

Chapter Fourteen

Quality Assurance and Enhancement of Internationalisation

14.1 Introduction

At Lingnan University, internationalisation is an integral part of the university's overall quality assurance and enhancement system. Internationalisation is central to the strategic plan of the university. Many of the university's international activities are coordinated via the Office of Global Education (OGE), which is led by the Special Advisor to the President on Internationalization and the Director of Global Education. To encourage and facilitate university-wide participation, an Advisory Committee for Internationalisation (ACI) was established in 2025 to supersede the Management Board on Internationalisation. The composition of members includes representatives from Faculties/Schools, major administrative units related to internationalisation as well as a student representation. The committee serves to support OGE and provides guidance to facilitate internationalisation.

14.2 The roles and responsibilities of the Office of Global Education (OGE)

The mission of the OGE is to enrich the academic and cultural environment of Lingnan by facilitating student exchange programmes and promoting activities that instill an international outlook and appreciation of cultural diversity in our students. OGE is responsible for the quality assurance and enhancement of partner selection and evaluation, the quality of exchange students (both incoming and outgoing), as well as campus integration.

14.2.1 Partner Selection and Evaluation

The value of our student exchange programmes hinges on the quality of partner institutions. Assessing (potential) partners is very important and clear criteria inform the relevant process. Institutional changes are inevitable and over time, the level and nature of Lingnan's cooperation with partners may evolve. It is therefore vital, as part of the quality assurance and enhancement system, that each partnership be evaluated on a regular basis. In response to the recommendations of the QAC Audit Reports (October 2016) and the University's Strategic Plans (2016-2022; 2022-28), the International Partnership Policy Paper setting out the criteria and procedures for developing new partnerships and renewing or terminating existing partnerships was endorsed by the Senate at its meeting in March 2017 and updated in March 2023.

	Objectives	Quality Assurance and Enhancement Measures
1.	To assess (potential) partners in order to ensure the necessary level of comparability exists or the requisite degree of diversity.	- A set of transparent and clear criteria for setting up new partnerships was revised. A rigorous assessment of the suitability of the proposed partner institution in accordance with the partnership criteria will be conducted. Two levels of partnerships namely Key Strategic Partners and Foundation Strategic Partners were devised. - The proponent of the agreement should discuss the proposal with the relevant Head(s), Dean(s), AVP(s) or VP(s) as appropriate and complete the “Checklist for Prospective Partner”. - The proponent will submit the endorsement together with the checklist to the OGE for developing a draft agreement. The draft agreement will be sent by the proponent for review by the proposed partner university. - Agreements will be sent to the Office of Council/Court Business and Governance Administration (OCCBGA) for vetting before sending to the appropriate parties for signature. Agreements for key strategic partners will be sent to Senate for approval. - After the agreement is signed by relevant parties, it will be registered and entered into the OGE’s international agreement database.
2.	To evaluate each partner regularly.	- A set of transparent and clear criteria for renewing/terminating partnerships was revised. When student exchange agreements are close to renewal (usually every 3 or every 5 years), OGE will review the partnership in light of the criteria and make appropriate recommendations on the renewal/termination of the partnership. - For other partners, OGE can advise Faculties/ Schools/Centres/Units concerned six months before an exchange/collaborative agreement is due to expire to arrange for the provision of information on the outcomes and deliverables of the agreement, including as appropriate the level of research activity, the number and performance of students, etc. The Faculty/

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		School/Centre/Unit concerned will reassess the partner university based on these criteria and then seek approval from the VP(s), AVP(s), or Dean(s) for renewal or termination as appropriate. - OGE maintains frequent and in-depth communication, both via emails and face-to-face/online meetings at international education conferences, such as NAFSA, EAIE and APAIE, to communicate with partners on solutions to any relevant issue(s) or question(s).
3.	To identify popular exchange destinations where future partnerships may be located.	- OGE makes use of the Business Intelligence (BI) reporting system, as well as other data to identify popular exchange destinations for our outbound students. Such data may be useful for identifying desirable and popular places when considering new additional exchange partnerships.

14.2.2 Quality of Exchange Students

Lingnan aims to increase the quality of its student mobility. OGE is responsible for monitoring the quality of the University's exchange students, both incoming and outgoing.

(i) Incoming Exchange Students

	Objectives	Quality Assurance and Enhancement Measures
1.	To ensure that all incoming exchange students have achieved or met suitable academic standards.	- All incoming exchange students must prove by means of an official transcript the number of credits that they have earned thus far. - All incoming exchange students from non-English speaking countries must provide the OGE with proof of their English proficiency. - All incoming exchange students should apply to their home institutions and follow the selection processes of their corresponding home institutions. - The exchange coordinators of partner universities will nominate to OGE all their successful applicants. - All incoming exchange students need to submit

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		a recommendation letter to OGE from a faculty member or the international office of their home institutions. - The eligibility requirements of incoming exchange students (e.g. their English language requirements of TOEFL, IELTS scores, GPA requirements) are listed out clearly on the OGE website and clearly conveyed to exchange coordinators of all partners. All incoming exchange students who are non-native English speakers normally have a TOEFL score of 213 (computerbased), 550 (paper based) or 79 (internetbased), or an IELTS (Academic Module) score of 6.0 or equivalent. - OGE checks if the nominated students from all partner universities have met Lingnan's eligibility requirements. - All eligible nominated incoming exchange student applications need to be approved by the Special Advisor to President on Internationalization and Director of Global Education.
2.	To ensure that the information provided by all incoming exchange students is accurate and that their applications are efficiently handled.	- There is an online application system for handling all incoming exchange student applications. This helps to avoid manual errors in the data input process and ensures that all incoming exchange student information is accurate and complete. - All application materials must be verified and endorsed by partner institutions before they are submitted to OGE. - Personal particulars of all incoming exchange students are checked against an official copy of personal identification evidence, e.g. student's passport/identity card. This helps to ensure that the data submitted by students is valid. - OGE reviews and checks the data of all incoming exchange students before submitting them to the Immigration Department for visa application.

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3.	To ensure that all incoming exchange students meet the minimum credit requirement at Lingnan.	- All incoming exchange students for semester-long exchange are required to take at least 12 credits to maintain a full-time student status at Lingnan. This requirement is clearly shown on the OGE website and the online application form for the Student Exchange Programme. - OGE checks via the Registry's reporting system in order to ensure that all incoming exchange students have registered for at least 12 credits.
4.	To ensure that all incoming exchange students are well informed about the basic information on Hong Kong and Lingnan, as well as their rights and obligations during their studies here.	- An electronic copy of the student handbook which provides basic information about Hong Kong and Lingnan is uploaded to the OGE website and distributed to all incoming exchange students before their arrival. The student handbook is updated annually in order to provide up-to-date information to students. - OGE organises an arrival orientation for all incoming exchange students. The orientation covers a wide range of topics including information about Hong Kong, the different services that they can access while at Lingnan, safety issues in Hong Kong, as well as the rules and regulations of staying in the university hostels.
5.	To ensure that all incoming exchange students have adequate protection against accidents and medical expenses during their studies at Lingnan.	- All incoming exchange students are required to submit their proof of insurance to OGE in order to ensure that they have adequate insurance cover for travel, personal accident, medical expenses (accident and non-accident), hospitalisation and emergency evacuation/repatriation throughout the entire period of their studies at Lingnan.
6.	To ensure that all incoming exchange students settle comfortably in Lingnan and Hong Kong.	- OGE organises a Global Ambassador Scheme (GAS), so that incoming exchange students can meet our existing students to help them better adjust to Lingnan University and Hong Kong life. - OGE organises various excursion activities, facilitating interaction with incoming exchange

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		students and introducing them to Hong Kong culture. Relevant feedback on their experiences is also collected. - The front office of OGE provides a one-stop service for all incoming exchange students.
7.	To ensure that all incoming exchange student feedback is heard and properly dealt with.	- OGE conducts online surveys with all incoming exchange students. In the pre-exchange survey, incoming exchange students are asked to evaluate the arrival arrangements, arrival orientation and GAS. In the post-exchange survey, incoming exchange students are asked to evaluate the academic experience, accommodation, campus facilities and services provided by different units at Lingnan. - OGE imports data from such surveys into the BI system for storage and analysis. The analysis is an important tool that supports continuous improvement in the area of Internationalisation. - It is not uncommon for incoming exchange students to provide feedback to their home universities. OGE keeps regular contacts with partner universities, via both emails and face-to-face/online meetings at international education conferences such as NAFSA, EAIE and APAIE to collect and learn from such feedback and look for ways for further improvement.

(ii) Outgoing Exchange Students

	Objectives	Quality Assurance and Enhancement Measures
1.	To clearly formulate aims of student exchange programmes.	- OGE has always made the aims of student exchange programmes explicit and clearly communicates these to students. The learning goals of student exchange programmes are clearly communicated to all students during the new-student orientation, the student exchange information sessions, as well as on specific OGE promotional leaflets/brochures.
2.	To establish selection criteria	- A set of transparent and clear criteria for setting

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	and procedures for partners in accordance with the purpose of the exchange programme.	up new partnerships was devised in AY2013-14 and subsequently revised in AY2016-17 and AY2022-23. All potential partners are now assessed according to the criteria before signing an agreement. OGE always limits the number of partners to the level that best meets Lingnan's needs; and selects them on the basis of a set of criteria, and with reference to the aims and characteristics of Lingnan or a particular programme. It is always the aim of the OGE to strive for long-term relationships with such partners.
3.	To assure the quality of all students going on student exchanges.	- A set of eligibility requirements (such as minimum CGPA, IELTS/TOEFL results, interview performances) has been set out clearly. OGE enforces these requirements and assesses all students applying for exchange in light of such selection criteria. - OGE ensures that all students applying for semester-long student exchange programmes go through interviews. These are normally conducted by a faculty member and an OGE colleague. Should academic colleagues be unavailable, two OGE staff will conduct such interviews (one staff member MUST be at the rank of Assistant Manager or above). The interviews aim to ensure that students have the appropriate attitude and personality to go on exchange. - OGE administers all students' applications for exchange through an online system. The system inputs students' data (such as their personal data, CGPA and IELTS/TOEFL scores) from the Banner system. This helps to ensure the accuracy of students' data for selection and allocation. - OGE ensures that all proposed academic plans specified in students' applications for semester-long student exchange programmes are reviewed and recommended by their academic advisers.

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4.	To ensure that all students going on student exchange programmes have all the relevant information pertaining to their exchange overseas.	- OGE organises pre-departure briefings for all outgoing exchange students. - OGE provides health and safety advice for outgoing exchange students. OGE invites exchange returnees, incoming exchange students, faculty members who have relevant background knowledge, the Immigration Department of the HKSAR Government, as well as members from the relevant Consulate Generals to share with students their first-hand information and knowledge. - Prior to exchange, OGE engages with outbound students via email, telephone and through personal meetings to advise them on a range of issues including module selection, study plans, credit exemption and accommodation arrangements, etc. - OGE holds information sessions on exchange scholarships, needs-based financial aid schemes and schemes for Education Bureau (EDB) Subsidies for outgoing exchange students. This is to ensure that students understand the details of each financial support option, including the eligibility, donor requirements, application procedures and obligation of the awardees/recipients. - OGE updates fact sheets and other partners' information regularly on the OGE website.
5.	To ensure that students going on student exchange programmes understand the academic requirements while studying abroad.	- OGE sets out guidelines for completing study plans for all outgoing exchange students and the guidelines are available on the OGE website for students' reference. - OGE staff members meet with students and provide them with advice on issues relating to drawing up their study plans for exchange. These include the courses available at the partner universities and the conversion of credits back to Lingnan, etc. All students are required to draw up a clear study plan before going on exchange. - An important measure to increase the quality

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		assurance and enhancement of student exchange programmes is the involvement of academic advisers in students' selection of modules abroad. OGE involves academic advisers at two important stages in students' selection of exchange institutions and the modules abroad. As described in Point (3) above, all students going on semester-long exchange programmes are required to submit their proposed academic plans to their academic advisers at the application stage to ensure that the modules offered by the institutions to which they applied can fit into their academic plans at Lingnan. Before departure, all students going on credit-bearing exchange programmes are also required to seek advice on their actual study plans from their academic advisers prior to their course selection at host institutions. This is to make sure that the credits that they are going to earn during the exchange can be recognised and counted towards their graduation requirements at Lingnan. Moreover, students need to attach course descriptions in their applications for any course exemption as stated in their study plans. The study plans will need to be approved by the students' respective subject teachers, Director of Core Curriculum/ Head of Centre for English and Additional Languages (when transferring cluster courses under core curriculum), Director of Service-Learning (when transferring courses with service-learning components) and Heads of Departments of major and minor programme(s) (if applicable) /Programme Directors and the relevant authorities. - OGE also involves host institutions in the students' selection of modules. All outgoing exchange students are required to submit a "Course Confirmation Form" with endorsement from their host institutions to confirm their registered courses. This is to ensure that all students take enough credits/courses while they are studying overseas.
6.	To establish selection criteria and procedures for allocation of scholarships and financial	- OGE administers all students' applications for exchange scholarships and financial aid through an online system. The system inputs students'

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	aid schemes in accordance with donors' requirements.	data (such as their personal data, CGPA and IELTS/TOEFL scores) from the Banner system. This helps to ensure the accuracy of students' data for the allocation purpose. - OGE ensures that students are allocated to various scholarships and financial aid schemes based on a set of transparent and clear criteria as specified by our donors, Office of Institutional Advancement and Alumni Affairs (OIAAA) and the EDB (including minimum CGPA, IELTS/TOEFL results and financial proof of Grant/Loan received from the Tertiary Student Finance Scheme). - OGE annually reviews the number of scholarships available in a given CGPA range and calculates the amount of financial aid based on the available donations and the number of eligible applicants. - OGE ensures that all students fulfill the requirements and obligations of particular scholarships and financial aid schemes, e.g. attending selection interviews/sharing sessions, submitting pre-exchange or post-exchange essays/reports, and completing voluntary/social services.
7.	To ensure that outgoing exchange students receive adequate guidance during the exchange period.	- OGE works with all exchange partners to ensure they will provide orientation and guidance to our outgoing students during their studies overseas. - OGE keeps contact with outgoing students via email while they study overseas. All students are explicitly told that they can always contact OGE or the International Offices at the host institutions for guidance and support during their study abroad period.
8.	To ensure that the quality of the exchange programme is evaluated and assessed for future improvement.	- OGE conducts two online surveys to gather feedback and evaluations from all outgoing students on their experience. In the pre-exchange survey, students are asked to evaluate the pre-departure arrangements while in the post-exchange survey, students are asked to evaluate the overall experience at their host institutions

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		and the services and support provided by OGE. Students are also asked to evaluate themselves in terms of their personal qualities in six core aspects including interpersonal skills, communication skills, management skills, problem-solving skills, social responsibilities and global perspectives in the pre- and post-exchange surveys. The data gathered from the surveys are imported into Lingnan's BI system for analysis of the impact of exchange programmes on students' personal and intellectual development. - To objectively assess the learning outcomes of the exchange programmes, a study adopting the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) has been carried out for outgoing exchange students since AY2018-19. Outgoing exchange students are invited to take pre- and post-exchange IDI assessment tests, which objectively measure their intercultural competence. Subsequent briefing sessions and individual profile sessions based on the test results are organised to guide students and prepare them. - OGE collects feedback from exchange returnees through other channels such as sharing sessions involving prospective students and student exchange fairs. The feedback received is reviewed by OGE for the purpose of improvement. - OGE administers the STAR (Students Taking Active Roles) programme, as a quality measure in recognition of students' participation in international activities. Outgoing exchange students are encouraged to join the STAR programme. They are required to complete a Pre-Exchange Goal-setting Form and a Portfolio of Exchange Achievements. The former describes the objectives and expected outcomes, and the means of achieving them while the latter evaluates the learning outcomes. Both these forms are reviewed by OGE staff objectively. - In case there are issues requiring clarification, OGE staff will conduct meetings with students

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		individually. Those students who were evaluated as achieving the learning outcomes with appropriate standards are given the title of “STAR” in their transcripts as testimonials of their active participation and achievements during their exchange experience.
9.	To ensure that the academic courses offered by the host institutions are suitable for Lingnan students.	- OGE takes follow-up action i.e. setting up individual meetings and/or contacting students with failed course(s) via different means including but not limited to phone/email to understand the relevant reasons and see if students encountered any obstacles during the exchange semester. Subsequent actions are taken with host institutions if appropriate. Also, a penalty system for the outbound exchange students with course failures or registration of courses fewer than the minimum required credits as a full-time student in Lingnan has been imposed for students who go on outbound exchange since the Fall of 2019. Sponsorships (including air tickets, scholarships and programme subsidies) might be clawed back, or compulsory service hours might be imposed depending on the percentage of failed credits.

14.2.3 Internationalisation at Home

	Objectives	Quality Assurance and Enhancement Measures
1.	To promote integration between local and incoming exchange students.	- OGE has established the Global Ambassador Scheme (GAS). The Scheme pairs each incoming exchange student with a local student. This enables students to interact more with each other. All incoming exchange students as well as local students are asked to evaluate the success of the Scheme. - OGE organises activities, such as excursions and tours to different places in Hong Kong. Local students and incoming exchange students participate in these activities. OGE keeps all participation records of such activities. - OGE organises events, such as the International Day Carnival, the European Night and Curry

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		Night to promote international culture and global diversity. OGE keeps participation records of such events.
2.	To enrich students' exposure to intercultural exchanges and broaden students' horizons to prepare them to excel in a globalised world.	- To organise seminars and talks conducted by external guests (such as faculty members from partner institutions, etc.) to enable those Lingnan students who are unable to travel offshore to learn about other cultures.