

Guidelines and Procedures for Five-year Review of Core Curriculum

7.1 Purpose/Aim

- 7.1.1 As part of the quality assurance and enhancement mechanism of the University, the Core Curriculum (CC) is subject to a rigorous review at an interval of 5 years. Any modifications/developments as a result of the review will be put to effect in the next academic year, where applicable.
- 7.1.2 The five-year review serves to ensure that the CC undergoes a **rigorous review** at a reasonable interval to ascertain its satisfactory operation and development.

The general aim of a five-year review is to assure the academic validity and standard of the CC. In more specific terms, the review will consider:

- (a) whether the CC has been successfully implemented and attained the appropriate standard;
- (b) whether the CC has met its identified aims and achieved the intended learning outcomes, in particular how the courses on the CC have been connected to achieve the aims/outcomes;
- (c) whether and how the views/problems raised by relevant parties/reflected by statistics have been addressed/solved;
- (d) whether the CC has been developed and managed appropriately; and
- (e) whether the proposed modifications/developments are appropriate and can be effectively implemented.

7.2 Content and Documentation

- 7.2.1 Following 4 years of implementation, operation and development, a **critical, thorough and comprehensive review** of the CC in various aspects **based on feedback/comments** from various sources has to be conducted by the Core Curriculum Committee (CCC). The review should cover all aspects of the CC, including student enrolment, aims and learning outcomes, curriculum, content (including the issue of proliferation of courses and overlapping of course contents), teaching/learning activities, switches of language of instruction (if any), assessment methods/results, the overall intellectual level of the CC, the intellectual demands it places on students, and staffing resources.
- 7.2.2 The Director of CC has to ensure that a brief review document is drawn up. It should provide some basic information about the CC, including its aims and learning outcomes, student enrolment numbers, programme design, structure and curriculum, programme operation, management, quality assurance and enhancement, learning and teaching, examination and assessment, staffing resources, a brief up-to-date syllabus of each course, etc. Apart from giving figures or statistics on such aspects as student enrolment, and examination and assessment, the document should give **an analysis of the data showing the trends and development**.

Most important of all, the document should

- (a) give a **critical analysis and commentary** on the CC during the review period highlighting how and to what extent the aims and learning outcomes at CC level (and individual course level if deemed appropriate) are achieved; and
- (b) include the **proposed modifications and developments for the CC and its courses**,

giving clear justifications. (Please refer to the Appendix for more details.)

7.2.3 The five-year review documentation will not require such details as summary of developments since last interim review or five-year review, professional recognition, resource support (accommodation, equipment, general expenses, library support, computing support, etc.), University-wide assessment regulations, etc. Instead, information on these items will be made optional and be included when deemed necessary.

7.2.4 In line with the spirit that measurement of learning outcomes should be **evidence-based**, the review document should draw upon evidence and information from the following sources:

- (a) Statistical data on student numbers and examination results for the past 4 years between reviews, such as student demand, distribution of assessment grades, attrition rate, etc. The statistics provide the factual basis for the review.
- (b) Comments and suggestions contained in the reports of External Academic Advisers, relevant records of discussion of the comments and suggestions, response made to the External Academic Advisers as well as agreed action taken/to be taken (if any).
- (c) Comments and suggestions from the Advisory Board concerned.
- (d) The views of students obtained through various means, such as Course Teaching and Learning Evaluation, questionnaires, surveys, Staff-Student Consultation Committee meetings, informal meetings with students, views expressed by ex-students where appropriate, etc.
- (e) The views of graduates and alumni obtained through means such as surveys and informal meetings, etc.
- (f) The views of staff teaching on the courses of the CC.
- (g) The time-series data on various aspects of the CC developed by the OCC, or, where necessary, with assistance from the Centre for Innovative Teaching and Learning.
- (h) Stock-taking of learning and teaching activities, and assessment methods.

7.3 Reviewers and Review Meeting

7.3.1 A senior academic of Associate Professor or above in rank inside the University and has not taught in the CC programme for 2 years shall be appointed as the Convener of the review meeting. Three external members, outside the University, of Associate Professor or Senior Lecturer or above in rank and with expertise in the relevant disciplines shall also be appointed by the AQAC. One external member should be non-local and, where possible, selected from one of the benchmarking institutions of the University¹ or the programme.

7.3.2 Nominations for appointment as Convener and external members shall be made by the CCC. A greater number of nominations (with preference order) should be submitted to the AQAC for its consideration and choice (e.g. 6 to 7 nominations for appointment of 3 external members).

7.3.3 CCC shall not nominate those who have a close connection to the OCC/CC, for instance, current Chairman or members of the Advisory Board of the CC programme, unless there are compelling circumstances to do so.

7.3.4 If a non-local reviewer cannot join the review meetings on campus, video conference will be

¹ Ewha Women University of South Korea, International Christian University of Japan, London School of Economics of UK, Pomona College of USA, The University of Durham of UK, Wellesley College of USA, Williams College of USA and Yuanpei College, Peking University of China

arranged as far as practicable. Considering that the reviewers can be from different time zones, and therefore operational difficulties may be encountered for arranging video conference for review meetings which last for a whole day, the reviewers can take part in some, not all, of the meetings. When a non-local reviewer is unable to come to the University and a video conference cannot be arranged or he/she can only join part of the event, paper assessment in areas specified under 7.1.2 above shall be provided by him/her prior to the meeting.

- 7.3.5 The Registry will co-ordinate the appointment procedures and forward to the appointed reviewers a copy of the review documentation endorsed by the WJYSISMB and CCC and approved by AQAC.
- 7.3.6 The appointed reviewers will meet with the CCC to discuss matters of concern especially the proposed modifications/developments. In essence, the review takes the form of CCC meeting with external input from reviewers. This peer review format has the advantage of encouraging freer flow of views. The review is expected to be a one-day exercise to facilitate more thorough and in depth discussion. The appointed reviewers may also meet with relevant graduates and students. The CC review document (except sensitive data) should be provided to them.
- 7.3.7 The reviewers are responsible for assessing the academic standard of the CC, and evaluating how the CC has performed in the five areas detailed in Section 7.1.2 based on the review documentation and other information submitted, as well as their discussions with the CCC, other staff as appropriate, students and graduates, etc. In reviewing the CC, the reviewers have to make reference to data and statistical evidence. The reviewers are not required to recommend approval of the CC. Instead, they give comments/recommendations in any aspect of the CC. Their reports shall also articulate their evaluation of the CC and the basis on which they arrive at the evaluation. The external members will also provide written feedback/recommendations which form the basis of the written report.
- 7.3.8 The Registry will work with the CCC Secretary on logistics of the review meeting and prepare the report.
- 7.3.9 For a visit of a non-local external member, the visit shall be up to four days. The package will include a return air ticket of economy class (with a ceiling rate based on point-to-point direct full-fare economy ticket rate), accommodation expenses of up to HK\$1,700 per night and a per diem allowance at HK\$900 per day.
- 7.3.10 An honorarium of HK\$4,500 will be paid to an external member who has completed his/her duties.

7.4. After the Review Meeting

- 7.4.1 After the review meeting, the OCC shall follow up the comments/recommendations of the reviewers, write up a response, and finalise a brief summary setting out proposed modifications/developments (with justifications and implementation details) taking into account the external input from reviewers, for submission to the WJYSISMB and CCC for endorsement and then to the AQAC for consideration and approval as appropriate. In the response, the CCC should provide a plan of action as far as practicable to follow up comments/recommendations which involve a longer term development and implementation. A copy of the report of the review meeting (and any follow-up meeting(s)), part of the review documentation with significant revisions (if any), and any other documents where deemed necessary should also be submitted. The AQAC's decision and comments, if any, the approved CCC response to comments/recommendations of reviewers and the brief summary

on proposed modifications/developments² will be submitted to the Senate for its information and possible comments.

7.5 Timing

- 7.5.1 Generally, the review should take place 5 years after the previous CC review. As a general guideline, the review documentation should be ready for consideration of the AQAC in October/November for review meetings to be held in January/February, or in December/January for review meetings to be held in March/April/May, before dispatching to the appointed reviewers. The response and brief summary together with other documents (detailed above) should be submitted to the AQAC meeting around March/April for review meetings held in January/February, or around May/June for review meetings held in March/April, or in September/October for review meetings held in May.

² In case proposed major modifications to the programme/courses include those significant ones that Senate has not delegated its authority of approval to AQAC, Senate approval will be sought.

Content of a Five-year Review Documentation for Core Curriculum

Part I: General Information on CC

1. Summary Information

Number and categories of courses, title of courses, contributing departments, dates of previous interim/five-year review (if any).

2. Aims and Learning Outcomes

The educational aims and intended learning outcomes of the CC, expressed, as appropriate, to reflect relevant knowledge, attitude and skills (e.g. analytical and communication skills), the intellectual and imaginative development of the student. Particular emphasis be placed on what students are expected to learn. Illustrate briefly the mapping between the learning outcomes of the programme and Lingnan's Ideal Graduate Attributes to show how the programme contributes to the achievement of some or all of Lingnan's Ideal Graduate Attributes. Include a mapping table between the learning outcomes of the programme and Lingnan's Ideal Graduate Attributes following the table shown in Annex 1.

3. Student Numbers

Student numbers of each course in past 4 years. Highlights of student figures as indicators of performance, if deemed necessary. An analysis of the data showing the trends and development should be included.

4. Design and Structure

Design philosophy and academic structure of course offerings in detail. The inter-relationships between courses should be identified and any categorisation of the courses clearly presented. How the components in the CC align with the overall aims and intended learning outcomes of the CC and may lead to achievement of them. A mapping table of learning outcomes of the programme and the full list of courses should be included.

5. Operation, Management, Quality Assurance and Enhancement

Details of course operation, management, quality assurance and enhancement, including constitution and terms of reference of the CCC and other committee(s) responsible for the CC course management, quality assurance and enhancement, e.g. SDSMB and WJYSISMB.

Responsibilities of the Director of CC. Other CC responsibilities as appropriate – Associate Director of CC, supporting staff, etc.

6. Teaching/Learning Methods and Projects (if any)

General description of the teaching and learning methods/activities including balance of and rationale of the proposed teaching/learning methods/activities.

If there are any changes related to language of instruction of courses in the programme (apart

from those on the Core Curriculum and Chinese/English enhancement courses), they should be reported to reflect that the changes are anomalies with reasons given.

Project work (if any) should be explained in detail, typical examples given and the organisation and assessment methods described.

7. Examination and Assessment

What are the general strategies and methods in assessing students for the CC. There may be some highlights or examples on assessment methods specifically for certain courses used to measure certain learning outcomes.

Highlights of statistics on examination results as indicators of performance, if deemed necessary. An analysis of the data showing the trends and development should be included. Detailed figures of past 4 years can be appended.

8. Staff Resources for the CC

The staff resources which are used to support the CC and any expected/proposed addition/deduction should be specified according to the headings (a) to (b) below. A distinction should be made between those resources in place, and those still to be obtained. [Request for resources should be separately submitted to relevant Committees, e.g. University Administrative and Planning Committee.]

(a) Overall Staff Support

Present establishment and grades of teaching, general and administrative staff in the OCC.

(b) Academic Staff

- i) Listing of academic staff who are involved in teaching courses of the CC, with rank, qualifications, teaching and/or other responsibilities in the administration of the CC, staff research interest/specialty, courses taught, etc.;
- ii) rank and subject area of additional posts, those previously agreed and any now requested, with justifications, if any;
- iii) expected staff deduction, if any.

[Note: The five-year review documentation does not require such details as summary of developments since last interim review or five-year review, professional recognition, resource support (accommodation, equipment, general expenses, library support, computing support, etc.), University-wide assessment regulations, etc. Instead, information on these items will be made optional and be included when deemed necessary.]

Part II: Critical Appraisal and Development for the CC and its Courses

A. Critical Appraisal

1. A **critical analysis** and **commentary** in various aspects of the CC, including student enrollment, aims and learning outcomes, curriculum, content (including the issue of proliferation of courses and overlapping of course contents), teaching/learning activities, assessment methods/results and regulations (with emphasis on effectiveness and variety of teaching/learning activities and assessment methods for achieving CC course learning outcomes), the overall intellectual level of the CC, the intellectual demands it places on students, and staffing resources.

The document shall **critically evaluate** how and to what extent the aims and learning outcomes at CC level (and individual course level if deemed appropriate) are achieved. It shall give details on the actions taken to achieve and measure learning outcomes as well as the evidence for the evaluation (as detailed under section 7.2.4 of the guidelines). These shall include collection and handling of results of Course Teaching and Learning Evaluation, views and suggestions from External Academic Advisers, Advisory Board, and Staff-Student Consultation Committee, student/graduates survey, alumni survey, employers survey, etc. It is expected that there is an **extensive analysis of some time-series data** indicating the performance of the CC.

There shall be an evaluation of the CC addressing the aims of the review:

- (a) whether the CC has been successfully implemented and attained the appropriate standard;
- (b) whether the CC has met its identified aims and achieved the intended learning outcomes, in particular how the courses on the CC have been connected to achieve the aims/outcomes;
- (c) whether and how the views/problems raised by relevant parties/reflected by statistics have been addressed/solved[#]; and
- (d) whether the CC has been developed and managed appropriately.

[#] There should be elaboration on views/suggestions received from External Academic Advisers during the years under review and discussion/response made as well as action taken/to be taken.

2. There shall be a separate section to evaluate the efforts made in and the progress on following up recommendations given by the last interim or 5-year review panel.
3. Developments in recent years as implementation of the action plans set out in the annual reports of last four years shall also be evaluated.
4. **External benchmarking** at programme level should be conducted to look at and learn from international best practices of other institutions including performance indicators at the programme, such as
 - contributions to curriculum development;
 - curriculum innovations – evidence of innovative teaching materials, programme structure and course contents;
 - delivery of teaching – number and nature of subjects taught; evidence of innovative teaching pedagogies; course teaching and learning evaluation scores;
 - interaction with students;
 - assessment standards;
 - awards and prizes for teaching; and/or
 - teaching leadership.

With regard to performance indicators, benchmarking is preferably made with reference to the Sector-wide Performance Indicators and those specific to Lingnan University contained in the University Accountability Agreement (UAA)^{Note}.

Note: Sector-wide Performance Measures under ‘The quality of the student experience of learning and teaching’ domain in the UAA include 1) (a) undergraduate satisfaction with the quality and value gained from their teaching and learning experience; and (b) undergraduate satisfaction with their overall learning environment, 2) undergraduate employment success rate, and 3) learning

experience outside classroom – (a) Service-Learning; and (b) internship experience; 4) satisfaction of students with special educational needs; while the Key Performance Indicators specific for Lingnan University include 1) percentage of graduates having research training through capstone projects/supervised individual/group research, 2) percentage of students attending leadership training, 3) percentage of students participating in diversified whole-person development co-curriculum learning experience, 4) percentage of students participating in educational activities that enhance moral education and social citizenship, and 5) Percentage of graduates who passed all courses in the English Language Enhancement Curriculum and achieved an overall band score of 6.5 or above in IELTS (Academic) or equivalent, except a minimum band score of 6.0 for Major in Chinese.

While the CCC has the discretion regarding the details of benchmarking for each exercise, including what are to be benchmarked, with which institutions and how to evaluate the data collected, the approved external benchmarking plan of the programme shall be followed as far as practicable. The institutions to be benchmarked in the 5-year programme review exercise are preferably to come from but not limited to those chosen for benchmarking at the institutional level. A brief self-reflection with reference to the benchmarking performed in the review period with emphasis on the results or findings that lead to development or improvement to the programme/courses should be included in the review document.

B. Proposed Modifications and Developments for the Core Curriculum and its Courses

Details of proposed modifications and developments, with justifications including whether such will be conducive to achievement of learning outcomes (where appropriate), views of stakeholders, and implementation details. In case substantial modifications are proposed, the revised structure has to be set out. If the modifications require approval of other programmes, please state whether the approval has been sought.

Part III: Brief Syllabus of Each Course

An updated brief syllabus of each course for offering after the review: course title and code, teaching hours and mode, prerequisite/co-requisite/exclusion (if any), exemption requirements (if any), brief course descriptions, aims, learning outcomes*, teaching method, measurement of learning outcomes*, assessment methodology, and any other items deemed necessary. The standard format of a course syllabus and sample syllabuses are shown in Annexes 5 to 7 to Appendix C of Chapter 1 Initiation of New Programmes, Validation and Approval for Undergraduate Programmes. An interactive Course Syllabus Generation Tool is available at <http://tlc.ln.edu.hk/SyllabusTool/> which provides step by step guidelines to develop course syllabus meeting the standard format.

* Reference materials on writing of “Learning Outcomes” and “Measurement of Learning Outcomes” and other useful information featuring Outcome-based Approaches to Teaching and Learning (OBATL) are available from CITAL’s website <<https://ln.edu.hk/cital/support-for-staff/outcomes-based-approaches-to-teaching-and-learning/obatl-resource>>.

Mapping of the Programme Intended Learning Outcomes (PILOs) to Lingnan's Graduate Attributes for Undergraduates Programmes

	Graduate Attributes for Undergraduates								
Programme Intended Learning Outcomes (PILOs)	Scholarly and Interdisciplinary ¹	Digitally Literate ²	Skilled Communicator ³	Critical and Analytical ⁴	Creative and Entrepreneurial ⁵	Committed to Service ⁶	Glocally Minded ⁷	Personally and Socially Responsible ⁸	Committed to Life-long Learning ⁹
PILO 1									
PILO 2									
PILO 3									
etc.									

Notes:

1. LU graduates will have a secure grounding in a chosen academic field(s) and cross-disciplinary applications.
2. LU graduates will have proficiency in technology.
3. LU graduates will have excellent communication skills, including oral and written English and Chinese (Putonghua as well as Cantonese) skills.
4. LU graduates will demonstrate independent critical thinking and strong analytic competence.
5. LU graduates will be creative problem-solvers and be capable planners, and entrepreneurs.
6. LU graduates will have a commitment to service to the community.
7. LU graduates will have a global and local (a Glocal) outlook with the ability to understand various cultural perspectives.
8. LU graduates will have tolerance, integrity, civility and a sense of responsibility.
9. LU graduates will have a desire for life-long learning.