Distinguished Keynote Paper:
Quality Management of Higher Education – the Hong Kong Story

Prof. Lilian L P Vrijmoed
Vice-President (Academic) - UOW College Hong Kong,
Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, P.R. China
lilianv@uow.edu.au

ABSTRACT

In Hong Kong, systematic Quality Assurance (QA) work of higher education began in the 90s. It was undertaken by the QA Council of the University Grants Committee and the Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications, engaging a peer – evaluation system involving both Hong Kong and overseas senior academics. Each of these two bodies serves a different higher education sector, depending on their funding source. The vigilant undertaking of quality audits and accreditation exercises by the two QA bodies have not only led to the establishment of a robust quality management system of higher education in Hong Kong, the QA processes have also gradually facilitated the development of a QA culture for continuous improvement amongst the Hong Kong HE community.

Keywords: Outcome-based education, Outcomes-based Teaching and Learning, University Grants Committee, Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications.

1.   Introduction

1.1   Founding of higher education institutions in Hong Kong

The first comprehensive higher education (HE) provider in Hong Kong, the University of Hong Kong, was first established "as a self-governing body of scholars by the University Ordinance" in 1911. In the following year, the University was officially opened with Arts, Engineering and Medicine as the first faculties (University History – the Early Years). However, it was only fifty-one years later that the Chinese University of Hong Kong was founded as the second HE institute. This University was created by the amalgamation of three post-secondary Colleges, namely, the New Asia College (founded in 1949), the Chung Chi College (founded in 1951) and the United College (founded in 1956) with faculties of Arts, Science and Social Science being launched initially (Milestones through the Decades). Since then more and more HE/sub-degree institutions appeared in the Hong Kong education landscape. To-date there are eight government-funded (University Grants Committee (UGC)-funded) universities and numerous self-funded / public-funded / sub-degree institutions offering tertiary (bachelor degrees and above) and post-secondary education (e.g. Associate Degrees, Higher Diplomas and Diploma programmes) to the Hong Kong population (List of higher education institutes in Hong Kong).

1.2   Establishment of the first governing body for higher education in Hong Kong

Before Hong Kong's sovereignty was returned to China in 1997, governance of all the registered education providers was under the Education Department of the Hong Kong Government, which was under the British Government's jurisdiction then. However, since 1965, governance of the HE institutions was delegated to the University Grants Committee (UGC) (also known as the University and Polytechnic Grants Committee (UGPC) before the City Polytechnic, Hong Kong Polytechnic and the HK Baptist College were granted 'University' status). This Committee is a non-statutory advisory body which "*advises the Government of the SAR on the funding and strategic development of higher education in Hong Kong*" and one of its role listed in the mission statement states that UGC will "*safeguard quality and promote efficiency, cost-effectiveness and accountability in the activities of institutions*" (University Grants Committee). In view of this, the concept of quality management slowly surfaced amongst the UGC-funded universities and polytechnics and led to the establishment of internal QA bodies and processes such as the setting up QA Committees and undertaking internal audits in the 90s.

2.   Commencement of Quality Assurance Work

2.1   UGC-funded HE institutions and the QA body

Despite the fact that all the UGC-funded universities have self-accreditation status for the degree programmes they are offering, UGC launched two rounds of visits to these universities to check the quality of education provided by these HE institutions; the Teaching and Learning Quality Process Reviews (TLQPRs) between 1995 & 1997 and 2001 & 2003. The goals of these two exercises were:
   a. *to focus attention on teaching and learning as the primary mission of Hong Kong's tertiary institutions;*
   b. *to assist institutions in their efforts to improve the quality of teaching and learning; and*
   c. *to enable the UGC and the institutions to discharge their obligation to maintain accountability for the quality of teaching and learning.*

This was the first time when the quality of teaching and learning in the UGG-funded HE institutions was being officially "audited". In 2005, the HE sector published the "*Education Quality Work: The Hong Kong Experience – A handbook on good practices in assuring and improving teaching and learning quality*". It was the joint effort of all the eight UGC-funded HE institutions then via an Editorial Committee of *Education Quality Work: The Hong Kong Experience* chaired by the late Professor T.P. Leung. This publication summarized the best practices and assurance of quality in teaching and learning adopted by the eight institutions observed by the Review Panel of TLQPR during the review. Regarding the success of these reviews in achieving the goals, there were differences in the views between the international team who conducted the reviews and had positive evaluation of the outcomes vs. the academics in the HE institutions who participated in the process and expressed negative views (Mok, Y., 2002). Despite this controversy, all the HE institutions subsequently did target 'teaching and learning' as one of their important QA agenda which was reinforced with corresponding establishment of infrastructure / projects to meet the QA objectives (Massey, W.F. & French, N.J., 2001). In the meantime, UGC issued two important reports, which further clarified its role to formulate the strategic development of HE in Hong Kong. A report entitled "*Higher Education in Hong Kong-Report of the University Grants Committee*" (also known as the Sutherland Report) was released in 2002. Another report, the "*Hong Kong Higher Education – To Make a Difference, To Move with the Times*" published in 2004, is a follow-up document illustrating the roadmap for the 2002 report to review the role statements of each of the eight UGC-funded HE institutions. The recommendations of these reports pointed to the setting up a more structured QA system to safeguard and improve the quality of teaching and learning, leading to the establishment of the UGC QA Council in 2007.

2.2   Non-UGC-funded (self-financed) HE / Post-Secondary institutions and the QA body

But what QA process did the government apply to the private (self-financed) post-secondary / sub-degree HE institutions which do not have self-accreditation status? In 1990, another government QA body, the Hong Kong Council of Academic Awards (HKCAA) was established to assess the curriculum of sub-degrees and bachelor degrees of these private education providers. It functions "*as an independent statutory body to provide authoritative advice on academic standards of degree programmes*" and in 2007, the Council "*also took on responsibility for the vocational and professional education and training sector ….*"   (Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic & Vocational Qualifications). Its mission statement claims to safeguard "*the credibility of qualifications under the Qualifications Framework and enhances the quality of education and training in Hong Kong through provision of efficient and effective QA services*".

3.   Launch of Outcomes-based Education and the Subsequent QA Work

3.1   Origin of outcomes-based education

The initial idea of outcomes-based education (OBE) was proposed by William Spady (1994) targeting disadvantaged students at the school level (Biggs & Tang, 2011). This OBE idea was gradually adopted by the tertiary education sector and is currently implemented in many education institutions across the globe, including Hong Kong. Unlike the common practice more than twenty years ago, OBE aims to shift the focus of applying pedagogical strategy from a teacher-centered method to a student-centered

approach. Consequently, this paradigm shift also encourages teachers to be conscious of not only on '**what**' they are teaching but also on '**how**' they are delivering the content. The important questions for teachers to answer are, '*Are the students learning? Is the teaching effective? Can the effectiveness be measured?* or '*Can the students' achievement of learning outcomes be observable for assessment?*' These are typical questions posed during quality audit of academic operations in any educational institutions worldwide.

3.2   Official launch of outcomes-based education by the University Grants Committee

UGC introduced OBE officially to the Hong Kong education sector in 2005 when the HE institutions started to prepare for the transition of a 3Y to 4Y bachelor degree curriculum to be implemented in 2012. The opening remarks of the then UGC Secretary General, Mr Michael Stone at the "Symposium on Outcome-based Approach to Teaching, Learning and Assessment in Higher Education: International Perspectives" best outlined its purpose:

> *"An outcome-based approach to student learning is a student-centred approach. Placing the emphasis on learning outcomes helps institutions focus their education effort on what that effort is meant to achieve, and itself leads to better teaching and learning. It facilitates institutions' academic planning by placing students' interest at the forefront. This is particularly relevant when all institutions are planning major changes in their curricula under "3+3+4".*

From then onwards, all the tertiary / post- secondary education institutions in Hong Kong, irrespective of their source of funding, invested a lot time and resources in the revision of the curriculum. Apart from adding an extra year of content to the then 3Y curriculum, all documents of programmes and courses had to be presented in an outcomes-based teaching and learning (OBTL) format (Biggs, J. & Tang, C., 2006). This approach involved revision of the documents of each programme leading to an award of a bachelor /master degree. In addition to the programme objectives and its summarized syllabus, programme intended learning outcomes (PILOs) have to be incorporated. As for documents of programme courses which are the building blocks of the programme, apart from information on objectives, syllabus, and references etc., three additional elements should be included. These are, (i) course intended learning outcomes (CILOs) which summarize what students are expected to learn and achieve after completion of the course, (ii) teaching and learning activities (TLAs) designed to help students develop the ILOs and (iii) assessment tasks (ATs) which are aimed at measuring the achievement of the ILOs of students. Constructive alignment must be applied to these three elements. According to Biggs & Tang (2006), " *'Constructive' refers to the idea that students construct meaning through relevant learning activities; 'alignment' refers to the situation when teaching and learning activities, and assessment tasks, are aligned to the Intended Learning Outcomes by using the verbs stipulated in the ILOs."* Examples are available   at www.ucdoer.ie/index.php/Using_Biggs'_Model_of_Constructive_Alignment_in_Curriculum_Design/Introduction. Embedded in the programme design, CILOs of all courses must be aligned to the PILOs of each programme which may or may not align to the graduate attributes of each of the HE / post-secondary education institutions.

3.3   The UGC QA Council and quality audits undertaken on UGC-funded HE institutions

As mentioned in section 2.1, the UGC QAC was established in 2007 which shall "*provide external third party assurance and endorsement on institutions' QA…………..A "Fitness-for-purpose" approach will be adopted – institutions will be invited to set out clearly their visions and objectives, intended student learning outcomes, and the indicators that are used for measuring their achievement."* (UGC QA Council, 2007). The QAC's terms of reference states:

> a. "*To advise the University Grants Committee (UGC) on QA matters in the higher education sector in Hong Kong and other related matters as requested by the Committee;*
> b.   *To conduct audits and other reviews as requested by the UGC, and report on the QA mechanisms and quality of the offerings of universities";*

Building on the experience and outcomes of the two rounds of TLQPR conducted between 1995 & 1997 and 2001 & 2003, UGC had made the following observations, namely, (i) the 8 UGC-funded institutions had made noteworthy improvements of their QA system in teaching and learning, (ii) enhancement of

awareness of assurance issues related to improvement of teaching practice, and (iii) raising the teaching and learning profile in Hong Kong (UGC QA Council, 2008). Two cycles of quality audits on first degrees and above of the HE institutions were subsequently undertaken between 2008 & 2011 and 2014 & 2016 respectively. For each cycle, a quality manual was published by the QAC to provide guidelines to both institutions and audit panels (with members derived from senior local and overseas HE academics) to prepare for the entire audit process and to enhance the transparency of the exercise. The operation of the two cycles are described in the audit manuals published on the UGC QAC website (UGC QA Council, 2008, 2016).

In the first cycle, the QAC adopted the "Fitness for Purpose" approach and employed the Approach – Deployment-Results-Improvement (ADRI) method for the audit. The main questions posed to each of HE institution to be audited were:
> *(Approach) What is the institution's purpose?*
> *(Deployment) How does the institution achieve its purpose?*
> *(Results) What evidence does the institution have that its purpose is being achieved?*
> *(Improvement) What processes are in place for improvement?*
> > (*Extracted from "Audit Manual. First Audit Cycle. UGC, QA Council, 2008"*)

QAC also identified eleven common focus areas related to the quality systems in place to offer the 'fitness for purpose' curriculum and extra-curricular support for student learning, selecting some sample programmes for deeper examination if the QA system is working at the programme level (University Grants Council, QA Council, 2008). The second round of audit focused more on student learning and achievement around two key themes: enhancing student learning experience and global engagements, adhering to the "Fitness for Purpose" principle for the audit (University Grants Council, QA Council, 2016).

The major tasks of the audit process for the institution started with the submission of a self – evaluation document to the audit panel, providing some preliminary information on focused areas of the audit, followed by preparing for the audit visit (3-5 days) of the audit panel. After the visit, the panel will provide an audit report to the institution for checking of factual errors or misrepresentations. This report will be subsequently finalised, sent to the institution, with an invitation to provide a brief response. The full report with the response from the institution will then be submitted to UGC with provision for public viewing via the UGC QAC website. The institution also has to submit a progress report 18 months after publication of the audit report to give an account on its response to the audit panel's audit observations, especially on the affirmations and recommendations. To-date, a full set of audit reports of all the eight institutions being audited in the two cycles can be found in the UGC QAC website (www.ugc.edu.hk/eng/qac).

The first audit cycle was completed in 2010. In the interim between 2011 and the start of the second audit cycle in 2016, two major developments took place in the HE sector in Hong Kong. They are, namely (i) the implementation of the 4-Y curriculum in 2012 with the admission of a double-cohort of students in the year and (ii) the adoption of the outcomes-based teaching and learning (OBTL) strategy for the design and delivery of the curriculum, aiming at what students can achieve in terms of knowledge and skill to enhance their employability and career development. In this audit cycle, the panel was also interested to explore how the HE institutions managed the transition and if the existing quality systems can effectively monitor the performance of the OBTL adoption of curriculum delivery supported by evidence of students' achievement of learning outcomes. The workflow of the audit process was similar to that of the first cycle.

After completion of the second audit cycle, the QAC also prepared a report on "*Overview Report of QA Council Second Audit Cycle*" which is briefly described below and more detail information is available in the 37-page report (UGC QAC, 2017). This report summarized and analysed the results of the quality audits under the following headings, supported by identified exemplanary examples from the eight institutions: namely,
    a)   the setting and maintaining of academic standards;
    b)   the quality of student learning opportunities;
    c)   student achievement;
    d)   quality enhancement; and
    e)   postgraduate provision

In addition, a commentary was provided on the two audit themes: (i) enhancing the student learning experience, and (ii) global engagements: strategies and current developments. The panels made a total of eight and ten commendations of both themes respectively. In both cases, the panels reiterated that institutions had made a conscious effort to create innovative strategies and action plans to realize the objectives of these two themes in both curricular and co- / extra- curricular activities.

The report ended with a summary of the overall strength of the UGC-funded HE sector in terms of excellent performance nearly in all dimensions of development including regional and international rankings, first-rate academic standards, provision of creative supportive services for enhancement of student learning and high-level assessment tools for students' achievement of programme intended learning outcomes and graduate attributes. Areas requiring further attention were also listed. Examples included (i) the adoption of e-learning as an important pedagogical tool for teaching, (ii) support for students' own tracking of their own overall learning in curricular and co- / extra- curricular activities and (iii) collaborative efforts amongst universities to implement OBTL for enhancement of the strategies adopted.

3.4   The Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic & Vocational Qualifications (HKCAAVQ) and the accreditations of learning programmes

As described in section 2.2, HKCAAVQ is the other independent government, but statutory, QA body which undertakes similar QA activities similar to those of UGC QAC, but only on education providers which are non-UGC funded and do not have self-accreditation status. With the introduction of the HK Qualifications Framework (HKQF), in 2007, "the seven-level hierarchy covering qualifications in the academic, vocational and professional as well as continuing education and training sectors", its functional role was extended to vocational and professional education and training sectors. Unlike the operation mode of UGC QAC, QA activities are only undertaken at the request of education providers in the format of "accreditation" according to the HKQF and the updated revised Common Descriptors for Associate Degree and Higher Diploma Programmes (benched marked at QF 4) from the Education Bureau. Accreditation of education providers and learning programmes involves a "Four-Stage QA Process". These four stages are Initial Evaluation (IE), Learning Programme Accreditation (LPA), Programme Area Accreditation (PAA) and Periodic Institutional Review (PIR) which are described in detail in the latest published "Manual for the Four-stage QA Process under the Hong Kong Qualifications Framework" (HKCAAVQ, 2019a). Presentation of evidence demonstrating the required standards specified in each of the Four-stage QA Process in the accreditation of learning programmes is essential. Examples of accepted evidences are listed in another recent publication of HKCAAVQ, an "Evidence Guide for Academic Accreditation" (HKCAAVQ, 2019b) which specifies what type of activities / reports / plans / policies etc. can be taken as "evidence" for accreditation purpose.

The HKCAAVQ has taken an outcome-based approach in its accreditation process since 2008 (Li, 2015). The author reviewed how this approach has enhanced the effectiveness of the accreditation process and how adoption of OBTL was further advocated amongst operators through this process. The accreditation reports of learning programmes offered by different local operators are available in the website of HKCAAVQ   (https://www.hkcaavq.edu.hk/en/publications/summary-accreditation-reports#y2019-tab). These reports provide the 'assurance' of the quality of the learning programmes in accordance with the HKQF offered by the self-financed education sector in Hong Kong for public scrutiny and operators can also learn from one another.

3.5   Internal quality management of academic programmes in HE institutions

The OBTL approach for the delivery of teaching and learning was a novel idea for most academic staff in all HE / post-secondary institutions when the UGC first promoted the concept to be incorporated in the 4Y undergraduate curriculum for implementation in 2012. Within each HE provider, a proliferation of seminars, workshops, task forces dedicated to specific operation component of OBTL implementation were formed. Some even engaged consultants to support this challenging endeavour (e.g. City University of Hong Kong invited Professor John Biggs and Dr. Catherine Tang to be consultants for the OBTL project).

As mentioned earlier, the internal QA system within all HE / post-secondary institutions established in the mid-90s or soon after were well-established to deal the QA of the OBTL-adopted curriculum. Although

there may be variations amongst each of these institutions, the protocol adopted are quite similar to the process listed below:

a) A newly initiated programme brief is first approved by a high level committee which deals with academic matters (e.g. Academic Planning and Development Committee).

b) Formation of a programme planning committee to prepare the detailed programme proposal by the responsible academic unit (this committee may or may not involve external members).

c) Submission of the detailed programme proposal to the next higher level academic body for approval (e.g. faculty board / college board / school board) – any amendments will be referred to the programme planning committee again for revision.

d) Re-submission of the revised detailed programme proposal to the faculty board / college board / school board for approval again.

e) Submission of the board/school-approved revised detailed programme proposal to the QA Committee or other committee(s) with similar authority for approval (e.g. Programme Validation Committee - PVC).

f) Final endorsement of the QAC/PVC-approved revised detailed programme proposal by the Academic Board.

Once the programme is approved and is being implemented, internal QA procedure are also in place to monitoring the OBTL part of the programme. The three major tools are:

a) Use of the Teaching and Learning Evaluation (TLE) survey. This survey collects information from students regarding the teaching performance and effectiveness of the instructors and the learning of the students, in terms of their self-perception on their own learning, exploring their positive / negative learning experience with respect to a specific course the TLE is targeting;

b) Appointment of an external examiner / advisor of the course / programme respectively who either monitors the quality of the examination process and may or may not include coursework or only simply offering general advice on a programme,

c) Examination of an annual programme report which usually includes information on key performance indicators (e.g. data on student admission, undergraduate and graduates' academic performance, and graduate employment) and last but not least evidence on the achievement of programme learning outcomes. TLE scores and reports of external examiner / advisers are usually included. The procedure of endorsement of these reports usually adhere to the following sequence: the programme management committee, management committee of the programme offering unit, Division Board/Faculty Board/School Board to which the offering unit is affiliated to, QA committee/ academic board.

4.   Lessons Learned from the UGC QAC Audits

Very favourable comments were received from the QAC audit panels from the second round of the quality audit of the eight UGC-funded universities as described in the "Overview Report of QA Council Second Audit Cycle" (UGC QAC, 2017). Navigation through the websites of these universities on OBTL or OBE domain reveal that all of them demonstrate a full endorsement of the basic principles of OBTL supported by corresponding operation policies and procedures. There was however one OBTL-related item in the report which was recommended by the panels for further attention, namely:

> "*identify opportunities for sector-wide collaborative enhancement in key areas where the quality and maturity of practice varies between universities, for example: the embedding of an outcome-based approach to learning and teaching; criterion-referenced assessment; and evaluation of the extent to which the achievement of graduate and programme learning outcomes is authentically facilitated by formal and informal assessment regimes*"
> *(Extracted from UGC QAC (2017) "Overview Report of QA Council Second Audit Cycle" p,35.)*

Achievement of learning outcomes within an OBTL education framework are important indicators of the success of the OBTL operation. The recommendation reflects that either inappropriate rubrics or assessment tools were applied for the measurement or there was no alignment between the expected outcomes and the teaching and learning activity / assessment task in the design of the curriculum. The suggestion of inter-university collaboration was also encouraged. Indeed examples of university level outcomes assessment plans / projects are not commonly found on the websites of these eight universities. However, examples can be drawn from the "Learning Outcomes Assessment Plan" of Hong Kong

Polytechnic University (2008) which deals with programme learning outcomes and the "Evidence Collection Initiative (ECI)" of Hong Kong Baptist University (2012) which involves 'Programme Outcomes Assessment on Graduate Attributes' and the 'University Academic Profile'. Hodgson (2015) demonstrated the application of different VALUE rubrics of Association of American Colleges & Universities to assess programme outcomes in an International Conference on Assessment for Learning in Higher Education 2015, Hong Kong. In addition, examples on programme outcomes assessment plans /projects are available from some overseas universities; viz. Rochester Institute of Technology, University of California Santa Cruz, Montgomery College and University of Rhode Island.

5.   Conclusions

Hong Kong has a very robust system in the quality management of the Higher Education system. Two government independent bodies, the non-statutory UGC QAC and the statutory HKCAAVQ, undertake the QA work. UGC QAC adopted a 'Fit for Purpose' approach to conduct quality audits at frequent intervals on the eight UGC-funded universities which have self-accreditation status. QA work of the self-financed HE sector which have no self-accreditation status is handled by the HKCAAVQ according to the HK Qualifications Framework and the common descriptors from the Education Bureau for Higher Diploma and Associate Degree Programmes. These government-initiated QA processes have led to the establishment of a robust QA system within the entire HE sector in Hong Kong which results in the continuous enhancement of quality of the education provided as well as the building up of a quality culture in the HE community.

References

Biggs, J. & Tang, C. (2006), "Outcomes-Based Teaching and Learning (OBTL) What is it, Why is it, How do we make it work?" Available from <http://www.archive.jfn.ac.lk/OBESCL/MOHE/OBE-Articles/Academic-documents-articles/12.OBTL.pdf > [Assessed 10 May2019].

Biggs, J. & Tang, C. (2011), *Teaching for Quality Learning at University.* 4th edition. New York, NY: Society for Research into Higher Education & Open University Press.

Hong Kong Baptist University (2012). *Evidence Collection Initiative (ECI) for Whole Person Education Assessment.* Available from: http://chtl.hkbu.edu.hk/main/eci-design/ [Accessed 10 May 2019].

Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic & Vocational Qualifications (2019a), "*Manual for the Four-stage QA Process under the Hong Kong Qualifications Framework*". Available from: <https://www.hkcaavq.edu.hk/files/services/accreditation/academic-accreditation/Four-stage_Manual_Eng_full_v1.1_clean__190319_.pdf> [Accessed 10 May 2019}

Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic & Vocational Qualifications (2019b), "*Evidence Guide for Academic Accreditation*". Available from <https://www.hkcaavq.edu.hk/files/services/accreditation/academic-accreditation/Evidence_Guide_for_Academic_Accreditation__V1_1__Apr_2019__clean_.pdf> [Accessed 10 May].

Hodgson, P. (2015) Programme Outcomes Assessment: Direct and Indirect Evidence of Student Learning. Available from: <https://www.academia.edu/22732863/Programme_Outcomes_Assessment_Direct_and_Indirect_Evidences_of_Student_Learning> [Accessed 18 May 2019].

Hong Kong Polytechnic University (2008). *Developing a Programme Learning Outcome Assessement Plan.* Available from: <https://www.polyu.edu.hk/obe/07_4_files/PolyU_PLOAP_Guide.pdf > [Accessed on 10 May 2019].

Li, E. (2015), "Adopting an Outcome-based Approach to Accreditation by a QA Agency" presented at QA and the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education, Macao. Available from <https://www.hkcaavq.edu.hk/files/publications/others/Adopting_OBA.pdf> [Accessed 10/5/19].

Massy, W.F. & French, N.J. (2001), "Teaching and Learning Quality Process Review: What the programme has achieved in Hong Kong", *Quality in Higher Education*, Vol. 7:1, pp33-45.

Mok, Y. (2002), *Perceptions of the Teaching and Learning Process Review (TLQPR): A Qualitative Study.* Master of Education dissertation, University of Hong Kong.

Spady, W. (1994), *Outcome-Based Education: Critical Issues and Answers.* Arlington Virginia: American Association of School Administrators.

University Grants Committee QA Council, (2007), Seminar on QA of Higher Education. Available from: <https://www.ugc.edu.hk/eng/ugc/about/press_speech_other/speech/2007/sp20070519.html> [Accessed on 10 May 2019].

University Grants Committee QA Council, (2008), Quality Manual. First audit Cycle. Available from: <https://www.ugc.edu.hk/doc/eng/qac/manual/auditmanual.pdf >[Accessed 10 May 2019].

University Grants Committee QA Council, (2016), Quality Manual. Second Audit Cycle. Available from: <https://www.ugc.edu.hk/doc/eng/qac/manual/auditmanual2.pdf> [Accessed 10 May 2019].

University Grants Committee QA Council, (2017), *Overview Report of QA Council Second Audit Cycle, Sept 2019.* Available from:

<   https://www.ugc.edu.hk/doc/eng/qac/quality/first_degree/overviewreport.pdf>   [Assessed   10   May   2019].

Author's Background

Professor Lilian Vrijmoed has worked in the Hong Kong higher education sector for more than 35 years since graduating from the University of Hong Kong, with a PhD in marine mycology in the mid-80s. After working in Hong Kong for nearly 30 years, she worked in the past five years in one of the Sino-foreign Universities in Zhuhai, China - the Beijing Normal University - Hong Kong Baptist University United International College. Thus, she has witnessed the adoption of the Outcomes-based Teaching and Learning strategy in the 4Y undergraduate curriculum in the Hong Kong higher education sector as well as the beginning of the QA work being undertaken. She has involved in Quality Audits of the two Hong Kong Government QA bodies and is currently working in a self-financed HE provider in Hong Kong, the UOW College Hong Kong.