

APPENDIX B: INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSE TO THE AUDIT FINDINGS

The University of Hong Kong welcomes the quality audit exercise, which has provided a very constructive opportunity for us to reflect on our teaching and learning (T&L) provision at all levels. The critical self-review has reaffirmed our strengths and identified areas of enhancement and consolidation. We are very grateful to the Audit Panel for its time and effort in reviewing our education provision and quality mechanisms. We are extremely pleased to note its positive commendations and affirmations of our work. These positive comments are not only a recognition of our past efforts, but also a stimulus to further enrich our students' learning experience and prepare them for future challenges in a dynamic world.

The Audit Panel noted that the University's effective use of local and international benchmarking in the review of programmes is a key feature of our approach to setting, maintaining, and enhancing the standards and quality of our awards (paragraph 1.34). It found that effective systems are in place for managing academic standards and quality at all programme levels (paragraph 1.4), and that external engagement is our particular strength (paragraph 2.15). The University has built robust quality enhancement mechanisms, inviting reputable scholars in respective fields to provide inputs, for example, in our curriculum reviews and external examining of programmes. We are appreciative of the Audit Panel's recognition that "externality is comprehensively embedded within quality assurance processes, resulting in significant benchmarking locally and globally leading to enhancement of programmes and the curricula, and is a feature of good practice" (paragraph 2.20).

Also, the Audit Panel confirmed that the University has "a comprehensive set of policies and procedures for programme development and approval, monitoring, and review. The academic governance frameworks at the University and HKU SPACE are clear and identify levels of authority, accountability, and responsibility across the institutions" (paragraph 2.22). The mechanisms and "review arrangements are well understood and operate effectively in providing assurance of quality and standards as well as enhancing the curricula" (paragraph 2.21).

In terms of T&L enhancement, the Audit Panel concluded that "the University has demonstrated a strong commitment to the continuous review and enhancement of T&L in both face-to-face teaching and virtual T&L contexts in order to achieve its educational aims" (paragraph 3.10), and that "the arrangements are effective" (paragraph 3.1). Staff development and support are critical to enhancing the students' learning experience, especially in a globally connected world with fast changing technologies. To strengthen support and embrace T&L innovations, the University established a new Teaching and Learning Innovation Centre (TALIC) in July 2023, through the amalgamation of three former units.

We are glad to note the Audit Panel's strong endorsement of TALIC's work, affirming that "the wide range of professional development activities organised by TALIC provide effective support for academic staff throughout their careers" (paragraph 3.4).

The Audit Panel also found the University's varied schemes to support teaching development and innovation and to promote pedagogical research have created impacts on many aspects of T&L (paragraph 3.6). Undoubtedly, TALIC will follow up on the Audit Panel's advice to explore a wider dissemination of our innovative pedagogic practice across the entire campus.

Assessment is an important area of T&L. The University is committed to fair, transparent and rigorous assessment. The Audit Panel found that "HKU and HKU SPACE's regulatory processes, including the respective external examining systems; academic regulations; and assessment processes, are robust" (paragraph 4.8). The Audit Panel acknowledged that TALIC's support on this front was informative and comprehensive, enhancing the diversification of assessment practice (paragraph 4.14). With the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic and the explosive development of Generative AI in recent years, assessment in higher education has faced unprecedented challenges. It is encouraging to receive the Audit Panel's affirmation that the University and HKU SPACE are able to respond in a timely manner to challenges, as evidenced by our rapid response to the COVID-19 pandemic in developing online and alternative assessment and new technologies (paragraph 4.15).

The needs of students and the support provided to them are constantly evolving. The University has implemented several mechanisms to regularly collect feedback from students and take measures to address their needs and enhance their learning experience. We are delighted to receive the Audit Panel's confirmation about the effectiveness of the University's Student Support Framework, including student services, service providers, monitoring authorities and feedback mechanisms (paragraph 5.11). Our Centre of Development and Resources for Students offers extensive support services and development activities for students. Our academic advising system assists students in achieving their academic goals and identifies those who may be at risk. The employability of our graduates remains consistently high. At the start of 2023-24, we introduced a series of future readiness activities for first-year undergraduate students to help them adapt more quickly to university life and foster a sense of belonging to the University.

The theme of this audit exercise is the collection, analysis and usage of data. In this respect, the Audit Panel found that the University has "effective systems for the collection, analysis, and review of internal and external data for the management of academic quality and standards, and for evidence-based decisions designed to enhance the quality of T&L" (paragraph 6.16). The University collects data from stakeholders throughout the student journey and utilises them to continually improve our programmes. HKU SPACE has established a Quality Analytics Team to develop a more efficient student survey platform and reporting system. The University will continue to explore ways to enhance data collection and analysis, particularly with the aid of emerging technologies.

The recognition and positive feedback from the Audit Panel have provided us with immense encouragement and motivation to strive for further excellence. In a rapidly

evolving higher education landscape, there is no room for complacency. We have taken on the advice of the Panel and are actively reviewing the composition of the University and Faculty Teaching and Learning Quality Committees to ensure greater consistency (paragraph 1.9). More widely, we are carefully considering the Audit Report in its entirety to further enhance our provision.

In a highly competitive global environment, the University will take the lead in innovating and responding swiftly to challenges in higher education. The rapid advancements in powerful Generative AI present many exciting opportunities to enhance T&L and improve the student learning experience. We are steadfast in our commitment to providing students with world-class transformative education, and have full confidence that we will scale even greater heights with the concerted efforts of our teachers, students, staff, alumni and other stakeholders.