made in the audit report. LIFE proposed an action plan for the improvement on the Recommendations and Affirmations of the QAC Audit of Sub-degree operations of LU. The action plan was approved by the Senate on 10 February 2020 and then submitted to the QAC Secretariat in February 2020. This 7-month progress report provides an update on the implementation of the action plan of Dimension 1 "Governance, management, university planning and accountability". Other dimensions will be reported in the 18-month QAC progress report.

## Summary of Progress of Dimension 1 “Governance, management, university planning and accountability”

1. The Panel recommends that the University examine and revise as necessary the governance relationships between LU Council, LU Senate and the Board of Governors (BoG) of LIFE. The purpose of this would be first to ensure internal consistency between the LU Ordinance, LU Statutes and Academic Regulations; and second to ensure that awards received by LIFE graduates are made with full authority of LU Senate, as stipulated under the LU Ordinance (Cap.1165). (Paragraph 1.9, Page 12 of the QAC audit report)

1.1. In response to the recommendation on the internal consistency between LU Ordinance, LU Statutes and Academic Regulations, LIFE took immediate action to review the powers and duties of the Board of Governors of LIFE (BoG). The proposed revisions to the powers and duties of BoG were approved by LU Council on 17 February 2020. A few clauses related to academic matters, particularly conferment of academic awards were removed from the powers and duties of the BoG. In addition, given the fact that LU Statute 6 stipulates that “the Board of Governors shall be accountable to the University Council”, the Council approved the revision to powers and duties that describes the BoG as the “supreme governing body” be changed to “the governing body”. The LU Statute 7 which stipulated powers and duties of the BoG was updated in Annex 1.

1.2. At its meeting on 30 March 2020, the Senate approved that the Undergraduate Examinations Board (UEB), under the delegated authority of the Senate, be the approving body for the conferment of awards to LIFE students of Associate Degree, Higher Diploma and Diploma programmes with immediate effect. The terms of reference of LIFE Academic Board and the UEB are updated in Annex 2 and Annex 3 respectively.

2. The Panel considers the inherent conflicts among the roles undermine its values as a permanent fixture within the management structure of LU and LIFE. The Panel recommends that the University reconsider and revise as necessary the governance and the senior leadership positions that link LU and LIFE to ensure that governance, leadership and management roles are clearly delineated and differentiated, while continuing to facilitate effective channels of communication between the two entities. (Paragraph 1.10, Page 12 of the QAC audit report)

2.1. In order to delineate and differentiate the governance, leadership and management roles between LU and LIFE, and to enhance management effectiveness and decision making process that link LU and LIFE, a new Associate Vice-President (Further Education and Projects) with specific roles, who reports to the President, has already been appointed to replace the previous Supervisor of the Director of LIFE to oversee LIFE, with effect from 15 June 2019.

3. The Audit Panel acknowledges that the University and LIFE have already noted the need to rethink some of LIFE's committees and recognises the value of maintaining a consistent approach to governance and management between the University and LIFE.... The Panel recommends that the University and LIFE review LIFE's committee structure, including terms of reference, membership and arrangements for evaluating effectiveness of committees. (Paragraph 1.12, Page 12 of the QAC audit report)

3.1. Having reviewed the terms of reference and membership composition of the BoG, the Management Committee and the Executive Committee, a few overlapping management functions were found especially between the Executive Committee and the Management Committee. The LU Council approved to streamline and merge the two committees into one and to retain the name "Management Committee". Given that LIFE follows closely LU's administrative policies and procedures for financial, personnel and other operation matters, the merged committee consists of the management staff of LIFE only and is chaired by the Director of LIFE. The BoG continues to focus on the governance role and the Associate Vice-President (Further Education and Projects) is the Deputy Chairman of the BoG. The proposed revisions were approved by LU Council on 17 February 2020. The updated governance and management structure is given in Annex 4.

3.2. To enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the Academic Board and its standing Committees, LU Senate approved the restructuring of and revisions to Quality Assurance Committees of LIFE (QAC/LIFE) at its meeting on 10 February 2020. The Terms of Reference of the Academic Committee (AC) and its standing committees were revised accordingly as shown in Annex 5. The Senate also renamed the Academic Committee (AC) to Academic Board (AB) at the meeting to better reflect its overseeing role to its standing committees. LIFE will continue to review the operational efficiency of the refined academic structure and further streamlining will be considered when necessary.

4. The Panel affirms the work that has been undertaken, as part of the development of the new Strategic Plan for LU and LIFE, to develop a set of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) with sharper focus and more quantitative measures that will enable both LU and LIFE to track their progress towards stated strategic priorities. (Paragraph 1.13, Page 13 of the QAC audit report)

4.1. In response to the affirmation and advice of the QAC Audit Panel, LIFE further revised its Strategic Plan 2019-2025 that had been submitted to the LU's Steering Group on Strategic Planning on 30 November 2018. As specified in the Action Plan submitted to the QAC on 17 February 2020, the revised strategic plan with a set of specific and quantitative key performance indicators (KPIs) to evaluate LIFE's programme performance and contributions to LU's strategic priorities would be developed.

4.2. Taking reference to LU’s Strategic Plan 2019-2025 and based on the mission of LIFE of preparing students for academic excellence, personal, career advancement, and contribution to society through a wide range of learning and student development activities, four strategic areas with KPIs are developed as follows and details of the revised Strategic Plan is given in Annex 6. The BoG approved the revised Strategic Plan 2019-2025 with KPIs for LIFE in August 2020.

	<b>Strategic Areas</b>	<b>Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)</b>
1	Developing Quality Programmes to Meet the Needs of Society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of new programmes</li> <li>• Sufficient enrolment to launch a programme</li> </ul>
2	Enhancing Teaching and Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CTLE average</li> <li>• Graduation Rate</li> <li>• Articulation Rate</li> <li>• Employment Rate</li> </ul>
3	Promoting Whole-person Development of Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students’ feedback on Life Enrichment and Appreciation Programmes (LEAP) activities</li> <li>• Students’ feedback on Language Enhancement Programme (LEP) activities</li> <li>• Results of Student Learning Experience Survey (SLES) in the area of Whole-person Development</li> </ul>
4	Enhancing the Professional Development for Teaching Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continuing Professional Development (CPD) training activities in professional expertise</li> <li>• Pedagogical training activities</li> </ul>

### **Concluding Remarks**

LIFE takes the Audit Panel’s constructive comments seriously and has made significant progress in implementing its action items in response to the affirmations and recommendations given by the Audit Panel. The restructuring of the governance and management structure is an example demonstrating the commitment to the quality enhancement. To provide high-quality teaching and learning, LIFE will continuously monitor and evaluate the implementation of all the actions items in the Action Plan.

## **LINGNAN UNIVERSITY STATUTES**

### **Statute 7**

#### **Powers and Duties of the Board of Governors of LIFE**

Subject to the supervision of the University Council, the Board of Governors shall be the governing body of Lingnan Institute of Further Education (“LIFE”) and shall have the following powers and duties:

1. To consider the strategic plan prepared by LIFE biennially and ensure that it is in congruence with the directions of the University;
2. To endorse the financial budgets prepared by LIFE and submit to the University Council for approval;
3. To determine conditions of employment and other employment benefits of LIFE;
4. To receive the annual reports and relevant financial reports of LIFE; and
5. To appoint sub-committees as necessary.

**Academic Board (AB)**  
**Lingnan Institute of Further Education (LIFE)**

**Terms of Reference**

1. To develop policies, standards, procedures in relation to the approval, monitoring and review of programmes and oversee all academic matters of LIFE;
2. To endorse new academic programmes and major changes of existing programmes;
3. To approve minor changes on existing programmes;
4. To approve non-local accredited academic programmes;
5. To consider and endorse recommendations of the Examinations Committee on the award classification of students and conferment of award of Associate Degree, Higher Diploma and Diploma for the approval of the Undergraduate Examinations Board under the delegated authority of the Senate;
6. To consider and approve the recommendations of the Examination Committees on the award classification of students and conferment of award of Diploma Yi Jin and other part-time Lifelong Learning Programmes under the delegated authority of the Senate;
7. To approve recommendations from the Examinations Committee on the academic probation, discontinuation and irregularity cases;
8. To consider and approve, under delegated authority of the Senate, the termination of studies for Associate Degree and Higher Diploma, Diploma students either on academic or disciplinary grounds;
9. To receive reports and endorse/approve recommendations from its standing committees.
10. To review and approve annual programme reports and endorse external programme review reports and follow-up action plans;
11. To approve the appointment of External Academic Advisers and Honorary Advisers;
12. To determine the academic calendar; and
13. To set up sub-committees as necessary.

**Membership**

Chairman	Director of Lingnan Institute of Further Education
Members	One academic staff member from each of the three Faculties One representative from the Academic Quality Assurance Committee for Undergraduate Programmes (AQAC) of the University Senate Associate/Assistant Director (Programme Development and Management) Programme Director (Sub-degree Programmes) Three teaching staff members elected by and from among their members Programme Head (Higher Education and International Programmes) Programme Head (Foundation Programmes) Programme Head (Lifelong Learning Programmes) Two students, each from AD and HD/Diploma of LIFE
Co-opted	Other members may be co-opted if necessary
Secretary	Associate/Assistant Director (Quality Assurance and Registry)

## Undergraduate Examinations Board

### *Terms of reference*

- a) To oversee the administration of undergraduate (UG) examinations.
- b) With the exception of decisions with policy implications and non-standard graduation cases, the Undergraduate Examinations Board (UEB) is delegated by the Senate to consider and approve recommendations of Boards of Examiners on student graduation, upgrading of honours classifications, and discontinuation of studies at UG level.
- c) With the exception of non-standard graduation cases, the UEB is delegated by the Senate to consider and approve recommendations of the Academic Board (AB) of Lingnan Institute of Further Education (LIFE) on the conferment of Associate Degrees, Higher Diplomas, and Diplomas .
- d) To review recommendations of Boards of Examiners or equivalent on UG student assessment and examination matters and to make its own recommendations thereon, if necessary, to the Senate.
- e) To recommend to the Senate, changes/refinements to guidelines and measures related to UG student assessment and examinations to ensure the smooth conduct of UG examinations.
- f) To consider student matters relating to UG examinations, excluding discontinuation appeal cases, referred to it by the Registrar.
- g) To refer issues on UG student assessment relating to quality assurance to the Academic Quality Assurance Committee for Undergraduate Programmes for consideration.

### *Membership*

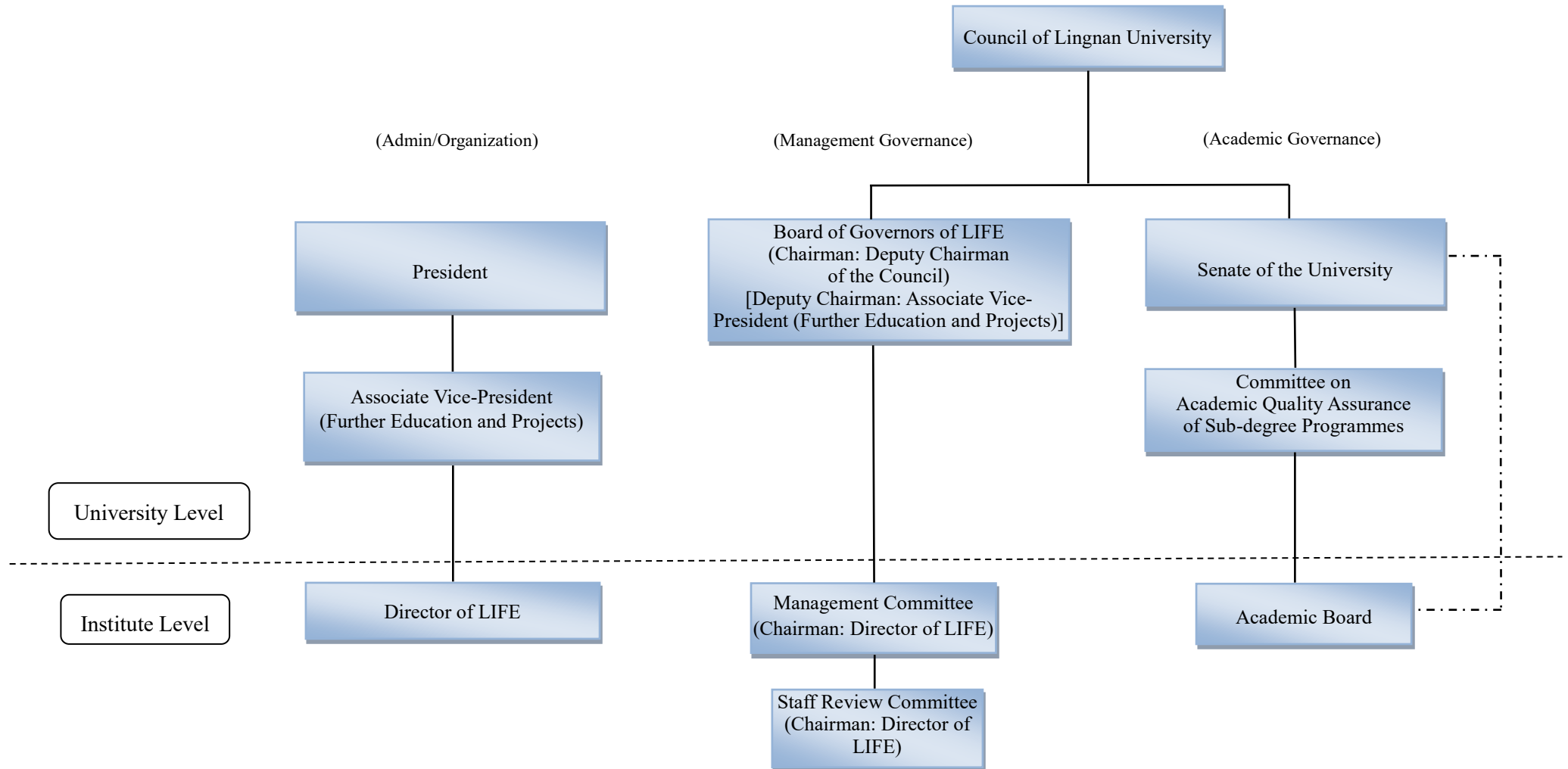
Chairman	:	Associate Vice-President (Academic Affairs and External Relations)
Members	:	Deans or their representatives <sup>#</sup> One representative from each Faculty <sup>#</sup>
Co-opted Member <sup>^</sup>	:	Director of Lingnan Institute of Further Education
Member and Secretary	:	Registrar or his/her nominee

<sup>#</sup> Representatives designated annually will have full voting power.

<sup>^</sup> Only for consideration of recommendations of AB of LIFE on the conferment of Associate Degrees, Higher Diplomas, and Diplomas.

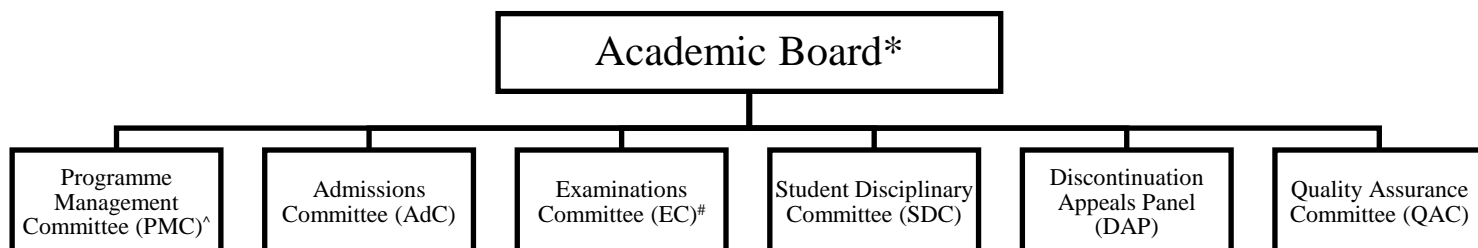
- Notes: 1. For item b), “non-standard graduation cases” refer to those stipulated under Section 24 of the Regulations Governing Undergraduate Studies, viz.: “Where a student is unable, through illness or other extenuating circumstances, to complete some or all of the course requirements and/or examinations in the final term, or does not have the likelihood of completing the degree requirements, the Board of Examiners may make an overall judgment based on his/her performance in the course completed and recommend the student for a degree with no classification. The acceptance of such an award by a student will render him/her ineligible to present himself/herself for any subsequent consideration for the same bachelor’s degree.”
2. For item e), an example of the “guidelines related to student assessment and examinations” is the Guidelines for Granting Special Consideration for Discontinuation Cases and an example of the “measures to ensure the smooth conduct of examinations” is the measures against nuisance caused by ringing mobile phones.

### Governance and Management Structure of LIFE





## Structure of Standing Committees of the Academic Board (AB) of LIFE



\* Responsible for all programmes of LIFE

^ There are 5 Programme Management Committees under the Academic Board (AB), as follows:

- (1) Sub-degree and Diploma Programme Management Committee (SD/DPMC)
- (2) Degree and International Programme Management Committee (DIPMC)
- (3) Foundation Programme Management Committee (FPMC)
- (4) Lifelong Learning Programme Management Committee (LLPMC)
- (5) Joint Programme Committee (JPC) of ADBM and ADMS Programmes

# There are 5 Examinations Committees under the Academic Board (AB), as follows

- (1) Sub-degree and Diploma Programme Examinations Committee (SD/DPEC)
- (2) Degree and International Programme Examinations Committee (DIPEC)
- (3) Foundation Programme Examinations Committee (FPEC)
- (4) Lifelong Learning Programme Examinations Committee (LLPEC)
- (5) Board of Examiners (BoE) of ADBM and ADMS Programmes

**Lingnan Institute of Further Education (LIFE)**  
**Strategic Plan 2019-2025**

<b>1</b>	<b>Developing Quality Programmes to Meet the Needs of Society</b>		
<b>Action Area</b>	<b>Key Performance Indicators</b>	<b>Contribution to LU's Strategic Areas</b>	
(1) Develop full-time academic programmes that suit the manpower needs of society (2) Increase the enrollment of life-long programmes (LLPs) by developing more life-long programmes in collaboration with professional bodies with focus on attainment of professional qualifications, or for professional pursuit and advancement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of newly developed programmes:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ 1 new full-time programme every 2 years</li> <li>➤ 1 new life-long programme every year</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Sufficient enrollment to launch a programme</li> </ul>	N/A	
<b>2</b>	<b>Enhancing Teaching and Learning</b>		
<b>Action Area</b>	<b>Key Performance Indicators</b>	<b>Contribution to LU's Strategic Areas</b>	
(1) Enhance teaching effectiveness and learning experience with a variety of pedagogical approaches such as e-learning, practical and experiential learning opportunities, and various kinds of learning support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CTLE average <math>\geq 4.5</math></li> <li>• Graduate rate <math>\geq 70\%</math></li> <li>• Articulation rate <math>\geq 70\%</math></li> <li>• Employment rate <math>\geq 70\%</math> for those who opt for employment after 6 months from graduation</li> </ul>	<b>Enhancing Undergraduate Teaching and Learning</b> "... We are deeply committed to excellence in undergraduate education... We will introduce more interactive and smart learning experiences, including greater use of digital learning resources and pedagogical approaches..."	

<b>3</b>	<b>Promoting Whole-person Development of Students</b>		
<b>Action Areas</b>	<b>Key Performance Indicators</b>	<b>Contribution to LU's Strategic Areas</b>	
(1) Offer co-curriculum programmes and activities that cultivate students' whole-person growth including their independent and critical thinking, communication skills, sense of social responsibility, ability for independent learning and passion for lifelong learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students' satisfaction on LEAP activities <math>\geq 70\%</math></li> <li>• Students' satisfaction on LEP activities <math>\geq 70\%</math></li> <li>• Results of Student Learning Experience Survey (SLES; to be developed) on the area of Whole-person Development <math>\geq 3.5</math> (out of 5)</li> </ul>	<b>Advancing Residential Education and Promoting Student Training in Leadership and Entrepreneurship</b> "...Quality whole-person education and residential education are critical to student development at Lingnan. They prepare students to respond positively to novel situations and unstructured problems and to communicate effectively in academic, professional and social settings to achieve all-round excellence..."	
<b>4</b>	<b>Enhancing the Professional Development for Teaching Staff</b>		
<b>Action Areas</b>	<b>Key Performance Indicators</b>	<b>Contribution to LU's Strategic Areas</b>	
(1) Develop a framework to steer professional development of teaching staff based on the overall institutional pedagogical development priorities of LIFE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continuing Professional Development (CPD) training activities <math>\geq 4</math> hours annually in professional expertise</li> <li>• Pedagogical training activities <math>\geq 4</math> hours annually</li> </ul>	<b>Enhancing Undergraduate Teaching and Learning</b> "...We are deeply committed to excellence in undergraduate education... We will introduce more interactive and smart learning experiences, including greater use of digital learning resources and pedagogical approaches..."	