

Chapter Eleven

Quality Assurance and Enhancement of the Core Curriculum, Science Education, and Music and Performing Arts Courses

11.1 Introduction

The School of Interdisciplinary Studies (SIS) houses interdisciplinary programmes and units providing general education, namely the Office of the Core Curriculum (OCC), the Science Unit (SU) and the Wong Bing Lai Music and Performing Arts Unit (WBLMP). The quality assurance and enhancement of programmes and units under the SIS is overseen by the School of Interdisciplinary Studies Management Board (SISMB), which comprises key personnel from the units/offices and the interdisciplinary programmes that are housed in the School. The terms of references and membership of SISMB are detailed in [Appendix A](#).

This chapter is dedicated to the quality assurance framework of the Core Curriculum, Science Education and Music and Performing Arts courses. The quality assurance and enhancement for interdisciplinary programmes under SIS are included in other chapters of the AQA Manual about the quality assurance and enhancement for new and existing programmes.

11.2 Core Curriculum

As an essential part of the undergraduate curriculum at Lingnan University, the Core Curriculum is a compulsory component for all undergraduate students irrespective of their Majors since 2012-13 four-year intake. It aims to provide students with a broad and balanced foundation through an exposure to a wide range of cross-disciplinary subjects. The Core Curriculum has been constantly reviewed and revised. The current requirement applicable to students from the 2018-19 Year 1 intake and the 2019-20 Senior Year intake requires students to complete 27 credits in the Core Curriculum, including 4 compulsory courses in the Common Core and one course from each of the five Clusters.

Given its significance in the University curriculum, the Core Curriculum is conceived as a university-wide responsibility. All academic units and the Office of Service-Learning contribute to the offering of courses, while the OCC serves as the coordinator in managing and implementing the programme.

11.2.1 Quality Assurance and Enhancement Structure

Reporting to AQAC, the Core Curriculum Committee (CCC) is a university-level committee which oversees the development, implementation and quality assurance of the Core Curriculum. Input and feedback are regularly sought from the Advisory Board and Staff-Student Consultation Committee (SSCC) for Core Curriculum to enhance the programme. The terms of references and memberships of these Committees/Board are detailed in Appendices B to D.

11.2.2 Quality Assurance and Enhancement Mechanism

As presented in the Quality Assurance Mechanism for the Core Curriculum in Figure 1, each offering unit takes charge of the quality assurance and enhancement of its courses offered in the Core Curriculum. To maintain the quality of the programme, all units are to submit course-related proposals to CCC for consideration, and annual reports on courses offered to the Director of Core Curriculum via OCC for review.

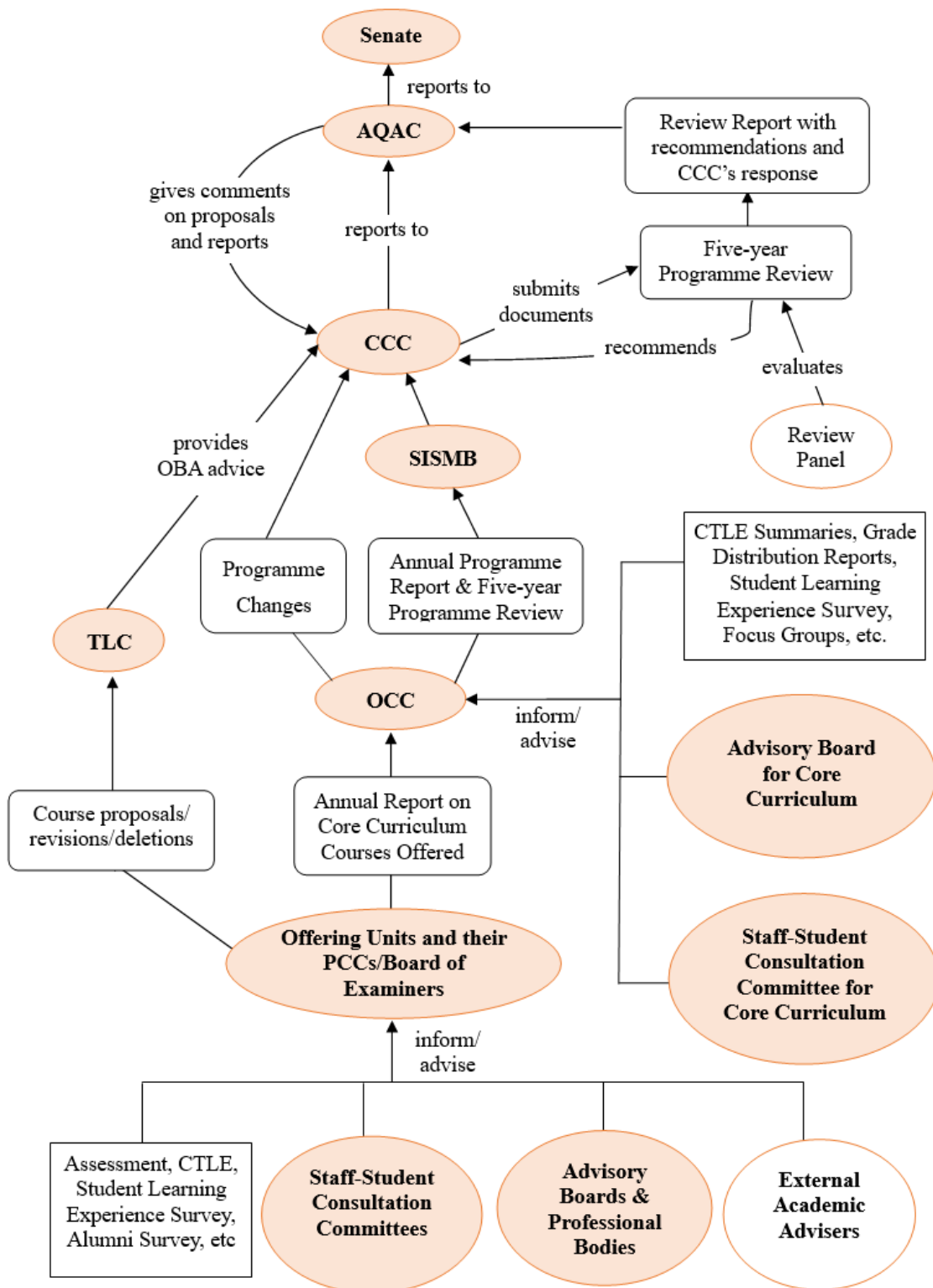
Proposals of Courses and Modifications

Proposals of Core Curriculum courses and modifications should be first endorsed by the relevant PCC/ Unit Board. Advice from the Teaching and Learning Centre (TLC) should be sought on outcome-based element, wherever appropriate, before submission for deliberation of CCC. CCC ensures that the proposed courses and modifications adhere to the principles for Core Curriculum courses as adopted by the Senate and that they align with the relevant intended learning outcomes. All proposals endorsed by CCC are then further scrutinised or noted by AQAC.

Annual Report on Core Curriculum Courses Offered

At the end of each academic year, each of the offering units is to review the offered Core Curriculum courses and to send out relevant materials of at least one of the courses to an External Academic Adviser (EAA) for review. All Cluster courses are subject to comments by EAAs within five years, and each Common Core course should be reviewed by an EAA every two years. Comments of EAAs and follow-up actions should be reported in the Annual Report on Core Curriculum Courses Offered, alongside other reporting items as shown in Appendix E, for submission to OCC.

Figure 1. Quality Assurance Mechanism for the Core Curriculum



Note: The Annual Programme Report and Five-year Programme Review document are first reviewed by the SISMB and then CCC in view that (i) CCC comprising key personnel of SIS, faculties, programmes and academic units shall take charge of the quality assurance of the Core Curriculum; (ii) Core Curriculum is a requirement for all undergraduates but not only SIS students; and (iii) all academic units of the University contribute to course offering in the programme.

Programme Reviews and Changes

Similar to all undergraduate programmes of the University, the Core Curriculum is subject to regular reviews at the programme level. Other than the comprehensive review involving a panel consisting of mainly external reviewers during the Five-year Programme Review, the programme is evaluated annually by OCC and the SISMB via the Annual Programme Reporting. Each year OCC works with TLC in data analytics and qualitative assessment to measure students' achievement of the programme intended learning outcomes. The findings together with input and feedback from offering units, students and the Advisory Board are highlighted in the Annual Programme Report for SISMB and CCC's review and submission to AQAC. In case programme-level modifications have to be made, OCC submits proposals to CCC directly for consideration. All proposals endorsed by CCC are then further scrutinised by AQAC.

11.3 Science Education at Lingnan University

As a liberal arts university, Lingnan University provides a unique undergraduate experience by introducing Core Curriculum and Science Education to supplement the Major programmes offered by the three Faculties (Arts, Business and Social Sciences) and the SIS.

The SU was established in 2015 to develop and teach science courses designed for non-science students at Lingnan to fulfill the "Science, Technology, Mathematics and Society" Cluster (CLD) requirements of the Core Curriculum. From 2018-19 onwards, CCC8013 The Process of Science was developed as one of the four required Common Core courses for all undergraduate students.

From 2019, the SU continues to develop new initiatives to promote both general and advanced science education in a broader spectrum. Three programmes have been developed and approved for official launch: (1) Minor in Environmental and Scientific Literacy (from 2020-21), (2) MPhil in Environmental Science (from 2020-21) and (3) Environment and Sustainability Concentration in the Master in Cities and Governance Programme (from 2022-23).

11.3.1 Quality Assurance and Enhancement Structure

Apart from the CCC which takes care of the QA for the Core Curriculum, the Board of Science Unit (BSU) and the Advisory Board for Science Unit (ABSU) were formed to ensure the academic standard of the Science education at Lingnan.

Board of Science Unit

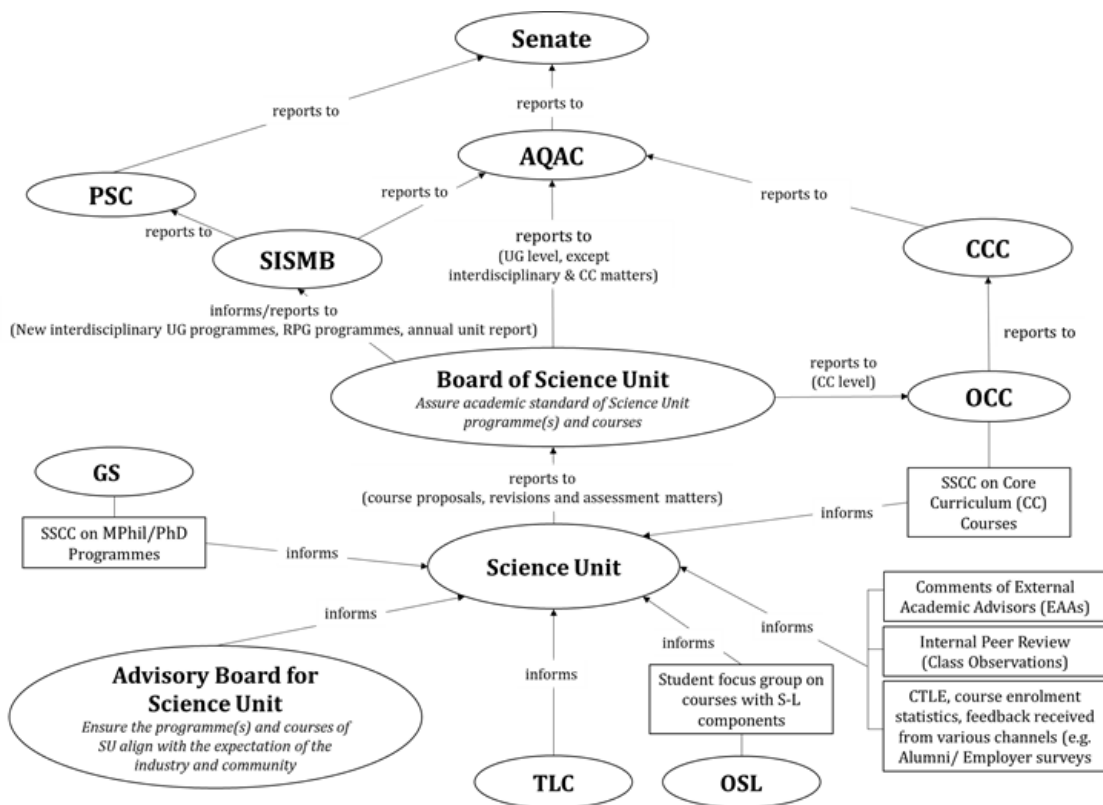
Board of Science Unit (BSU) (similar to the structure and role of a Department Board; see [Appendix F](#) for the terms of reference and membership) is chaired by the Head of the SU comprising all teaching members of the SU. It oversees a wide range of academic and research activities in a comprehensive manner, including discussion and coordination about assessment related matters of the SU.

Advisory Board for Science Unit

In view of the expanded curriculum of the Science education at various levels, the Advisory Board was set up to obtain professional comments and insights from the industry and community to consistently review and improve the programmes and courses to ensure that they align with the expectations and needs of the industry and community. The terms of reference and membership of the Advisory Board is provided in [Appendix G](#).

The detailed QA structure can be referred to Figure 2.

Figure 2. QA Mechanism for Science Education



11.3.2 Quality Assurance and Enhancement Procedures

Proposals of Courses and Modifications

New course proposals and modifications to Common Core and Cluster courses of the SU will continue to follow the overarching QA process of the Core Curriculum.

Additions and revisions of Science programmes and courses coded SCI designed for undergraduate students will be directly reviewed by the BSU and then submitted to the AQAC for further examination and approval. For matters in relation to research postgraduate programmes, BSU will inform/report to SISMB and SISMB will report to the Postgraduate Studies Committee (PSC) for consideration and approval. For taught postgraduate programmes and courses, the quality assurance and enhancement structure/process for new and existing programmes as stipulated in other chapters of the AQA Manual shall apply.

Annual Unit Report

The SU will submit an Annual Unit Report to the AQAC via the SISMB for review and endorsement. The Report will cover the major academic developments and achievements. Relevant extracts of statistics and feedback about the SU courses from the Course Teaching and Learning Evaluation (CTLE), the External Academic Advisers and other channels will be articulated and reflected in the report. Details can be referred to Chapter 6 of the AQA Manual.

Annual Report on Core Curriculum Courses

The SU will also submit an annual report on Core Curriculum courses to account for the overall developments in teaching, learning, good practices, and assessment of the Common Core and Cluster courses offered by the SU at the end of each academic year.

Internal Peer Review

The Peer Teaching Evaluation process is established whereby each term both full-time and part-time instructors of the SU sit in a course taught by the other teaching members to provide feedback and learn from their peers.

Staff-Student Consultation Committees

The SU participates regularly in the SSCC meetings for Core Curriculum to communicate with students and collect views and suggestions for enhancing academic quality and delivery of the science curriculum. Starting from 2020-21, the SU is also involved in the SSCC for MPhil/PhD Programmes to receive students' comments for betterment of the new MPhil programme.

11.3.3 Teaching and Learning

To deliver the science courses to non-major students at an accessible and rigorous level, the SU collaborates closely with TLC to collect and convert students' feedback to ways that effectively address the learning needs of students. The SU also participates in the Peers Observation Scheme which encourages exchange among peers for course improvement and cross-disciplinary course development. In addition, the Faculty Pioneers Community of Practice, a scheme launched by the TLC in 2020, introduces new ideas for developing smart teaching and learning to meet students' learning needs in a rapidly changing environment.

Some of the science courses are integrated with Service-Learning components. The SU participates in student focus groups and other programmes organised by the Office of Service-Learning (OSL) to collect useful information about the effectiveness of integrating experiential projects and activities for learning scientific process and knowledge.

11.3.4 Assessment Review

The SU will discuss and coordinate assessment related matters of undergraduate and postgraduate courses through the BSU. The BSU reviews matters concerning assessments, including the development of rubrics, consistency of grading, grade distributions of SU courses and effectiveness of teaching with a diversity of pedagogies, etc. at the end of each term.

A selection of assessment tasks and grading of courses will be chosen for in-depth review. As all SU courses are currently graded based on continuous assessment, examples of representative assessment items will be chosen to be examined. This review process will assess the suitability of each assignment and the rubric developed to assess that assignment.

In accordance with the University guidelines, the SU has appointed two External Academic Advisers, one local and one non-local (from one of the LU's benchmarking institutions). At the end of each term the EAAs will review a selection of courses and assignments of the science courses offered by the SU to assure that the instructors are marking according to local and international standards. The comments of the EAAs will be channeled to the BSU and reflected in the relevant annual programme reports, as appropriate.

11.4 Music and Performing Arts Courses

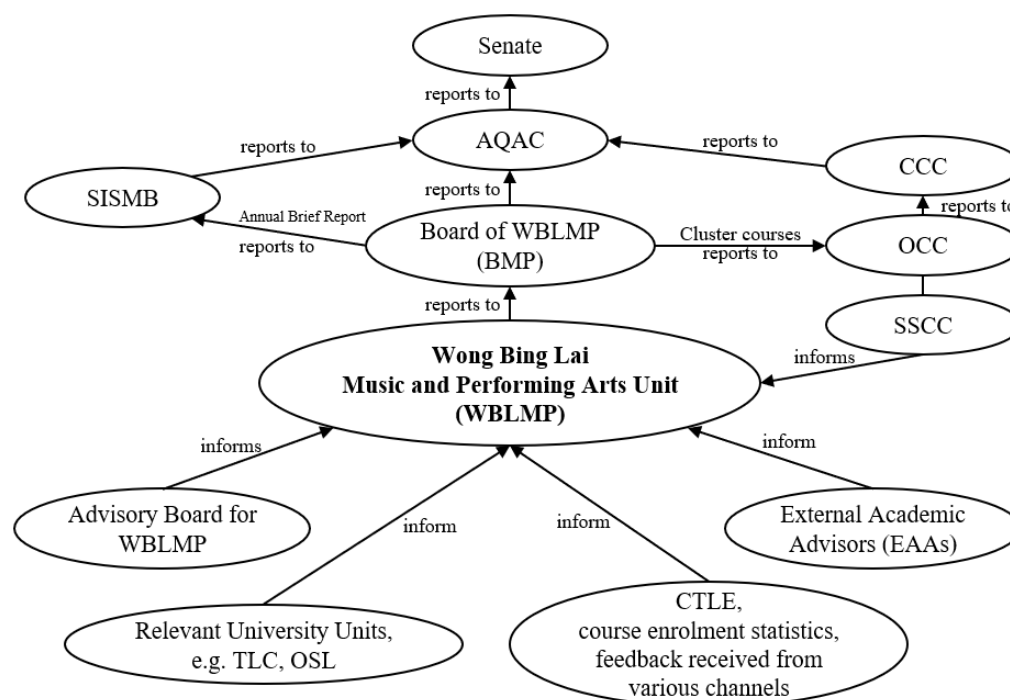
The scope of courses offered by WBLMP has expanded since the Unit was established in 2017. A stand-alone course letter code “MPA”, i.e. “Music & Performing Arts”, has been used for discipline-specific courses accessible to undergraduate students. WBLMP has also begun to incorporate Service-Learning components into its courses.

11.4.1 Quality Assurance and Enhancement Structure

To assure the quality of MPA courses, the Board of WBLMP (BMP) and the Advisory Board for WBLMP were set up. WBLMP has started to appoint two External Academic Advisers, one local and one non-local, from 2021-22.

The QA mechanism for WBLMP is provided in Figure 3.

Figure 3. QA Mechanism for WBLMP.



Board of Wong Bing Lai Music and Performing Arts Unit (BMP)

The BMP is chaired by the Head of WBLMP and comprises academic staff members from relevant departments/units/offices. It oversees the quality assurance, operations, assessment results, offerings, and revision of WBLMP’s courses and academic curriculum. The terms of reference and membership of BMP is provided in [Appendix H](#).

Advisory Board for Wong Bing Lai Music and Performing Arts Unit

The Advisory Board acts as an interface between the industry/community and the music and performing arts courses/programmes. Including leaders and practitioners of the arts scene in Hong Kong, it provides professional comments and insights for the development of music and performing arts at Lingnan. The terms of reference and membership of the Board is provided in [Appendix I](#).

External Academic Advisers

At the end of each term, the EAAs will review a selection of courses and assignments of WBLMP's courses to assure that the instructors are marking according to local and international standards. Comments of the EAAs will be channeled to the BMP and reflected in relevant reports.

11.4.2 Quality Assurance and Enhancement Procedures

New/revisions to MPA courses designed for undergraduate students must go through the following approval procedures:

- 1) Courses shall be reviewed and endorsed by the BMP.
- 2) The finalized and endorsed proposals will be submitted to the AQAC. Approval of AQAC is needed for new courses and major revisions.
- 3) Courses will be submitted to the Senate for noting.

11.4.3 Evaluation and Development

Throughout each term, WBLMP collects feedback on the courses from different stakeholders including students, instructors, internal and external partners and advisers, for identifying good practices and areas to improve.

WBLMP submits an Annual Brief Report to the BMP, SISMB and AQAC every academic year for overall monitoring. The Report is prepared in accordance with guidelines provided in [Chapter 6](#) of the AQA Manual.

Oversight of assessment matters are among the duties of the BMP. This includes the development of rubrics, consistency of grading, grade distributions and effectiveness of teaching pedagogies.

**School of Interdisciplinary Studies Management Board
Terms of Reference and Membership**

Terms of Reference

- a. To be responsible to the Senate for the academic standards and quality assurance of the programmes and courses (both undergraduate and postgraduate) offered by the School and to report thereon to the Senate from time to time;
- b. To endorse new programme proposals, annual programme reports of the interdisciplinary programmes housed under the School, annual reports of the Core Curriculum, Science Unit and Wong Bing Lai Music and Performing Arts Unit and 5-year programme reviews;
- c. To provide a forum to stimulate academic development, and research and knowledge transfer activities of the School and discuss issues and policies related to the development and operation of the School and to make decisions where appropriate;
- d. To set up committees, task forces and working groups as appropriate in support of the academic and quality assurance work of the School;
- e. To perform any other duty as may be required by the Senate.

Membership

Chairperson: Dean of the School of Interdisciplinary Studies

Ex-officio Members: Associate Dean of School of Interdisciplinary Studies
Director of Core Curriculum
Head of Science Unit
Head of the Wong Bing Lai Music and Performing Arts Unit
Programme Directors/ Associate Programme Directors of Undergraduate and Postgraduate programmes of the School

Co-opted Members: All regular faculty members of the School who are full-time employees of the University
(*on a needed-basis*) One representative from each of the three Faculties
One research postgraduate student from the School

Secretary: A staff member of the School of Interdisciplinary Studies

**Core Curriculum Committee
Terms of Reference and Membership**

Terms of reference

- 1) To develop and refine the Core Curriculum for the four-year university system in consultation with parties concerned.
- 2) To take charge of the Core Curriculum including the design, implementation, quality assurance and review of the curricula, academic regulations and assessment policies.
- 3) To deal with all other matters related to the Core Curriculum.

Membership

Chairperson: Director of Core Curriculum

Members: Deans or their representatives
Director of Teaching & Learning Centre
Director or Associate Director of Undergraduate Business Programmes
Director or Associate Director of BSocSc Programme
One Head of Academic Department in the Arts Programmes
(to serve on a rotational and annual basis)
Head of Science Unit
Head of Wong Bing Lai Music and Performing Arts Unit
One academic staff representative from each Faculty
Two student representatives nominated by Students' Union

Observers: Heads (or their representatives) of Arts Departments/Language Centres
who are not members of the Committee are invited to be Observers

Secretary: A staff member of the Office of the Core Curriculum

**Advisory Board for Core Curriculum
Terms of Reference and Membership**

Role

The role of an Advisory Board is to act as an interface between Government/industry/commerce/the community at large and the Core Curriculum.

Power and responsibilities

An Advisory Board shall normally meet once a year to help plan and keep under review the following aspects of work including future developments:

- a) Level and length of courses/programme(s) concerned in relation to local needs;
- b) The relevance of the courses/programme(s) in relation to the changing needs and nature of potential employment in Hong Kong of graduates of the University;
- c) The prospects of local employment for graduates;
- d) The adequacy of the equipment and other resources of the academic unit(s) to fulfill local needs;
- e) The development of teaching and other activities carried out jointly by the academic unit(s) and the appropriate sector of the community;
- f) Consultancy and other services given by the academic unit(s); and
- g) Keep under review the assistance which the community can give to further the objectives of the University in the subject concerned by way of practical training facilities, the provision of part-time teaching staff and equipment, the award of scholarships, student-fellowships, etc.

Membership

Chairperson	:	To be nominated by the Convener and appointed by the Senate
Convener	:	Director of Core Curriculum
Members	:	To be nominated by the Convener and appointed by the Senate Deans or their representatives
Observers and Advisers	:	The Committee may invite any persons to attend any meeting as observers or advisers
Secretary	:	To be appointed by the Convener

**Staff-Student Consultation Committee for Core Curriculum
Terms of Reference and Membership**

Role

- a) To promote understanding between students and teaching staff.
- b) To consider feedback from students regarding teaching, learning, and course evaluation and issues of importance for enhancing teaching and learning quality.
- c) To review and monitor the learning and teaching quality assurance mechanisms and processes.
- d) To provide and consider feedback obtained from external advisers, students, graduates, peers and employers, and to communicate the feedback to the relevant teachers.

Membership

Chairman: Director of Core Curriculum

Members: Staff representatives

At least one student representative from each year of study of the four faculties/school of 4-year programme (i.e. Arts, Business, Social Sciences, Interdisciplinary Studies)

Secretary: To be appointed by the Chairman

LINGNAN UNIVERSITY
Annual Report on Core Curriculum Courses Offered

Programme/Department/Centre: _____

Academic Year: _____

A. Teaching and Learning of Core Curriculum Courses Offered

(Please attach separate sheets if necessary.)

1. Enrolment and Student Feedback

Term 1

Course Title (Course Code)	Quota Offered	No. Enrolled	CTLE Score	Student Feedback from CTLE and SSCC, and follow-up action(s)

Term 2

Course Title (Course Code)	Quota Offered	No. Enrolled	CTLE Score	Student Feedback from CTLE and SSCC, and follow-up action(s)

Summer Term (please delete as appropriate)

Course Title (Course Code)	Quota Offered	No. Enrolled	CTLE Score	Student Feedback from CTLE and SSCC, and follow-up action(s)

2. OBA Development (e.g. reflection on OBATL impact, evidence on students' achievement of learning outcomes, etc.)

(Please attach separate sheets as appropriate.)

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3. Issues/Problems Anticipated/Encountered and Follow-up Actions

Course Title (Course Code)	Issues/Problems Anticipated/Encountered	Actions Taken or to be Taken

4. Good Practices or Enhancements regarding Teaching and Learning

Course Title (Course Code)	Good Practices or Enhancements regarding Teaching & Learning

B. Student Assessment

1. Report on matters relating to student assessment

(e.g. preparation and marking of examinations/assessment tasks, conduct of exams, overall performance of students, etc.)

2. Views of External Academic Advisers and Responses/Follow-up to the Views

(Please enclose/extract the external academic advisers' views on all core curriculum courses your unit has sent out for comments this academic year and your unit's responses and/or follow-up actions.)

C. Ideas/Suggestions for Teaching and Learning, Assessment, and/or Course Offering

Endorsed by PCC/Department Board/Board of Centre:

(Programme Director/Head of Department/Centre)

Date

**Board of Science Unit
Terms of Reference and Membership**

Terms of reference

- a) To be responsible for the delivery of the programme(s) and courses the Unit offers, including course planning, teaching, assessment and evaluation, admissions policy, and achievement of the intended student learning outcomes
- b) To assure the overall academic standard of the programme(s) and courses offered by the Unit for which the Board is responsible.
- c) To be responsible for the quality of teaching and research work of the Unit.
- d) To review and monitor the quality assurance mechanisms and processes within the Unit.
- e) To review matters concerning examinations and continuous assessments.
- f) To formulate the Unit's policies within University guidelines.
- g) To consider staff matters of the Unit.
- h) To set up committees as it thinks necessary to discharge its duties.

Membership

Chairman:	Head of the Science Unit
Members:	All full-time members of the teaching staff of the Unit
Secretary:	To be appointed by the Chairman

**Advisory Board for Science Unit
Terms of Reference and Membership**

Role

The role of an Advisory Board is to act as an interface between Government/industry/commerce/the community at large and the Science programmes and courses.

Power and responsibilities

An Advisory Board shall normally meet once a year to help plan and keep under review the following aspects of work including future developments:

- (a) level and length of courses/programme(s) concerned in relation to local needs;
- (b) the relevance of the courses/programme(s) in relation to the local needs;
- (c) the prospects of local employment for graduates;
- (d) the adequacy of the equipment and other resources of the academic unit(s) to fulfil local needs;
- (e) the development of teaching and other activities carried out jointly by the academic unit(s) and the appropriate sector of the community;
- (f) investigation consultancy and other services given by the academic unit(s);
- (g) keep under review the assistance which the community can give to further the objectives of the University in the subject concerned by way of practical training facilities, the provision of part-time teaching;
- (h) the implementation and development of research and knowledge transfer activities of the academic unit(s).

Membership

Chairperson	:	To be nominated by the Convener and appointed by the Senate
Convener	:	Head of the Science Unit
Members	:	To be nominated by the Convener and appointed by the Senate Dean of the School of Interdisciplinary Studies or his/her representative
Secretary	:	To be appointed by the Convener
Observers and Advisers	:	The Committee may invite any persons to attend any meeting as observers or advisers.

**Board of Wong Bing Lai Music and Performing Arts Unit
Terms of Reference and Membership**

Terms of Reference

1. To oversee the development, mission, priorities, planning and promotion of the Wong Bing Lai Music and Performing Arts Unit, in consultation with the CCC, as needed;
2. To oversee the quality assurance, operations, assessment results, offerings, and revision of the Unit's courses and academic curriculum, and to report these to the AQAC;
3. To oversee the planning and promotion of music and performing arts activities offered by the Unit, in consultation with the CCC, as needed.

Membership

Chairperson: Head of the Wong Bing Lai Music and Performing Arts Unit

Members: At least 3 academic staff members, including

- a) At least one faculty member from the School of Interdisciplinary Studies/ the Faculty of Arts
- b) At least one faculty member with significant teaching experience in the Core Curriculum
- c) All significant teaching staff of Unit courses

Note: Appointments of above persons can overlap a, b and c, as needed.

Secretary: Administrative Staff from the Wong Bing Lai Music and Performing Arts Unit, as appointed by the Chair

Observers: Other academic staff members from relevant departments, as needed
Other members of the Unit's teaching staff

**Advisory Board for Wong Bing Lai Music and Performing Arts Unit
Terms of Reference and Membership**

Role

The role of an Advisory Board is to act as an interface between Government/ industry/ commerce/ the community at large and the music and performing arts programmes and courses.

Power and Responsibilities

An Advisory Board shall normally meet once a year to help plan and keep under review the following aspects of work including future developments:

- (a) level and length of courses/programme(s) concerned in relation to local needs;
- (b) the relevance of the courses/programme(s) in relation to the local needs;
- (c) the prospects of local employment for graduates;
- (d) the adequacy of the equipment and other resources of the academic unit(s) to fulfil local needs;
- (e) the development of teaching and other activities carried out jointly by the academic unit(s) and the appropriate sector of the community;
- (f) investigation consultancy and other services given by the academic unit(s);
- (g) keep under review the assistance which the community can give to further the objectives of the University in the subject concerned by way of practical training facilities, the provision of part-time teaching.

Membership

- Chairperson : To be nominated by the Convener and appointed by the Senate
- Convener : Head of the Wong Bing Lai Music and Performing Arts Unit
- Members : To be nominated by the Convener and appointed by the Senate
Ex-officio: Dean of School of Interdisciplinary Studies or his/her representative
- Secretary : To be appointed by the Convener
- Observers and Advisers : The Committee may invite any persons to attend any meeting as observers or advisers