

The Common Core Program **Quality Assurance Handbook**



*The Common Core –
A Program to Broaden, to Inspire and to Empower*

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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND

1.1 The Common Core Program (referred to as “the Program” hereafter) is a key part of the undergraduate education, complementing studies in specialist disciplines and other learning opportunities. The Program was implemented in the 2010-11 academic year in the form of a set of institutional requirements, comprising a specified number of credit requirements to be completed in the stated broad areas. These requirements are common to all programs which all students will complete regardless of their major program of study.

1.2 The first set of quality assurance (QA) processes was introduced in June 2009, which has subsequently been updated and enhanced after rounds of consultation with Schools and extensive deliberations at the Committee on Undergraduate Core Education (CUCE) meetings. Revisions may be made from time to time where necessary to enhance these processes. All revisions have to be approved by the CUCE, the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies (CUS) or the Senate Committee on Teaching and Learning Quality (CTLQ).

1.3 These processes are consolidated into this Quality Assurance Handbook with a view to facilitating the communication of the Common Core mission, goals, objectives, and QA Framework with faculty, staff and internal units, and to providing a handy reference of the QA processes and activities for faculty and staff. As the QA work continues to develop, this handbook will be updated from time to time to incorporate changes or additions to the QA activities.

ORGANIZATION OF THE HANDBOOK

1.4 The ensuing chapters will state the mission, goals, objectives, and the QA Framework of the Common Core Program, and explain the means to maintain and enhance the academic standards and quality of the common core courses in detail.

- ♦ *Chapter 2* defines the mission, goals, objectives, and the credit requirements of the Common Core Program. It also presents the intended learning outcomes for the common core areas and the desired attributes of HKUST graduates.
- ♦ *Chapter 3* presents an overview of the Common Core QA Framework and the organizational structure for implementing it.
- ♦ *Chapter 4* gives the general criteria for common core courses and their development and approval process.
- ♦ *Chapter 5* outlines the course revision procedures to support changes proposed for continuous improvements.
- ♦ *Chapter 6* illustrates the QA activities that serve to monitor and review the academic standard and the delivery quality of the approved common core courses.
- ♦ *Chapter 7* describes the internal and external review mechanism for the Common Core Program.
- ♦ *Chapter 8* delineates the arrangements for supporting instructors and students in furthering the teaching and learning activities for common core courses.

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CHAPTER 2 MISSION, GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

2.1 This chapter explains the mission, goals, and objectives of the Common Core Program (referred to as “the Program” hereafter). These were first developed in February 2009, and reworked by the Committee on Undergraduate Core Education (CUCE) in June 2014. The *mission* defines the institutional role and purpose of the Program; the *goals* describe the general intentions of what the Program strives to achieve; and the *objectives* are clearly defined tasks associated with tangible outcomes to be achieved through specific actions. The Mission, Goals and Objectives are closely aligned with each other.

MISSION

2.2 The mission of the Common Core Program is to support the mission and vision of HKUST (Figure 1) by providing a broad and well-rounded education to its undergraduates that nurtures them to be responsible, ethical and compassionate citizens with the aspiration and competency to excel in their endeavors.

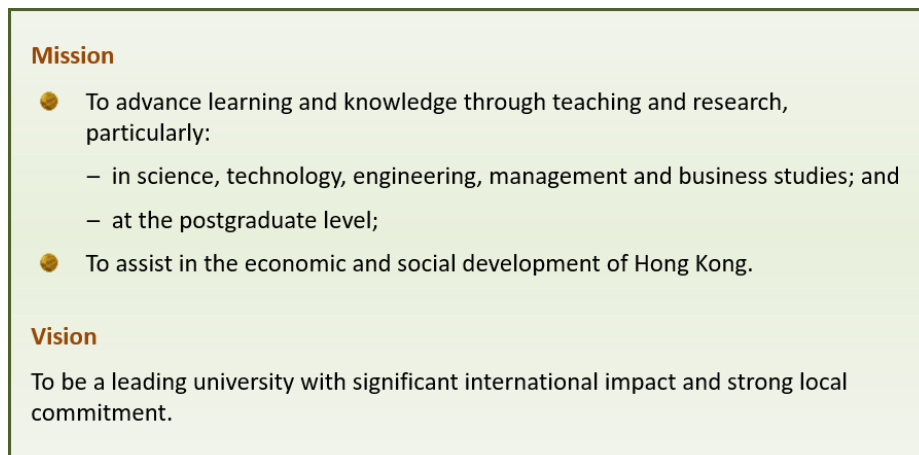


Figure 1: Mission and Vision of HKUST

GOALS

2.3 The Common Core Program strives to provide undergraduate students with a well-rounded quality education that broadens their horizons, inspires and ignites their passion for learning and empowers them for lifelong pursuit of excellence. Specifically, the goals of the Common Core Program are:

- Broadening horizons:** to allow students to gain intellectual breadth and an appreciation of intellectual achievements across and beyond the main academic disciplines of their studies.
- A passion for learning:** to spark students’ passion for learning and enhance their higher order intellectual abilities: analysis and evaluation; judgment and critical thinking; defining and solving problems.

- (c) **A lifelong pursuit of excellence:** to provide a foundation for students' life-long development through personal growth, preparation for future careers and opportunities to make contributions to the community.

OBJECTIVES

2.4 The objectives of the Common Core Program are:

- (a) To broaden students' knowledge beyond the main academic disciplines: science and technology, social studies, and arts and humanities, such that students can gain intellectual breadth.
- (b) To instill knowledge on the human achievements in the arts and culture, the social structures and forms, and the significance of scientific discovery and technical accomplishments.
- (c) To spark students' passion for learning by teaching and learning pedagogies that stimulate them to think for themselves, taking their own routes through the materials, to conduct self-directed research and inquiry, and to communicate their discoveries, explanations and narratives to others.
- (d) To help develop higher-order thinking skills through activities that require students to form and communicate judgments, to apply theories and concepts to unfamiliar situations, or to analyze cases and solve problems.
- (e) To stimulate students' development of skills in the areas of language and communication, quantitative reasoning and computer literacy.
- (f) To nurture the development of students' attributes including social adaptability, the willingness to accept challenges, and the ability to work independently and in collaboration.
- (g) To cultivate the development of responsible, ethical and compassionate citizens who can reflect on personal choices and basic human values, and understand the social and human impact of scientific and technical advances.
- (h) To equip students with strategies to manage their lives, contribute to the community, and live up to the expectations that the society places on its educated citizens.

QUALITY STATEMENT

The Common Core Program is committed to providing undergraduate students a well-rounded and quality education that broadens their horizons, inspires and ignites their passion for learning, and empowers them for lifelong pursuit of excellence.

2.5 This quality statement is adopted by the CUC in June 2014 to highlight the commitment of the University to uphold the quality of the Common Core Program and galvanize the support of its stakeholders in its quality assurance work. It is also instrumental in communicating with students,

faculty, and the university community the beliefs and the ideals embedded in the Program, as well as the intent of the University to manage the Program in high quality.

CREDIT REQUIREMENTS OF THE COMMON CORE

2.6 The Common Core Program comprises a total of 36 credits (out of 120-126 credits) to be elected from 8 broad common core areas (Figure 2), of which 9 credits must be taken from school-sponsored courses (SSCs).

Common Core Area	Credits		Note
	Required	Elective	
Humanities (H)	6*	6	* 3 credits must be from H SSCs
Social Analysis (SA)	6*		* 3 credits must be from SA SSCs
Science and Technology (S&T)	6*		* 3 credits must be from S&T SSCs
Quantitative Reasoning (QR)	3		
Arts	0		
English Communication	6**	Nil	**Must be taken in the 1st year of study
Chinese Communication	3	Nil	
Healthy Lifestyle	Non-credit	Nil	
Total Credits Required	36		[Note: "SSCs" denotes "School-Sponsored Courses"]

Figure 2: Credit Requirements of the Common Core Program

2.7 The Common Core requirements are common to all undergraduate programs. All undergraduates will complete the same set of common core requirements regardless of their major discipline of study. Students are expected to complete the majority of the common core credits in Year 1 and 2. The 6 credits of English Communication (E-Comm) are to be taken in the first year.

2.8 Introducing the SSCs into the Common Core Program as one of its requirements is a unique feature for the undergraduate curriculum. The objectives of the SSCs are to

- Exemplify the attainment of the Common Core goals in their course design, content, pedagogy and delivery;
- Support the attainment of the desired attributes for HKUST graduate, *ABC LIVE*; and
- Transcend disciplinary areas.

The carefully designed content and pedagogy will not only impart knowledge to students, but more importantly also spark their interest and passion to explore and create knowledge by themselves. Further information about SSCs can be found in Chapter 4.

INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES FOR COMMON CORE AREAS

2.9 Each common core area has clearly defined intended learning outcomes (ILOs) (Figure 3). The area ILOs are presented as statements of what students should be able to do as a result of their learning experience in the relevant common core courses. They were approved by the Senate in June 2009 and updated in June 2011. Minor modifications to the Humanities (H) area ILOs were made by the CUCE in April 2016.

Common Core Area	Intended Learning Outcomes	
Humanities (H)	H1	Comprehend and narrate human phenomena from the perspectives of humanities disciplines.
	H2	Appreciate and articulate diverse human values, feelings, reason and creativity in various forms of expression.
Social Analysis (SA)	SA1	Analyze key societal and behavioral issues by applying relevant social scientific approaches in different contexts
	SA2	Communicate a concern about key societal issues as responsible citizens
Science and Technology (S&T)	ST1	Comprehend and apply the basic principles of science and methods of scientific inquiry
	ST2	Evaluate the social and philosophical implications of scientific discoveries and technological development
Quantitative Reasoning (QR)	QR1	Use mathematical models or quantitative methods to formulate, analyze and solve problems that they encounter in their daily and professional lives
	QR2	Choose an appropriate method to represent and process a given set of quantitative data and to draw inferences from such data in a systematic and logical way
Arts	A1	Appreciate the theory, history and practice of the arts
	A2	Express themselves through various art forms or media
English Communication (E-Comm)	E1	Use English to achieve communicative purposes appropriate to the academic and social context
Chinese Communication (C-Comm)	C1	Students with Chinese background will be able to use Putonghua and Standard Written Chinese to achieve communicative purposes appropriate to the context, be it academic, social or professional
	C2	Students with non-Chinese background will be able to achieve basic communicative purposes in Putonghua
Healthy Lifestyle (HLTH)	HL1	Recognize the importance of physical, psychological, social, and occupational wellness
	HL2	Develop strategies to manage their lives
	HL3	Acquire new sports skills and maintain a higher level of physical wellness through a variety of activities

Figure 3: Intended Learning Outcomes for Common Core Areas

2.10 The ILOs of the eight areas are aligned with the mission and goals of the Common Core Program. They also serve the Common Core objectives and are to be achieved through the courses residing in the particular areas. [Figure 4](#) summarizes the mapping between the Common Core objectives and the area ILOs.

Common Core Areas ILOs		Common Core Goals and Objectives							
		Goal 1 Broadening Horizons		Goal 2 Passion for Learning		Goal 3 Lifelong Pursuit of Excellence			
		Obj 1	Obj 2	Obj 3	Obj 4	Obj 5	Obj 6	Obj 7	Obj 8
Humanities	H1	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	H2	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Social Analysis	SA1	✓	✓				✓		
	SA2							✓	✓
Science and Technology	ST1	✓	✓						
	ST2	✓	✓						
Quantitative Reasoning	QR1				✓	✓			
	QR2				✓	✓			
Arts	A1	✓	✓						
	A2	✓	✓						
English Communication	E1					✓			
Chinese Communication	C1					✓			
	C2					✓			
Healthy Lifestyle	HL1						✓		✓
	HL2				✓				✓
	HL3							✓	✓

OBJECTIVE 1 To broaden students' knowledge beyond the main academic disciplines: science and technology, social studies, and arts and humanities, such that students can gain intellectual breadth.	OBJECTIVE 2 To instill knowledge on the human achievements in the arts and culture, the social structures and forms, and the significance of scientific discovery and technical accomplishments.	OBJECTIVE 3 To spark students' passion for learning by teaching and learning pedagogies that stimulate them to think for themselves, taking their own routes through the materials, to conduct self-directed research and inquiry, and to communicate their discoveries, explanations and narratives to others.	OBJECTIVE 4 To help develop higher-order thinking skills through activities that require students to form and communicate judgments, to apply theories and concepts to unfamiliar situations, or to analyze cases and solve problems.
OBJECTIVE 5 To stimulate students' development of skills in the areas of language and communication, quantitative reasoning and computer literacy.	OBJECTIVE 6 To nurture the development of students' attributes including social adaptability, the willingness to accept challenges, and the ability to work independently and in collaboration.	OBJECTIVE 7 To cultivate the development of responsible, ethical and compassionate citizens who can reflect on personal choices and basic human values, and understand the social and human impact of scientific and technical advances.	OBJECTIVE 8 To equip students with strategies to manage their lives, contribute to the community, and live up to the expectations that society places on its educated citizens.

Figure 4: Mapping between Common Core Objectives and the Area ILOs

COMMON CORE AND THE DESIRED ATTRIBUTES OF HKUST GRADUATES

2.11 The University aims to provide education that helps its undergraduate students to develop broad graduate attributes that are summarized as “ABC LIVE”: **A**cademic excellence, **B**road-based education, **C**ompetencies and capacity building, **L**eadership and teamwork, **I**nternational outlook, **V**ision and an orientation to the future, and **E**thical standards and compassion ([Figure 5](#)).

A	Academic excellence An in-depth grasp of at least one area of specialist or professional study, based on a forward-looking curriculum and an inquiry-driven approach to learning
B	Broad-based education Intellectual breadth, flexibility, and curiosity, including an understanding of the role of rational, balanced inquiry and discussion, and a grasp of the basic approach and values of the core disciplines of science, social science, engineering and the humanities
C	Competencies and capacity building High-level, transferable competencies, including analytical, critical, quantitative and communications skills
L	Leadership and teamwork A capacity for leadership and teamwork, including the ability to motivate others, to be responsible and reliable, and to give and take direction and constructive criticism
I	International outlook An international outlook, and an appreciation of cultural diversity
V	Vision and an orientation to the future Adaptability and flexibility, a passion for learning, the ability to develop clear, forward-looking goals, and the self-direction and discipline to achieve these goals
E	Ethical standards and compassion Respect for others and high standards of personal integrity. Compassion and a readiness to contribute to the community

Figure 5: HKUST’s Desired Attributes for Undergraduates

2.12 The goals, objectives and area ILOs of the Common Core Program tie in well with these desired attributes. In particular, the Common Core serves to provide additional academic breadth (B); support the development of high-level competencies (C); and to implement a pedagogy that promotes personal development, moral reasoning and citizenship (LIVE).

CHAPTER 3 QUALITY ASSURANCE FRAMEWORK

3.1 This chapter describes the Quality Assurance (QA) Framework of the Common Core Program (referred to as “the Program” hereafter), which portrays the organizational structure, responsibilities, processes and activities for ensuring and sustaining the high academic quality of the Program.

OBJECTIVES OF THE QA FRAMEWORK

3.2 The objectives of the Common Core QA Framework are:

- (a) To support the mission of the Program through ensuring the high quality of common core courses and providing teaching and learning support;
- (b) To facilitate the continuous enhancement of the quality of common core courses;
- (c) To ensure consistency and effectiveness of the QA processes and activities; and
- (d) To establish the role for all parties involved in the QA processes and activities.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE FOR THE QA FRAMEWORK

3.3 The organizational structure for implementing the Common Core QA Framework is presented in Figure 6.

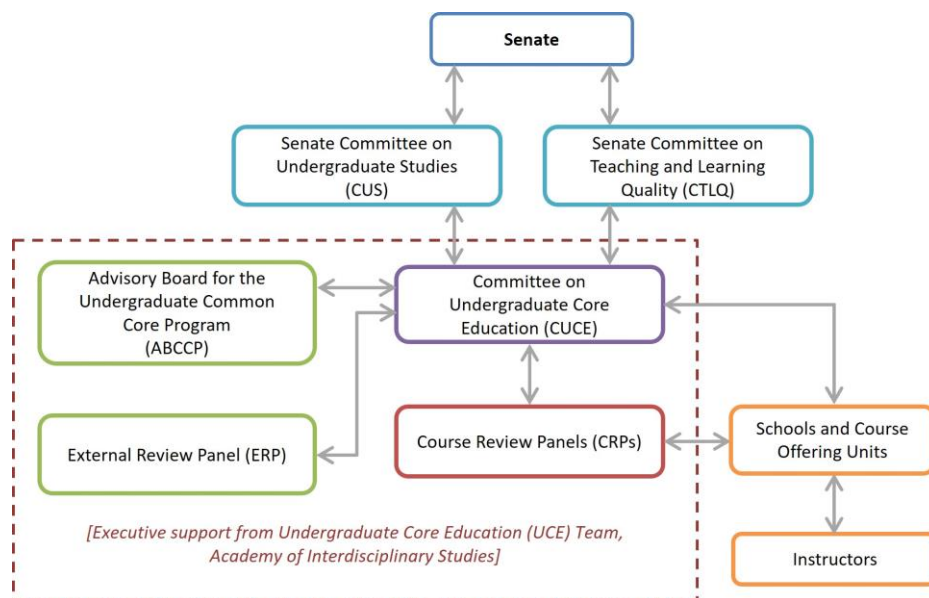


Figure 6: Organizational Structure for Implementing the Common Core QA Framework

3.4 **Instructors, Schools and Course Offering Units:** The instructors and course offering units have the principal responsibility for the quality of common core courses particularly for their design, delivery and assessment. They develop new common core courses, and recommend changes to approved ones when deemed necessary. These are submitted to the Schools for consideration and endorsement before submitting to the relevant Course Review Panel (CRP), which makes recommendations to the Committee on Undergraduate Core Education (CUCE) for approval. Schools are responsible for ensuring that the common core requirements and processes are met and implemented by their course offering units. The Schools establish arrangements to monitor

departmental processes for assuring the quality of common core course delivery and for maintaining the academic standard of these courses.

3.5 Course Review Panels (CRPs): CRPs are established by the CUCE for reviewing new course proposals, course change applications and delivery of common core courses for their respective common core area. The review aims to ensure that the course design and content meet the general criteria for common core courses and the course and area intended learning outcomes (ILOs). The CRP makes recommendations to the CUCE on courses that could serve the ILOs of the common core area in concern, and advises on the delivery of common core course ILOs and their mapping with the area ILOs. The terms of reference and membership of the CRPs are given at [Appendix 1](#).

3.6 Committee on Undergraduate Core Education (CUCE): The CUCE is a sub-committee of the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies (CUS). It advises and makes recommendations to the CUS on common core policies and regulations, and monitors and reviews procedures, quality and performance relating to the university core curriculum in the undergraduate degree programs. It also reports to the Senate Committee on Teaching and Learning Quality (CTLQ) on QA arrangements and the evaluation of the implementation of these measures. The terms of reference and membership of the CUCE are given at [Appendix 2](#).

3.7 Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies (CUS): The CUS advises and makes recommendations to the Senate on policies and regulations, and to monitor and review procedures, quality and performance relating to undergraduate studies. The CUS also considers and approves common core courses approved by the CUCE as undergraduate courses; and receives annual report from the CUCE on the progress of the Common Core Program. The terms of reference and membership of the CUS can be found at <https://ccss.ust.hk/senate/committee-undergraduate-studies>.

3.8 Senate Committee on Teaching and Learning Quality (CTLQ): The CTLQ advises and makes recommendations to the Senate on policies, regulations and guidelines relating to QA; promotes the quality of teaching and learning; and provides University-level monitoring of the operation of QA processes. Being part of the university education, the Common Core Program submits annual reports to the CTLQ on its QA and improvement work through the Undergraduate Core Education Team. The terms of reference and membership of the CTLQ can be found at <https://ccss.ust.hk/senate/committee-teaching-and-learning-quality>.

3.9 Advisory Board for the Undergraduate Common Core Program (ABCCP): The ABCCP comprises external experts from the academic sector and the community, and provides support and counsel to the CUCE on issues central to the Program, including its academic content, strategy for future development and quality related issues. The Advisory Board members are appointed by the Provost. The terms of reference and membership of the ABCCP are given at [Appendix 3](#).

3.10 External Review Panel (ERP): The external review aims to ensure that the Common Core Program attains a high academic standard when compared to similar top-ranked programs locally and internationally. An ERP will be set up to perform a holistic review of the Program focusing on the design, content, pedagogy and assessment of common core courses, as well as other teaching and learning related issues as reflected from the performance of students.

3.11 Undergraduate Core Education (UCE) Team: The UCE Team is administratively structured under the Academy of Interdisciplinary Studies (AIS), and is headed by the Academic Director. The UCE Team supports and coordinates the QA activities of the Common Core Program, and provides administrative and executive support to the CUCE in the areas of course administration, quality assurance and promotion of university core education.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF UNIVERSITY MEMBERS IN QA

3.12 The Common Core QA Framework contributes to the wider HKUST QA Framework published at <http://qa.ust.hk/index.html>, the HKUST QA Framework sets out clearly the roles and responsibilities of all members of the University in the collective work of QA and enhancement, including the students, academic staff, alumni and the community, academic departments and divisions, schools and academic support units, etc. They are expected to participate in and contribute to the QA work of the Common Core Program in the same manner as described there.

PROCESSES AND ACTIVITIES IN THE QA FRAMEWORK

3.13 The Common Core QA Framework covers the full spectrum of course level processes, including planning, approving, delivering, modifying and reviewing a common core course. It also includes the management of program level implementation, monitoring and review. Teaching and learning support activities are instrumental in this framework through promoting and recognizing innovations and excellence in teaching and learning in common core courses. Figure 7 gives a brief outline of these processes and activities in this framework.

QA Processes and Activities		Parties Involved		
		Internal	External	
Course Level	Course development, approval and change			Teaching and Learning Support (See details in Chapter 8)
	- Development and approval of new common core courses (See details in Chapter 4) - Course changes and deletion (See details in Chapter 5)	Instructors, Course Offering Units & Schools, CRP, CUCE, CUS, UCE Team	-	
	Course monitoring and review (See details in Chapter 6)			
- Review on the alignment of course ILOs with their respective area ILOs - Collection of quantitative and qualitative data for monitoring the teaching and learning quality of common core courses - Monitoring of course place provision and student enrollment	Instructors, Course Offering Units & Schools, CRP, CUCE, CTLQ, UCE Team	-		
Program Level	Program review (See details in Chapter 7)			
	- Annual report to the CUS and CTLQ - Review by the Advisory Board - Review by an External Review Panel	CUCE, CUS, CTLQ, UCE Team	ABCCP, ERP	

Figure 7: Processes and Activities in the Common Core QA Framework

CHAPTER 4 DEVELOPMENT AND APPROVAL OF COMMON CORE COURSES

4.1 Faculty members, schools, departments, teaching teams and units are welcome to submit course proposals for any common core areas of the Common Core Program (referred to as “the Program” hereafter), except English Communication (E-Comm) and Chinese Communication (C-Comm). The Center for Language Education (CLE) is the only unit to provide courses for the E-Comm common core area. Both the CLE and the School of Humanities and Social Science (SHSS) may present courses for the C-Comm common core area. Non-academic units interested in submitting common core course proposals need to be partnered with an academic unit in course development and delivery.

GENERAL CRITERIA FOR COMMON CORE COURSES

4.2 In general, common core courses are expected to meet all of the following general criteria:

- (a) the course should broaden students’ horizons;
- (b) the course should not have a prerequisite and should be open to all students;
- (c) the course should enhance students’ competencies such as communication, quantitative reasoning, and critical thinking; and
- (d) the course should challenge students to consider social, cultural, or philosophical issues.

These criteria may be reviewed and revised in response to changing circumstances or needs. Nevertheless, they should always adhere to the goals and objectives of the Program and be read and interpreted in conjunction with these goals and objectives.

4.3 To assure that courses developed are achieving the goals of the Program, the course proposal will be evaluated with regard to the following aspects:

- (a) **Course Curriculum:** The outcome-based education (OBE) approach is adopted in the design of course curriculum. The course learning outcomes are aligned with the intended learning outcomes (ILOs) of the common core area (refer to section 2.9) and achieved through a coherent and effective course content and structure;
- (b) **Contribution to the Common Core Program:** The course contributes to the objectives of the Common Core Program in complementing studies in specialist disciplines and providing a whole-person learning and developmental experience for students;
- (c) **Teaching and Learning:** The teaching and learning activities are effective in delivering the course learning outcomes and course content; and
- (d) **Assessment:** Assessment methods are appropriate to enable and evaluate students’ attainment of the course learning outcomes.

CRITERIA FOR STUDIO ARTS COURSES

4.4 Studio arts courses are listed under the Arts common core area. With a focus on hands-on practice of the art, studio arts courses aim to bring to students hands-on experience with a variety of art forms, help them learn to express themselves through different forms of artistic expressions, appreciate arts and culture and develop an aesthetic sense.

4.5 In addition to the general criteria for common core courses, studio arts courses are required to meet a separate set of criteria established by the Division of Humanities (HUMA) ([Appendix 4](#)). Each course is taught in the form of a studio session, in which lecturing, demonstration and student hands-on practice are interwoven together in an interactive manner. The courses may be supplemented by a co-curricular workshop providing students with additional learning time for hands-on practice of the art. Instructors are professional practitioners as well as experienced teachers of the art with proven records of professional recognition.

CRITERIA FOR SCHOOL-SPONSORED COURSES

4.6 All undergraduates are required to take 9 credits of school-sponsored courses (SSCs), with 3 credits each from the Humanities (H) SSCs, Social Analysis (SA) SSCs, and Science & Technology (S&T) SSCs. In addition to the general criteria for common core, SSCs are expected to demonstrate clear evidence of ALL of the following criteria:

- (a) Exemplifying the attainment of the Common Core goals in their course design, content, pedagogy and delivery;
- (b) Supporting the attainment of the desired attributes for HKUST graduate, *ABC LIVE*, and
- (c) Transcending disciplinary areas.

4.7 Examples of practices for illustrating/explaining the selection criteria are given in [Appendix 5](#). It is understood that individual SSCs may demonstrate different levels of attainment in each of these selection criteria. Of the seven attributes, A, B and C would be achieved mainly through major programs or the general common core courses. While the Common Core collectively should serve to attain all the remaining four attributes (i.e. *LIVE*), individual SSCs should address at least one of these four attributes.

4.8 The format of SSCs is flexible and includes small as well as large classes, with or without tutorial discussions. Schools have the discretion to decide on the most appropriate approach for delivery and scaling, and at the same time provide the needed resource to develop the courses in their best quality.

COURSE LEVEL

4.9 Apart from the no-prerequisite criteria, common core courses should generally be at 1000-level, such that the courses can be open to all students and help to achieve the common core objective of broadening students' horizon. 2000-level courses may be included in the Common Core and an explanation for the need is required. Approval of the Committee on Undergraduate Core Education (CUCE) is required if a 3000-level course is to be included in the Common Core. The guideline on common core course level is given in [Appendix 6](#).

TEACHING MEDIUM

4.10 While noting the University policy that English is the language of instruction in all formal instructional activities, and acknowledging that SHSS was delegated the authority by the Senate to approve the use of Chinese as the teaching medium in humanities and social science courses related to Chinese studies, the CUCE established a guideline in June 2015 ([Appendix 7](#)) to ensure a good provision of common core courses, particularly humanities (HUMA) courses, that are taught in English for non-Chinese speaking students.

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

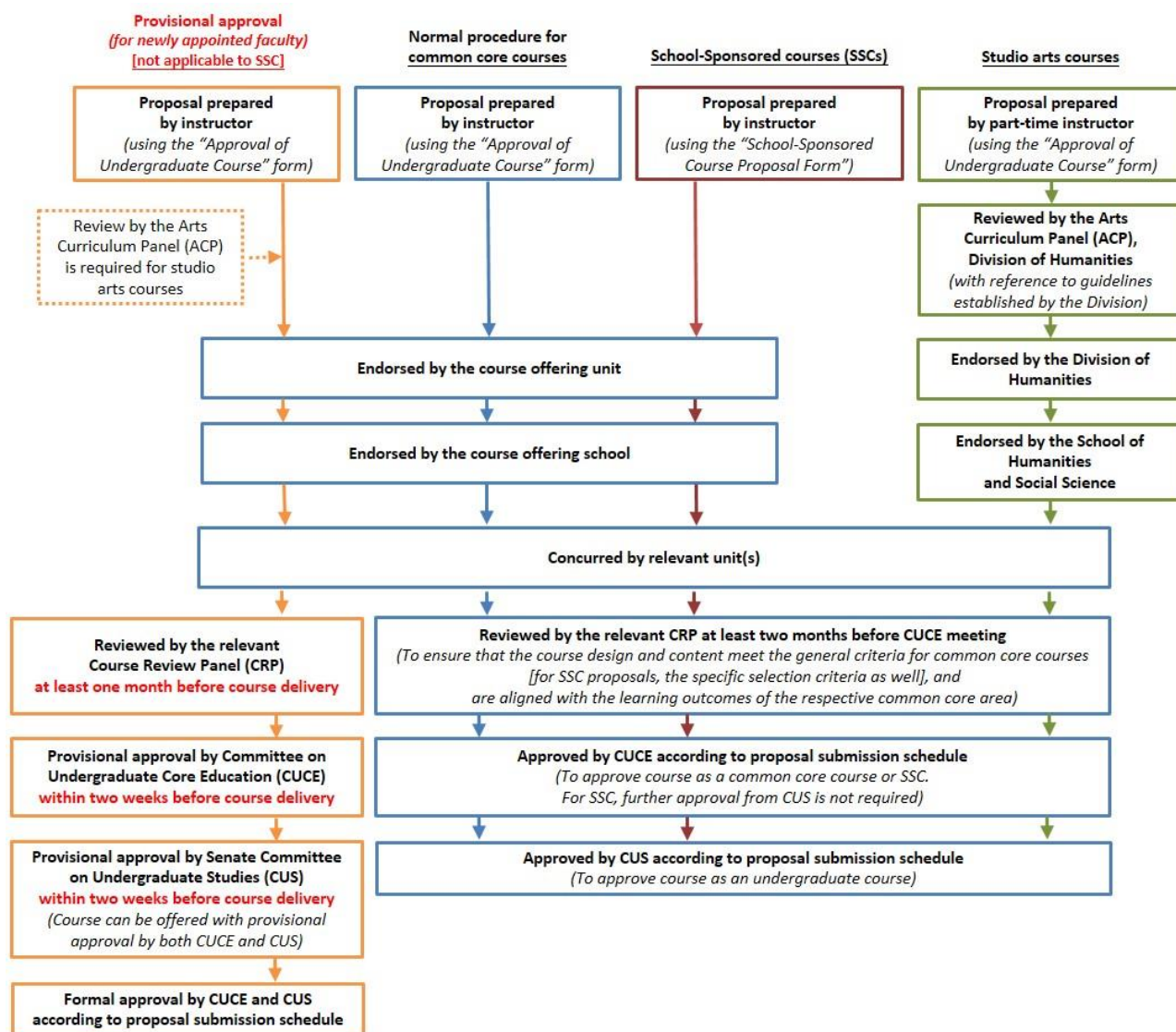
4.11 A proposal can be a new course, or developed from an existing course. Except for SSCs, course proposals are to be submitted using the prescribed form “[Approval of Undergraduate Course](#)”. Besides, basic course information such as title and credits, the form will ask for the following information to be provided:

- (a) proposed common core area:
- (b) course objectives, learning outcomes, content and topics, teaching and learning activities;
- (c) course materials and resources; and
- (d) assessment methods.

4.12 Courses proposed to be SSCs must be existing common core courses which have been offered at least once. The proposal must be submitted using the prescribed “School-Sponsored Course Proposal Form” ([Appendix 8](#)) together with evidence from previous offering(s) to demonstrate that the proposed course could meet the SSC selection criteria. Evidence should include, but not limited to, course outlines, assessment samples, student evaluation, and documentation of quality assurance activities adopted for ensuring the continued attainment of the SSC objectives.

COURSE APPROVAL PROCESS

4.13 Common core course proposals are subject to an elaborated process of approval, as shown in [Figure 8](#) below.



[Note: Proposals not recommended by the ACP / CRP, or not approved by the CUCE / CUS will be returned to the course offering unit for decision on the next step. The proposals may or may not be re-submitted.]

Figure 8: Approval Process for Common Core Courses

4.14 The course offering school submits the course proposal to the Undergraduate Core Education (UCE) Team, after it is endorsed by the course offering school and concurrences from all schools are cleared.

4.15 Studio arts courses are subject to a review and endorsement by the Arts Curriculum Panel (ACP) of the HUMA, before they are endorsed by the Division and the SHSS. The ACP reviews the proposals with reference to the guidelines established by the HUMA ([Appendix 4](#)).

4.16 All course proposals will be reviewed by relevant Course Review Panel (CRP). Courses proposed to be listed under more than one common core area will be reviewed by all relevant CRPs concerned. The role of a CRP is to ensure that the course design and content meet the general criteria for common core courses, and are aligned with the stated learning outcomes. For SSC proposals, the CRP will ensure that the course design and content meet the specific SSC selection criteria, based on evidence presented from previous offering(s). Comments or suggestions from the CRP for clarifying or making improvement, if any, will be communicated to the course offering school for consideration of revising the proposal. The CRP will provide a final recommendation for each proposal for consideration of the CUCE.

4.17 The authority of the CUCE is to approve a proposed course as common core course. A common core course can be added to the common core course list and be offered only when it is also approved by the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies (CUS) as an undergraduate course. For SSCs, further approval from the CUS is not required.

4.18 Proposals not recommended by the ACP or CRP, or not approved by the CUCE or CUS will be returned to the course offering unit for consideration of the next step. The proposals may or may not be re-submitted.

Provisional Approval of Common Core Courses

4.19 In view of the elaborated approval process for common core courses which normally takes about two months to complete, the course offering school may request for provisional approval for new common core courses that are to be developed by newly appointed faculty.

4.20 The School will submit a course proposal for vetting by the CRP at least one month prior to the delivery of the course. It should be accompanied by a request to seek provisional approval and a brief explanation of the reason for making the request. The submission may take place while the instructor's formal appointment is being processed.

4.21 The proposal needs to be at the level of details equivalent to what are expected of a regular new course proposal. The School is encouraged to have supporting staff facilitating the write up of this proposal.

4.22 The CRP (at least two members) will give an evaluation of the proposal, provide comments (if there is any), and make a provisional approval (subject to the final submission of amendment at least two weeks before the delivery date).

4.23 The CUCE and CUS approval will be sought at a regular meeting or by circulation within two weeks prior to the delivery date.

4.24 The course is allowed to be offered based on the provisional approval given by the CUCE and CUS. Formal approval by the CUCE and CUS will be sought as soon as possible after this provisional approval has been granted.

4.25 It is expected that only a small number of courses will be reviewed under this vetting protocol. After this process has been run through in a reasonable number of cases, a review of this mechanism will be conducted to ensure that the academic rigor of courses has not been compromised by this alternative fast track process.

CHAPTER 5 COMMON CORE COURSE CHANGE AND DELETION

5.1 Although common core courses are offered after a critical evaluation and review process set out in Chapter 4 Development and Approval of Common Core Courses, changes may be introduced to approved courses as a result of an on-going self-review process for improvement; and some may be removed from the common core course list.

5.2 All proposals to change or delete a common core course must be endorsed by the course offering unit and its School before submitting to the Undergraduate Core Education (UCE) Team. These proposals will then be reviewed by the relevant Course Review Panel (CRP), the Committee on Undergraduate Core Education (CUCE) or the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies (CUS) as appropriate.

5.3 The requisite forms, as well as the committee/panel involved in the review and approval of various types of course changes or deletion, are summarized in [Figure 9](#) below.

Types of Course Changes/Deletion	Form Required	Action by Committee/Panel
Status as a Common Core Course		
Remove course from the common core course list (while remaining as a UG course)	Common Core Course Change/Deletion Form (Appendix 9)	Report to CUCE for information
Delete a common core course (which will result in automatic removal of this course from the common core course list)	Undergraduate Course Change/Deletion Form *	Report to CUCE and CUS for information
Delete a common core course under the 'sunset' policy (which will result in automatic removal of this course from the common core course list)	--	1. Sunset decision by CUS; 2. Report to CUCE for information
Common Core Area		
Add an area	Approval of Undergraduate Course Form	1. Review by CRP; 2. Approval by CUCE
Remove an area	Common Core Course Change/Deletion Form	Report to CUCE for information
Change the category under an area	Common Core Course Change/Deletion Form	Report to CUCE for information
School-Sponsored Course (SSC) Designation		
Acquire the SSC designation	School-Sponsored Course Proposal Form (Appendix 8)	1. Review by CRP; 2. Approval by CUCE
Remove the SSC designation	Common Core Course Change/Deletion Form	Report to CUCE for information
Course Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)		
Change a course ILO and/or its contribution to the area ILO	Common Core Course Change/Deletion Form	Report to CUCE for information
Course Code		
Code change but <u>not involving</u> a change in the course level	Undergraduate Course Change/Deletion Form *	Report to CUCE and CUS for information
Code change <u>involving</u> a change in the course level	Undergraduate Course Change/Deletion Form *	1. Review by CRP; 2. Approval by CUCE; 3. Report to CUS for information
Basic Course Information		
Course credit / Course title / Catalog description / Default grading type / Prerequisite / Corequisite / Exclusion / Other enrollment requirements / Co-listing or multi-coding	Undergraduate Course Change/Deletion Form *	Report to CUCE and CUS for information

** This form should be submitted to the CUS Secretariat, which categorizes the proposed changes into major or minor and approves these changes in accordance with its own guidelines. If the changes are related to common core courses, the change request will be forwarded to the UCE Team to arrange for endorsement by the Academic Director (UCE) or the CUCE as appropriate.*

Figure 9: Forms Required and Approval Parties for Various Types of Course Changes or Deletion

5.4 Proposals not approved by the CUCE or CUS will be returned to the course offering unit for consideration of the next step. The proposals may or may not be re-submitted.

5.5 Instructors are expected to deploy teaching activities and assessment strategies they consider as appropriate to deliver the course content and course intended learning outcomes. Approval is not required when changes or updating are made to teaching activities and assessment. They may report these changes at the point of change to the UCE Team for record purpose.

CHAPTER 6 COURSE MONITORING AND REVIEW

PROVISION OF COURSE PLACES

6.1 The Common Core Program (referred to as “the Program” hereafter) is a major component of the undergraduate curriculum. Students are required to take 36 credits in 8 broad common core areas. To ensure that a balanced mix and spread of courses is offered in a term, and that students are given a reasonable number of course choices to select from in these areas, the Undergraduate Core Education (UCE) Team will provide a projected demand for common core course places to the Schools to facilitate the Schools to plan the courses to be offered.

6.2 The UCE Team will collect statistics on the common core places provided and student enrollment for monitoring the overall provision and offering of common core courses, which in turn will inform the future planning of course offerings, help to understand the student enrollment pattern, and monitor students’ progress toward the completion of the common core requirements. These statistics are reported to the Committee on Undergraduate Core Education (CUCE) periodically.

TEACHING AND LEARNING QUALITY

6.3 To assure and enhance the quality of the Common Core Program, regular monitoring of course delivery and outcome standards are carried out. The UCE Team gathers various feedbacks from students and instructors during the year. Course documentations are also collected to support the review of the alignment of course content, pedagogy and assessment with the intended learning outcomes (ILOs) of the common core course and of its associated common core area.

6.4 Major course monitoring activities include the following:

6.4.1 *Student Feedback on their Learning Experience*

Student feedback is an essential element in monitoring the quality of a course as experienced by the learners. Their views are gathered through the following channels:

a) Quantitative Data

i) Student Feedback Questionnaire (SFQ) (course overall mean scores only)

The Student Feedback Questionnaire (SFQ) is administered by the Office of Institutional Research (OIR) for all courses at the end of each term to collect feedback from students on their course learning experience.

The UCE Team collects from OIR the course overall mean scores of the SFQ for the common core courses to get a general overall rating by students about these courses. A summary of the statistics and the observations from the statistics are submitted to the CUCE for review.

The Academic Director (Undergraduate Core Education) may approach individual department head to discuss courses with unusual SFQ scores.

ii) Common Core Questions in SFQ

Apart from the course overall mean scores, additional questions related to the Common Core Program are appended to the SFQ to collect the learner's perspective about the extent the area ILOs is achieved. These questions are developed from the area ILO statements of the respective area ([Appendix 10](#)). There are two main groups of questions:

- Group A Questions, which are intended to find out to what extent the courses could achieve the ILOs for their area, through asking students to indicate the extent to which they have developed the abilities as described in the questions; and
- Group B Questions, which are intended to find out to what extent the courses could arouse students' interest in learning the issues discussed in the course.

iii) Survey on Common Core Courses Conducted as Part of the First Year Experience Survey (FYES)

A set of questions relating to common core courses ([Appendix 11](#)) is incorporated in the First Year Experience Survey (FYES) since 2012-13, which is administered by the OIR in the second half of the Spring term. It aims to collect feedback from the first year undergraduate students on which area of common core courses they are interested in; whether they find the number of course offerings sufficient; what kinds of teaching and learning activities they see as effective; and what they see are the values of taking common core courses.

iv) Survey on Common Core Courses Conducted as Part of the Student Engagement and Satisfaction Questionnaire (SESQ)

Two questions in the FYES relating to students' interest in common core courses (Question 1) and their perceived values of common core courses (Question 3) are also incorporated in the Student Engagement and Satisfaction Questionnaire (SESQ) from 2016-17 onwards. The purpose is to collect feedback from final year undergraduate students, for facilitating the tracking of feedback on these two aspects from the same cohort of students during their study at HKUST.

b) Qualitative Data

i) Student representative in CUCE

Student views and feedback can be reflected through the student representative serving on the CUCE. Through the student member, students can contribute to the discussion and decision-making regarding the curriculum and other teaching and learning matters regarding the Common Core Program.

ii) Student Focus Group

Student Focus Group studies are conducted on an ad-hoc basis based on needs to gather student's views toward their learning experience with common core courses, and their insight or new ideas about specific common core issues. Students are selected mainly from amongst those with year-2 standing or above as they have relatively more experience with common core courses.

6.4.2 *Instructor Teaching Experience*

The commitment and academic expertise of the teaching staff is crucial to the delivery of high quality courses. It is important to learn from instructors their feedback on the experience of developing and teaching common core courses, as well as their assessment of whether their courses have achieved the area ILOs. Noteworthy issues or good practices noted from these feedbacks will be communicated and shared with the Schools and other instructors afterwards.

a) Instructor Self-Review (ISR)

The Instructor Self-Review (ISR) is conducted at the end of each term in the form of an online questionnaire ([Appendix 12](#)). It provides quantitative feedback from instructors on their self-assessment of the extent their courses have achieved the course ILOs and the area ILOs.

It also provides qualitative feedback from instructors through written comments to share their response to student feedback on their course, good practices they identified on teaching and assessment, and suggestions for solving difficulties they have encountered during course teaching.

Information collected from the ISR will facilitate the four-level course review process (see paragraphs 6.6 – 6.10 below for details).

b) Instructor Focus Group

Organized in the form of small groups, the ad-hoc instructor focus group serves as a collegial platform for friendly, mutual sharing among instructors of good teaching practices, for collecting their feedback on the experience in teaching and developing common core courses, and to get to know their needs, expectation and challenges. It is also useful for soliciting ideas and suggestions for achieving the goals and objectives of the Common Core Program.

6.5 Jointly developed by the UCE Team and the Information Technology Services Office (ITSO), the Common Core Course Management System (CMS) serves to collect a wide range of common core statistical data, archive documentation, and produce statistics reports and analysis for informing the program quality and future planning. The UCE Team administers the system and data acquisition, and uses the system to monitor the quality of the Common Core Program. Relevant reports will be shared with Schools and other units in due course.

COURSE REVIEW

6.6 Course review is a four-level internal review process involving instructors, Schools, course review panels (CRPs) and the CUCE for monitoring the effectiveness of common core courses in achieving their course ILOs and their respective area ILOs when they were offered. Instructors provide inputs about the teaching and learning effectiveness in their courses through the instructor self-review process. Schools review the summary reports of the instructors' self-reviews on a biannual basis, and identify, with reference to the "trigger criterion" adopted by the School, courses that call for timely attention and follow up. Schools also undertake in-depth review of common core courses on a 4-year cycle. The CRPs examine the effectiveness of course delivery across schools/units in achieving the

area ILOs, and report to the CUCE issues identified and their recommendations. A brief outline of the course review process is presented in [Figure 10](#).

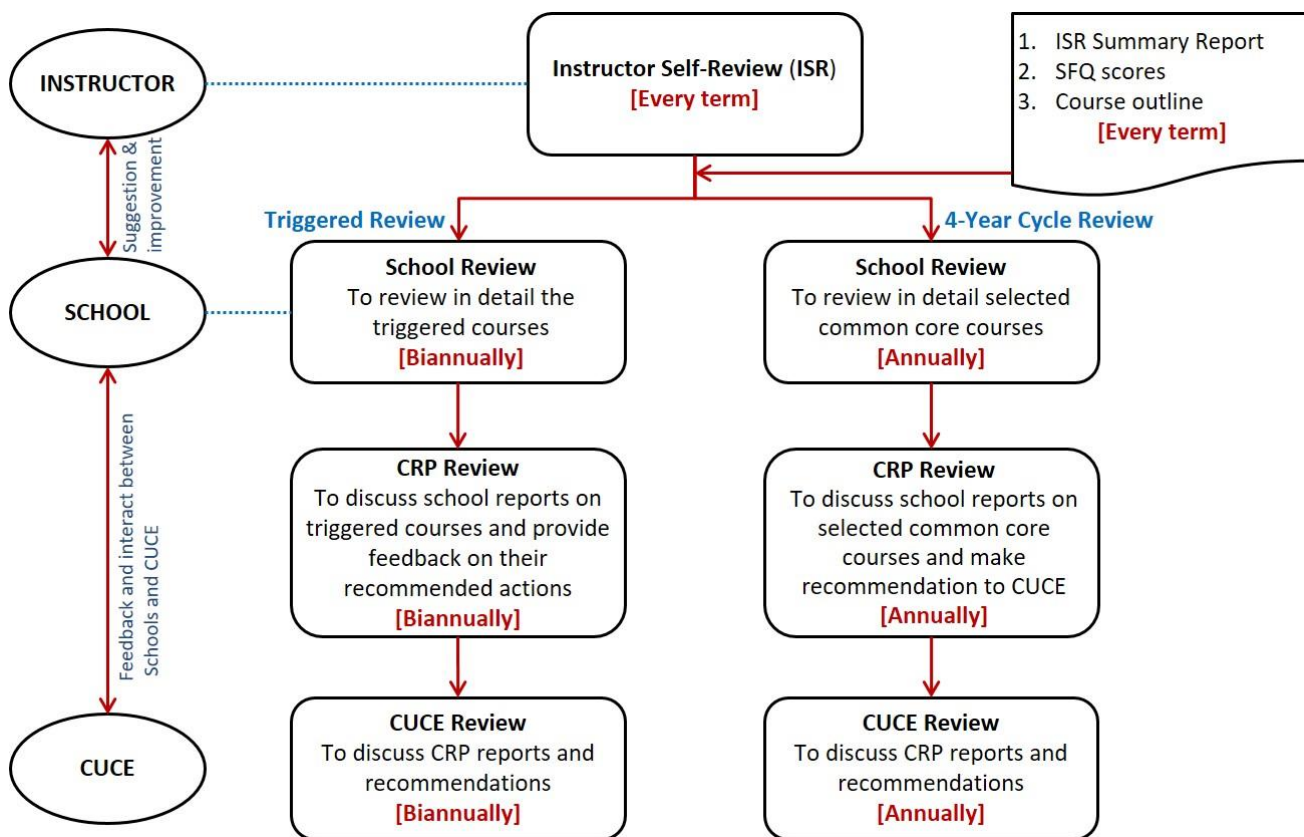


Figure 10: Course Review Process

6.7 Instructor Self-Review (ISR)

- The instructors play a critical role in the delivery of common core courses. The Instructor Self-Review (ISR) offers a platform for instructors to undertake a timely self-reflection on course teaching and learning, to share good practices on teaching and assessment, the challenges faced and proposed solutions, and to explore or suggest ideas for improvements in the next offering.

The ISR ([Appendix 12](#)) is conducted online at the end of each term covering all common core courses offered in the term. All course instructors are asked to indicate their assessment of whether their courses have achieved the course ILOs as stated in the course outline, as well as the ILOs of the common core area in concern. They are also invited to review the student feedback they collected through mid-term survey, end of term SFQ or other means, and suggest actions for improving the course wherever applicable. They will have access to the ISR forms they completed in previous terms.

- Information collected from the ISR are summarized by school and common core area, and made available to the schools, departments, the CRP concerned, and the CUCE to facilitate the course review process for course improvement and enhancement.

6.8 School Reviews

Schools will conduct two types of reviews: the “triggered review” and the “4-year cycle review” through an online course review system. These reviews are primarily based on the summary

report of the instructors' self-reviews, SFQ scores, and the appending course outlines that are routinely collected by Schools every term; as well as other course materials such as major assessment samples which are available on request. To make the School review process more efficient, the 4-year cycle review will be scheduled to synchronize with one of the triggered reviews.

(a) Triggered Review

- (i) The triggered review aims at enhancing the quality of the courses and their delivery, but not for evaluating the performance of the instructor. The main purpose is to identify courses that might need timely attention and follow-up actions after an offering. These courses are identified by means of the “trigger criterion”. Triggered reviews are conducted biannually, with one covering courses offered in the Fall and Winter terms, and another covering courses offered in the Spring and Summer terms.
- (ii) The CUCE adopts SFQ course overall mean score of 3.20 to be the minimum threshold trigger criterion. Schools may set a higher trigger score than 3.20. Common core courses receiving a SFQ course overall mean score below the trigger criterion in a term (3.20 or a higher score set by the School if applicable) will be triggered for review. Information such as course outlines, SFQ scores and ISR reports will be made available to help the reviewers understand the overall performance of the courses.
- (iii) When a course is triggered for review, the School will request the head of the course offering department to discuss the course with the instructor and report the review outcomes to the School. The department head and instructor will work together to review the course teaching, identify what the challenges are, suggest solutions to tackle them, and monitor the implementation of the improvement measures. Schools will coordinate with departments to ensure that issues identified will be addressed, and to facilitate courses to make improvement.
- (iv) The School will report its observations on the triggered course on a standard online form ([Appendix 13](#)), together with recommended actions (if any) with target completion date. Triggered courses will be monitored until their SFQ score has improved to be above the trigger criterion. The guidance notes for conducting the triggered review is given in [Appendix 14](#).

(b) 4-year Cycle Review

- (i) The 4-year cycle review is intended to be a review of the teaching and learning effectiveness of a common core course over a period of time. Each common core course will be reviewed once every 4 years. Schools are expected to review a subset of courses each year. The schedule of courses to be reviewed will be worked out by the UCE Team in consultation with schools.
- (ii) Using the specified template ([Appendix 15](#)), Schools will report to the respective CRP their observations on the courses reviewed, including relevance of course ILOs to the area, the effectiveness of the teaching and learning activities and assessment tasks; highlight good practices; summarize problems or difficulties encountered; and recommend follow-up actions to be completed with a specified timeline. The guidance notes for conducting the 4-year cycle review is given in [Appendix 16](#).

6.9 CRP Review

- (a) Upon receiving the review reports from Schools (both triggered review and 4-year cycle review), the UCE Team forwards the reports to the CRP concerned. The CRP discusses the review outcomes from each school, examines the effectiveness of course delivery across schools/units in achieving the area ILOs, and identifies courses for which improvement is essential to achieve the area ILOs. The CRP may, where deemed necessary, make reference to individual ISR forms and course outlines during the review. For School-Sponsored Courses (SSCs), the CRP also reviews their attainment of the SSC objectives. If these courses could not demonstrate their attainment of the SSC objectives, the CRP may recommend revocation of their SSC designation. A summary of the issues discussed and recommendations will be reported to the CUCE for further discussion.
- (b) To make the CRP review process more efficient, the 4-year cycle review will be scheduled to synchronize with one of the triggered reviews.

6.10 CUCE Review

The CUCE receives and discusses the course review reports from CRPs (both triggered review and 4-year cycle review). The CUCE review focuses on the overall quality of the common core course delivery for all areas, making feedbacks to the Schools its observations and general recommendations for improvement, highlights good practices to be shared by all schools, and ensuring that the recommended actions are followed up by the Schools. For SSCs that could not demonstrate their attainment of the SSC objectives, their SSC designation could be revoked by the CUCE. Schools should incorporate their actions in response to recommendations from the CUCE on their common core cycle review in their annual quality assurance (QA) reports on teaching and learning submitted to the Senate Committee on Teaching and Learning Quality (CTLQ).

REPORTING ON MONITORING ACTIVITIES

6.11 The progress of implementing the quality monitoring activities together with the information collected and the issues identified in the process will be presented to the CUCE and the CTLQ for review.

CHAPTER 7 PROGRAM REVIEW

REVIEW MECHANISM

7.1 Program review plays an important role in sustaining the quality of the Common Core Program (referred to as “the Program” hereafter). The Quality Assurance (QA) Framework delineates the activities to review the Program as a whole. While the Committee on Undergraduate Core Education (CUCE) monitors the teaching and learning quality of the Common Core Program internally through various QA activities, the Advisory Board for the Undergraduate Common Core Program (ABCCP) and the External Review Panel (ERP) provide external inputs for the academic contents, standards, strategic planning and quality related issues.

7.2 Figure 11 below outlines the organizational framework for conducting the internal and external program reviews.

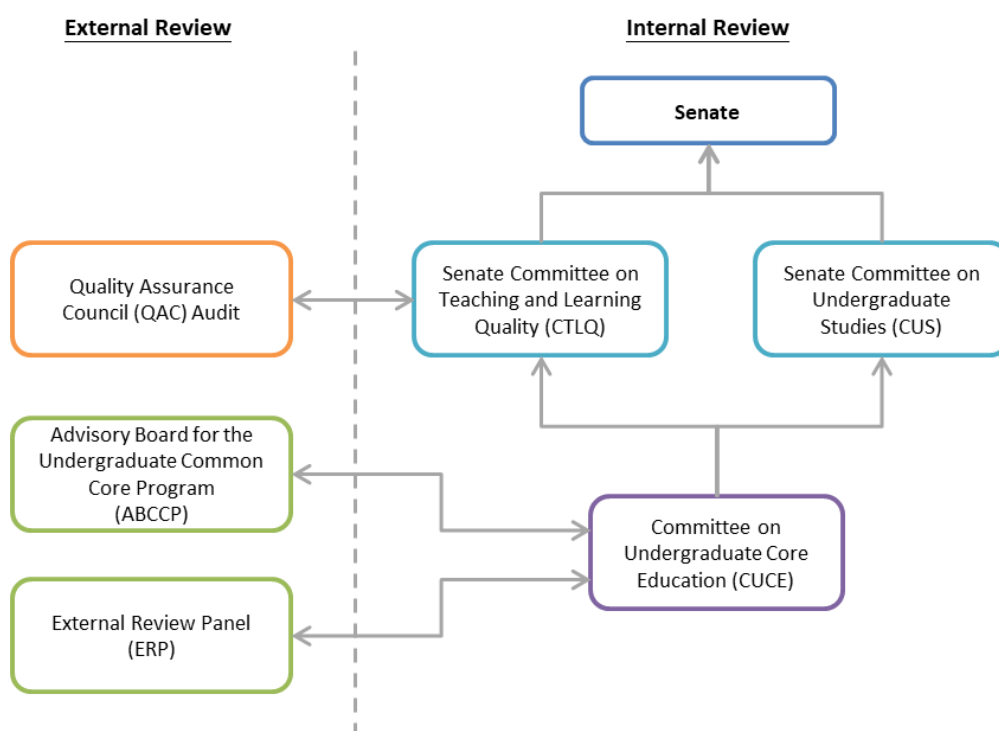


Figure 11: Organizational Framework for Implementing the Program Review

INTERNAL REVIEW

7.3 Three key units are involved in the internal review process: CUCE, CTLQ and CUS.

- Committee on Undergraduate Core Education (CUCE):** As stated in its terms of reference, one of the key roles of the CUCE is to monitor and review the quality of the Common Core Program as a whole. The CUCE reviews the QA arrangements of the Program periodically to identify areas of concern as well as good practices for maintaining and enhancing the quality of the common core courses. Based on this program level review, the CUCE formulates improvement actions and new initiatives for the coming years. The review results will be recorded in an Annual Report to be submitted to the Senate

Committee on Teaching and Learning Quality (CTLQ).

- b) **Senate Committee on Teaching and Learning Quality (CTLQ):** Based on the reports submitted by the Undergraduate Core Education (UCE) Team (as well as by Schools and other academic support units), the CTLQ reports the Quality Assurance Annual Reporting Exercise to the Senate. This annual reporting exercise provides the backbone for the University's monitoring of QA practices and educational quality. This exercise also serves as a reference for improvement in teaching and learning by encouraging a reflective and forward-looking review of programs.
- c) **Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies (CUS):** The CUS provides university-level monitoring of quality and performance relating to undergraduate studies including the Common Core Program. The CUS monitors the work of the CUCE, through receiving from it an annual report which summarizes its work undertaken regarding curriculum development, the QA measures for the Common Core Program and their effectiveness.

EXTERNAL REVIEW

7.4 The CTLQ has stipulated that a broad model for periodic review of undergraduate education with an external element should include the following:

- (a) Production of a ***self-evaluation document*** based on an internal review by those responsible for the educational provision under review, in consultation with the faculty/course instructors;
- (b) Review of the self-evaluation and other relevant documentation by an ***external review panel***;
- (c) A ***visit to the University*** by the external review panel, to meet staff and students, and to observe facilities and learning resources;
- (d) Production of a ***report with input from the external panel***, including confirmation that the curriculum and academic standards meet international benchmarks, and recommendations for enhancement with an action plan; and
- (e) A clear process for oversight of implementation of ***action plans***.

7.5 The Common Core Program follows these five core principles in conducting its external reviews.

7.6 **External Review Panel (ERP)**

- (a) An External Review Panel (ERP) will be established to undertake the external review. In the interim, the Advisory Board for the Undergraduate Common Core Program (ABCCP) will be engaged to undertake QA related work as stipulated in its terms of reference.
- (b) The role of the ERP is to assure the academic standard of the Common Core Program. The Panel includes external academics with experience and expertise in teaching common core courses or general education in tertiary institutions. It will undertake a holistic review of the Program focusing on the design, content, pedagogy and assessment of common core courses, as well as other teaching and learning related issues. The Panel will report to the CUCE its assessment and make recommendations for improvement.

7.7 Advisory Board for the Undergraduate Common Core Program (ABCCP)

The ABCCP is to provide support to the CUCE in evaluating the content and quality of the Common Core Program against external reference points. It will receive and review reports on the Common Core Program from the UCE Team, and advise the CUCE on the strategic development, course planning and academic content of the program in relation to the changing needs of the society.

7.8 Quality Assurance Council (QAC) Audit Panel

The QAC is established under the aegis of the University Grants Committee (UGC) which serves to assist the UGC in assuring the quality of programs offered by UGC-funded institutions at first-degree level and above. The QAC Audit is a periodic external QA process that involves independent peer review by senior academics in the higher education sector. It reviews the QA arrangements in place within the institutions for assuring and enhancing the quality and effectiveness of their provision. As one of the UGC-funded institutions in Hong Kong, the HKUST will be reviewed by the Audit Panel of the QAC. The Common Core Program, as part of the undergraduate curriculum, will be covered in the audit.

CHAPTER 8 TEACHING AND LEARNING SUPPORT

8.1 Quality teaching and learning support is conducive to effective course delivery and sustaining the academic quality of a course. Key teaching and learning support activities are listed below.

TEACHING SUPPORT

Faculty Briefing

8.2 As part of the New Faculty Orientation program organized by Center for Education Innovation (CEI), talks will be included to share with new faculty the goals of the Common Core Program (referred to as “the Program” hereafter) and the expectations of university education. These talks also emphasize the important role of the faculty in creating a positive learning environment for students, and the support available to faculty to take on this role. Faculty orientations are normally conducted in September and January each year.

Sharing of Teaching Experience and Instructor Focus Group

8.3 The Common Core Seminar Series organized by the CEI provides a platform for common core teachers to exchange and share experience on common core teaching, and to inspire their design of pedagogies and assessment strategies through learning about the successful or good practices from their peers.

8.4 Instructors are invited to conduct a self-assessment and reflection at the end of each term through the Instructor Self-Review (ISR) so as to reflect on their strengths and areas for improvement in the teaching process, and consider plans for improvement. Good practices and experiences gained from their teaching would be summarized and shared with the Committee on Undergraduate Core Education (CUCE), and with other instructors, where appropriate.

8.5 Through the Instructor Focus Group studies, instructors share their teaching experience and views on the arrangements for further enhancement of the Common Core Program. It is also a platform to foster peer support among common core instructors.

Funding Support Opportunities

8.6 The University Grants Committee (UGC) teaching development grant (TDG) is available to support teaching initiatives that enrich teaching, or implement innovative ideas that enhance student learning. At HKUST, the TDG funding is managed by the CEI. Instructors are encouraged to apply for TDG funding to support their development of new pedagogies.

Recognizing Teaching Excellence in Common Core Courses

8.7 The Common Core Teaching Excellence Award (re-developed from the Common Core Course Excellence Award) is established in 2016 to recognize outstanding common core course instructors who have made substantial contribution to the design and/or the teaching of exemplary common core courses, and to promote these courses to the students in the University community.

8.8 Any instructor or team of instructors who has designed and/or taught a common core course or common core courses within the designated period is eligible to be nominated for the award. Each instructor or team of instructors can only be nominated once in an award year. Nominations are

reviewed based on three broad criteria:

- (a) Excellence in course design (including the development of a new course, or the refinement or redevelopment of an existing course) and teaching innovation;
- (b) Delivery of an exemplary common core course; and
- (c) Innovative assessment of student learning.

8.9 One Award and up to a maximum of three Honorary Mentions will be recommended to the CUCE for confirmation after a thorough review of each nomination by a Selection Committee. The award-winning instructor or team of instructors will be invited to share their experiences with other instructors.

8.10 Details of the award criteria and related arrangements are presented in [Appendix 17](#).

LEARNING SUPPORT

Student Advising

8.11 The Undergraduate Core Education (UCE) Team coordinates with the Schools to incorporate common core seminars as part of their student orientation or academic advising programs to provide first-year students at the commencement of each academic year with the necessary information about the Common Core Program and the requirements. The goals, objectives, values and philosophy of the Program are highlighted; the purpose of university education and the HKUST's desired graduate attributes are also discussed.

University Common Core Program Website

8.12 The University Common Core Program website is developed to provide a one-stop information portal about the Common Core Program for the university community. It provides relevant academic and administrative information, including common core course lists for each common core area, and activities organized by the UCE Team.

Common Core Facebook Page

8.13 A Common Core Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/HKUSTCommonCore/>) is developed and used as a platform to promote the common core philosophy and goals to students, arouse their interest in common core courses and help them select courses. It is also a platform to share the feedback from instructors and students on common core courses, and provide updates on the development of the Common Core Program.

Common Core Course Review Panels

Five Course Review Panels (CRPs) are established by the Committee on Undergraduate Core Education (CUCE) to serve the respective common core area(s) as follows:

CRP	To Serve Common Core Areas
1	Humanities (H), Arts (A)
2	Social Analysis (SA)
3	Science (S), Technology (T)
4	English Communication (E-Comm), Chinese Communication (C-Comm)
5	Critical Thinking and Data Literacy (CTDL), Habits, Mindsets, and Wellness (HMW), Undergraduate experiential Opportunities Programs (UxOP)

Terms of reference

The Course Review Panel (CRP) shall decide its own meeting with a view to

1. Undertaking in-depth review of common core proposals in their respective area and making recommendations to the Committee on Undergraduate Core Education (CUCE) for approval;
2. Conducting thorough review on the migration of existing common core courses to the new framework of the Common Core Program and making recommendations to the CUCE for approval; and
3. Reviewing the delivery of common core courses in terms of the fulfillment of their intended learning outcomes (ILOs), their desired competencies, and the mappings among these course ILOs, area ILOs and competencies, and reporting to the CUCE for reference and further action.

Conduct of Business

The CRP is not an approval body. Its main role is to make recommendation to the CUCE on courses that could serve the ILOs and competencies of the common core area in concern, and to advise the CUCE on the delivery of common core course ILOs. Recommendations are to be made based on a consensus approach. When a consensus could not be reached, the CRP will report the different views to the CUCE for consideration.

Membership

Convenor:

A CUCE member whose expertise is outside the CRP's designated area(s), to be invited by the CUCE Secretary to serve

Members:

Three representatives for CRP 1 to 4 and six representatives for CRP 5 to be nominated by Schools/AIS as shown in the table below. These representatives serve as the communication channel between the respective CRP and their School/AIS. Those nominated by the course proposing School/AIS have the role of presenting the course proposals, answering questions arising from the CRP meeting, communicating comments from the CRP and following up with a response to CRP comments. Course proposers may also join the meeting to facilitate the discussion, if needed.

CRP	Common Core Areas	Convenor	Members Nominated by	
			Course Proposing School/AIS	Other School/AIS
1	H + A	An out-of-field CUCE Member	SHSS(HUMA)	SSCI / SENG / SBM / AIS
2	SA		SBM + SHSS(SOSC) + AIS	--
3	S + T		SSCI + SENG + AIS	--
4	E-Comm + C-Comm		SHSS(CLE) + SHSS(HUMA)	SSCI / SENG / SBM / AIS
5	CTDL + HMW + UxOP		SSCI + SENG + SBM + SHSS(HUMA) + SHSS(SOSC) + AIS	--

Term:

Two years, renewable

List of Members on the Course Review Panels (CRPs) (As of 1 January 2025)

CRP 1a: For the Humanities (H) and Arts (A) Common Core Areas	
Convenor:	Professor Arthur LAU, Academy of Interdisciplinary Studies
Members:	<i>Nominated by the course proposing school</i> Professor Lawrence ZHANG, Division of Humanities <i>Nominated by other school</i> Professor Jinqing HUANG, School of Science Professor Jing TAN, School of Business and Management
CRP 1b: For the Humanities (H) and Arts (A) Common Core Areas	
Convenor:	Vacant
Members:	<i>Nominated by the course proposing school</i> Dr Isaac DROSCHA, Division of Humanities <i>Nominated by other school</i> Professor Xuan QIU, School of Engineering Professor Naubahar SHARIF, Academy of Interdisciplinary Studies
CRP 2: For the Social Analysis (SA) Common Core Area	
Convenor:	Professor Bradley FOREMAN, School of Science
Members:	<i>Nominated by the course proposing school</i> Professor Ronald LAU, School of Business and Management Professor Kevin TAM, Division of Social Science Professor Yatang LIN, Academy of Interdisciplinary Studies
CRP 3: For the Science (S) and Technology (T) Common Core Areas	
Convenor:	Professor Jeevan JAISINGH, School of Business and Management
Members:	<i>Nominated by the course proposing school</i> Professor Bradley FOREMAN, School of Science Professor Kenneth LEUNG, School of Engineering Professor Xiaoming SHI, Academy of Interdisciplinary Studies
CRP 4: For the English Communication (E-Comm) and Chinese Communication (C-Comm) Common Core Areas	
Convenor:	Professor Agnes KU, Division of Social Science
Members:	<i>Nominated by the course proposing school</i> Professor Simon WONG, Division of Humanities Ms Jessie LAM, Center for Language Education <i>Nominated by other school</i> Professor Hong TAO, School of Engineering
CRP 5: For the Critical Thinking and Data Literacy (CTDL), Habits, Mindsets, and Wellness (HMW) and Undergraduate experiential Opportunities Programs (UxOP) Common Core Areas	
Convenor:	Vacant
Members:	<i>Nominated by the course proposing school</i> Professor Pak Wo LEUNG, School of Science Professor Marshal LIU, School of Engineering Professor Jia LIU, School of Business and Management Professor Siu Woo CHEUNG, Division of Humanities Professor Julian Mcallister GROVES, Division of Social Science Professor Arthur LAU, Academy of Interdisciplinary Studies

Committee on Undergraduate Core Education

Terms of reference

1. To advise and make recommendations to the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies on policies and regulations, and to monitor and review procedures, quality and performance relating to the university core curriculum of undergraduate degree programs, including, but not limited to:
 - (a) developing policies and regulations relating to the university core curriculum of undergraduate degree programs;
 - (b) developing guiding principles, criteria and learning outcomes for common core courses consistent with the objectives of the university core curriculum;
 - (c) reviewing and approving courses for inclusion in the University Common Core Program;
 - (d) coordinating and providing an overview of the offering of courses and activities for the university core curriculum;
 - (e) monitoring and reviewing periodically the quality of common core courses and the University Common Core Program under a quality assurance framework; and
 - (f) recommending implementation and other support for the university core curriculum.
2. To oversee and recommend implementation of the University Common Core Program during the transition period from the existing 36-credit distributional framework to the new 30-credit scaffolding framework.

Powers

1. To co-opt such additional voting members as may be required but not exceeding one-third of formal membership of the Committee.
2. To form any working groups as considered necessary.

Membership

Chair:

Nominated by the Provost and appointed by the Chair of the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies

- Professor Garvin Percy DIAS

Member and Secretary:

Academic Director (Undergraduate Core Education), *ex officio*

- Professor Sai Lok NAM

Members:

1. One representative from each of the Schools of Science, Engineering, and Business and Management to be nominated by the Deans and appointed by the Chair of the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies
 - Professor Bradley FOREMAN, School of Science
 - Professor Raymond WONG, School of Engineering
 - Professor Jeevan JAISINGH, School of Business & Management
2. One representative from each of the two Divisions of the School of Humanities and Social Science to be nominated by the Dean of Humanities and Social Science and appointed by the Chair of the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies
 - Dr Isaac DROSCHA, Division of Humanities
 - Professor Agnes KU, Division of Social Science
3. One representative from the Center for Language Education to be nominated by the Dean of Humanities and Social Science and appointed by the Chair of the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies
 - Ms Jessie LAM

4. One representative from the Academy of Interdisciplinary Studies to be nominated by the Director of the Academy of Interdisciplinary Studies and appointed by the Chair of the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies
 - Professor Arthur LAU
5. One non-first-year undergraduate student representative to be nominated by the relevant student body and appointed by the Chair of the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies
 - Mr Ching Yuen CHAN
6. One member of the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies appointed by the Chair of the Senate Committee on Undergraduate Studies
 - Professor Frederick FONG

Resource Persons:

1. Associate Provost (T&L)
 - Professor Jimmy FUNG
2. Dean of Students
 - Professor Pak Wo LEUNG
3. Academic Registrar
 - Mr James PRINCE

Term:

For the student member, one year, renewable
For others, two years, renewable

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Advisory Board for the Undergraduate Common Core Program

The Advisory Board comprises a panel of external experts from the academic sector and the community to provide support and counsel to the Committee on Undergraduate Core Education (CUCE) on issues central to the Undergraduate Common Core Program, including its academic content, strategy for future development, and quality related issues.

Terms of reference

The Board shall normally meet once a year with a view to

1. Receiving and reviewing reports on the common core, recommending to the CUCE improvement in specific areas, and highlighting good practices.
2. Evaluating the quality of the common core program against external reference points.
3. Advising strategies for the development of the common core program.

Membership

Chair:

To be selected among the members by themselves

Members:

- (a) Not more than four community leaders or representatives from international or local organizations
- (b) Three external academic faculty, including at least one from local and one from overseas university, who are actively engaged in general education or liberal arts education

All members are appointed by the Provost, upon recommendation of the Chair of the Committee on Undergraduate Core Education.

Secretary:

Academic Director (Undergraduate Core Education), *ex officio*

Observers:

- (a) Chair of the Committee on Undergraduate Core Education
- (b) The Board may invite other persons to attend a meeting as observers

Term:

Three years, renewable

Guideline on Vetting Studio Arts Courses

The Arts Curriculum Panel of the Division of Humanities will refer to the following criteria for the amount of work considered appropriate for 1-credit studio arts (“HART”) courses:

- (a) Studio session should be the appropriate class format for hands-on HART courses, in which lecturing, demonstration and student hands-on practice are interwoven together in an interactive manner.
- (b) Lecture will normally take up roughly 25% of the class time for a 2-hour studio session. Some course assignments are to be done in-class and students will on average spend about 1 to 1.5 hours per week outside class on their study.
- (c) The content of these courses should be at general, introductory level, carrying an academic component of around 25% at least. Given an emphasis on the practice of the art, these courses should refrain from being assessed by a written final examination.

If these courses are to be taught by visiting/part-time instructors, their CVs or portfolios should be submitted together with course proposals for the Panel’s review. The Panel will look at the following items in their CVs:

- (a) The instructor should have a MA/MFA degree or at least 5 years of professional training.
- (b) The instructor should have at least 5 years of working experience in the profession.
- (c) The instructor should have at least 3-5 years of classroom teaching experience including 1-2 years at degree level.
- (d) The instructor should have proven records of professional recognition, for instance important awards, locally or internationally recognized publications, performances or exhibitions.

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School-Sponsored Course Selection Criteria Illustrated with Examples of Practices

The table below gives some examples of practices to help illustrate the selection criteria for SSCs. They may not cover all possible practices; hence instructors are most welcome to develop and adopt their own practices to suit the need of their courses.

Examples of Practices for Illustrating the SSC Selection Criteria	
SSC Criterion 1: Exemplifying the attainment of the Common Core goals in their course design, content, pedagogy and delivery	
<i>As the Common Core has three goals, examples of practices are provided in respect of each goal.</i>	
(a)	Broadening horizons: To allow students to gain intellectual breadth and an appreciation of intellectual achievements across and beyond the main academic disciplines of their studies - Engage in designing and teaching course materials to facilitate students to master academic knowledge across and beyond the main academic disciplines: science and technology, social studies, and arts and humanities; - Instill knowledge on the human achievements in the arts and culture, the social structures and forms, and the significance of scientific discovery and technical accomplishments; - Develop students' appreciation of the relevance of the subject matters to the betterment of human life and how these subject matters make an impact on individual, societal or global levels.
(b)	A passion for learning: To spark students' passion for learning and enhance their higher order intellectual abilities: analysis and evaluation; judgment and critical thinking; defining and solving problems - Use of teaching and learning pedagogies to stimulate students to think for themselves, taking their own routes through the materials, to conduct self-directed research and inquiry, and to communicate their discoveries, explanations and narratives to others; - Use specific everyday examples to illustrate the concepts and theories to help students feel personally connected to what are being taught and how they can apply the material in real life; - Foster students' development of higher-order thinking skills through activities that require them to form and communicate judgments, to apply theories and concepts to unfamiliar situations, or to analyze cases and solve problems; - Use students' interests and fascinations as natural motivators to stimulate their curiosity and interest about the subject, and motivate them to learn actively and to carry out their own scientific investigations.
(c)	A lifelong pursuit of excellence: To provide a foundation for students' life-long development through personal growth, preparation for future careers and opportunities to make contributions to the community - Foster students' development of skills in the areas of language and communication, quantitative reasoning and computer literacy; - Develop students' attributes including social adaptability, willingness to accept challenges, and ability to work independently and in collaboration; - Cultivate a sense of responsibility in students so that they are willing to accept and bear the consequences of their own acts, and help them distinguish right from wrong, correct mistakes and mend their ways, and develop their attitude for self-directed learning; - Strengthen students' ability to integrate and apply knowledge and skills, and nurture their creativity, collaboration and problem-solving skills, with a view to fostering their innovation and entrepreneurial spirit; - Support students to build a solid foundation for lifelong learning and whole-person development and to adopt appropriate strategies to manage their lives, contribute to the community, and live up to the expectations that society places on its education citizens.

SSC Criterion 2: Supporting the attainment of the desired attributes for HKUST graduate, ABC LIVE

Of the seven attributes, Academic excellence (A), Broad-based education (B) and Competencies and capacity building (C) are expected to be achieved mainly through major programs or the general common core courses. While the Common Core collectively should serve to attain all the remaining four attributes i.e. LIVE, individual SSC should address at least one of these four attributes. Examples of practices are provided in respect of each attribute.

(L) Leadership and teamwork: A capacity for leadership and teamwork, including the ability to motivate others, to be responsible and reliable, and to give and take direction and constructive criticism

- Promote students' self-reflection on their own real world experiences of being led – and of leading – to help them develop their own unique strengths and gain active experience of cooperation and team management;
- Encourage students to remain open-minded, respect others' views, and collaborate and share ideas with others readily;
- Support student mentoring or peer-assisted instruction, where senior students work with their juniors to overcome problems and enhance learning;
- Promote teamwork that requires students from different backgrounds and disciplines to carry out tasks together to open up different angles on issues.

(I) International outlook: An international outlook, and an appreciation of cultural diversity

- Engage in designing and teaching course materials containing multiple cultures and values to enable students to develop their global perspectives and gain an appreciation of divergent cultural norms or views;
- Provide opportunities for students to directly contrast different value systems and ethical contexts;
- Facilitate students' understanding of the connection between people from diverse cultures; awareness of global issues and how their own behavior affects and is affected by larger world patterns; and insights into alternative worldviews.

(V) Vision and an orientation to the future: Adaptability and flexibility, a passion for learning, the ability to develop clear, forward-looking goals, and the self-direction and discipline to achieve these goals

- Support students to create their learning journal to develop valuable self-reflective and cognitive skills;
- Provide opportunities for students to cultivate positive work attitude and values, understand their own interests, abilities and orientations, build their self-confidence, and set their academic/career goals by flexibly connecting the contents of relevant subjects;
- Enable students to set goals, devise a plan to reach them and monitor progress toward their achievement;
- Foster students' understanding of how to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.

(E) Ethical standards and compassion (E): Respect for others and high standards of personal integrity. Compassion and a readiness to contribute to the community

- Communicate with students at the commencement of the term and reinforce at every stage of their academic work the value placed by HKUST on academic honesty and personal integrity;
- Incorporate statements encouraging ethical behaviors in syllabi and stress the link between ethical behaviors and achieving the learning objectives;
- Focus on the intellectual tools and understandings necessary for reasoning through ethical issues and problems in an insightful manner;
- Support students to develop as responsible, ethical and compassionate citizens and motivate them to influence the community with this spirit.

SSC Criterion 3: Transcending disciplinary areas

- Bring together multiple perspectives from diverse disciplines or involve participation from instructors in different disciplines/ departments/ schools to design and develop a shared interdisciplinary vision for the course;
- Develop learning experiences that are relevant to students from different disciplines;
- Set tasks for students to look at challenges from a collaborative point of view, allowing them solve problems using ideas from more than one field;
- Support students to apply the knowledge from different academic disciplines to solve real-world problems.

Guideline on the Level of the Courses to be Included in the Common Core

[Approved by the Committee on Undergraduate Core Education on 14 October 2015]

Inclusion of 1000/2000/3000-level Courses in the Common Core

1. One of the objectives of common core courses is to broaden students' horizons; thus they should not have a prerequisite and be open to all students. Common Core courses should generally be at 1000-level. 2000-level courses may be included in the Common Core and an explanation for the need is required.
2. Approval of the Committee on Undergraduate Core Education (CUCE) is required if a 3000-level course is to be included in the Common Core. The approval will be based on an academic justification provided by the course offering unit to demonstrate its relevance to the Common Core program.
3. 4000-level courses cannot be included in the Common Core.

General Considerations for 2000/3000-level Common Core Courses

4. Course proposers may include a reference to the following in preparing the academic justification that explains the request for including a 2000/3000-level courses in the Common Core:
 - (a) The 2000/3000-level course should arouse students' interest such that they may be motivated to continue study in the subject on their own or to pursue further study at higher level in future.
 - (b) These courses should provide a broad introduction, rather than immediately focusing on specialized topics or in-depth study of the subject.
 - (c) Where the courses come to demand students of ability to compare and analyze, the materials, the skills and assessments required ought to be set at an appropriate level that takes into consideration the academic background and preparedness of the students, the majority of whom are high school graduates with 12 years of schooling.

Provision of Common Core Course Places at Various Levels

5. To ensure that the Common Core Program would offer sufficient course places at 1000 or 2000 level, such that no student should be forced to take 3000-level courses if they do not feel comfortable doing so, the number of common core course places offered at 3000-level in each term and each area should not exceed 10% of the total course places offered for that area.
6. Statistics on the number of courses, course places offered and student enrollment in various course levels will be collected regularly and reported to the CUCE. The Undergraduate Core Education (UCE) Team, Academy of Interdisciplinary Studies* will work with Schools closely to prepare the statistics.

** The office name was updated following the re-organization of the UCE Team from under the Academic Registry to the Center for Education Innovation (in November 2017), and subsequently to the Interdisciplinary Programs Office (IPO) (in July 2021; IPO was renamed to the Academy of Interdisciplinary Studies on 1 July 2023).*

**Guideline on Using Chinese as the Teaching Medium
in H&SS Common Core Courses**

[Approved by the Committee on Undergraduate Core Education on 18 June 2015]

Senate Policy on the Medium of Instruction

1. The Academic Regulation stipulates that “unless otherwise approved by the Senate for a specific course or program of study, English is the medium of instruction and assessment at the University.” (<http://publish.ust.hk/acadreg/ugreg/index.html>).
2. The Senate has delegated its authority (in June 1998 and April 2002) to the School of Humanities and Social Science (SHSS) to use Chinese language as the teaching medium in H&SS courses related to the area of Chinese studies; and Chinese reading materials may be included in H&SS courses that deal with Chinese subject matters. Extracts from the confirmed minutes of the 39th and 60th Senate meetings held in June 1998 and April 2002 are presented in the Annex as reference.

CUCE Considerations in Establishing the Guideline

3. During the review of common core courses, it was noted that an increasing number of HUMA courses were approved to be taught in Putonghua or Cantonese, and some to use Chinese reading materials. The Committee on Undergraduate Core Education (CUCE) was concerned that this would limit the provision of HUMA common core courses taught in English to meet the demand from students of non-Chinese backgrounds, mainly international or exchange students.
4. On the other hand, the CUCE also understood that in consideration of the subject content to be covered, Chinese needs to be used as the teaching medium in some of these courses. Besides, the SHSS undertakes to contribute to enhancing the Chinese proficiency for students; hence the School needs to ensure that there is adequate number of courses taught in Chinese to meet the demand.

CUCE Guideline on Using Chinese as the Teaching Medium in H&SS Common Core Courses

5. While noting the University policy that English is the language of instruction in all formal instructional activities, and acknowledging that the SHSS was delegated the authority by the Senate to approve the use of Chinese as the teaching medium in H&SS courses related to Chinese studies, the CUCE adopts the following guideline to ensure a good provision of common core courses, particularly HUMA courses, that are taught in English for non-Chinese speaking students:
 - a) The SHSS will ensure that at least 70% of all HUMA common core courses as well as course places offered in each term are to be taught in English. The use of Chinese as the teaching medium will be considered only when the subject content makes this necessary.

- b) As regards school-sponsored courses (SSCs), the SHSS will also ensure that at least 70% of the SSC course places offered in the term are to be taught in English.
- c) When there are courses that must be delivered in Chinese, the SHSS will try its very best to offer courses of similar academic content in English whenever possible to meet the needs and demand of non-Chinese speaking students.
- d) The specific Chinese language to be used (Putonghua or Cantonese) should be indicated for each course.

6. Statistics on the number of courses, course places offered and student enrollment in H&SS common core courses taught in Chinese will be collected regularly and reported to the CUCE. The Undergraduate Core Education (UCE) Team, Academy of Interdisciplinary Studies* will work with the SHSS closely to prepare the statistics.

** The office name was updated following the re-organization of the UCE Team from under the Academic Registry to the Center for Education Innovation (in November 2017), and subsequently to the Interdisciplinary Programs Office (IPO) (in July 2021; IPO was renamed to the Academy of Interdisciplinary Studies on 1 July 2023).*

Annex: Extracts from confirmed minutes of Senate meetings:

- (A) 39th meeting held in June 1998 (*paper ref: SN39/48/98*)
- (B) 60th meeting held in April 2002 (*paper ref: SN60/11/2002*)

(A) Extracts from Confirmed Minutes of the 39th Senate Meeting held on 9 June 1998

**Proposal to Use Chinese Language as a Teaching Medium for HSS Courses
(Paper SN39/48/98)**

{Submitted by the School of Humanities and Social Science.}

28. The paper, presented by the Dean of Humanities and Social Science (HSS), sought approval to use Chinese language as a teaching medium for HSS courses related to the area of Chinese studies. It was emphasized that:

- (a) the School of HSS does not have the intention to change the University's policy on instructional medium;
- (b) the School agrees that HKUST graduates must have a good command of both English and Chinese in order to compete successfully in their career and advanced study;
- (c) the proposal is intended mainly to enable students to cope more effectively with courses the contents of which are related to Chinese studies; and
- (d) an approving mechanism will be established in the School to ensure that all faculty requests for the use of Chinese in class are fully reviewed and justified.

Summarized comments made by the CPS/CUS members on this subject were distributed at the meeting for Members' reference.

29. It was moved and seconded that the proposal be approved. While there was clear support, discussions focused mainly on the implementation and consequences of change. It was agreed that:

- (a) for the benefit of English speaking students, Chinese courses in English should still be available;
- (b) given the approving mechanism as proposed, it should not be necessary to involve the CPS or CUS in the process;
- (c) the School of HSS should submit, for each semester, to the CUS/CPS and the Senate as well, a list of courses that adopt Chinese language as the teaching medium. This should also be specified in the Academic Calendar;
- (d) the CPS and CUS should review the policy after two years of operation and report back to the Senate.

30. The proposal was carried.

DHSS

(B) Extracts from Confirmed Minutes of the 60th Senate Meeting held on 10 April 2002

Review of the Policy Governing the Approval of H&SS Courses Using Chinese Language as the Medium of Teaching (Paper SN60/11/2002)

{Submitted jointly by the Committee on Undergraduate Studies (CUS) and the Committee on Postgraduate Studies (CPS).}

7. At the 39th meeting held on 9 June 1998, the Senate had delegated authority to the School of Humanities and Social Science (H&SS) to approve H&SS courses that were related to the area of Chinese studies to use Chinese language as the medium of teaching. CUS and CPS had also been requested by the Senate to review the policy after two years of operation.

8. CUS and CPS had recently conducted a thorough review of the policy. Both Committees concluded that the current policy and procedures governing the approval of H&SS courses using Chinese language as the medium of teaching had been implemented smoothly. The two Committees hence jointly recommended the following to the Senate:

“To continue implementing the policy and procedures governing the approval of H&SS courses using Chinese language as the medium of teaching as are, that is, the School of H&SS be allowed to consider and approve courses at both the undergraduate and postgraduate levels taught in Chinese and that the School make a report to CUS and CPS on an annual basis. CUS and CPS will further review the policy and procedures in Spring 2003-04 and report to the Senate.”

9. It was so moved and seconded.

10. Professor TING Pang-Hsin, Dean of H&SS, made the following points:

- (a) Non-Chinese speaking students in the University constituted a relatively small proportion (less than 1%) of the total student population. Among the course offerings in H&SS, 50% in Humanities and 100% in Social Science were taught in English and were viable choices to them. There would be little doubt that the curricular needs of the English speaking students were well protected.
- (b) Faculty members in H&SS were fully aware of the University's policy of adopting English as the official medium of classroom instruction and the University's goal to internationalise its student population through increasing the number of overseas students. The choice of the instructional language was always based upon the nature and emphasis of the instruction. The selection had never been an arbitrary decision or a decision based upon convenience.
- (c) The School had established a strict mechanism for approving each request for using Chinese as the teaching medium. Procedurally, it started with a full review by the Undergraduate/Postgraduate Committee and the Head at the Divisional level and also by the Dean in consultation with the senior academic management at the School's Dean-Heads' Meetings.

- (d) In view of the well-established and fully-qualified faculty team of the School of H&SS, the University should put faith in their judgement in selecting the right materials and teaching medium for individual courses.

To avoid unnecessary paper-work and possible damage to the morale of colleagues in the School of H&SS, Professor Ting proposed the following amendment to the original recommendation from CUS and CPS:

“To continue implementing the policy and procedures governing the approval of H&SS courses using Chinese language as the medium of teaching as are, that is, the School of H&SS be allowed to consider and approve courses at both the undergraduate and postgraduate levels taught in Chinese and that the School make a report to the Senate on an annual basis.”

11. The amendment was moved and seconded.
12. Members expressed strong support of Professor Ting’s view amid appreciation of the achievements of his School, especially in China studies. Whilst there was no disagreement that the subjects of Chinese literature, Chinese history, Chinese philosophy etc. are best taught in Chinese, discussion focused on whether the School should submit its review report annually to CUS and CPS (which is the normal reporting relationship), or to the Senate direct.
13. Upon voting, the proposed amendment by Professor Ting was passed.
14. The amended motion was subsequently voted and carried.

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School-Sponsored Course Proposal Form

Note: Background information about school-sponsored courses can be found [here](#).

Part A: Particulars of the Common Core Course

1. Course Code:			
2. Full Title:			
3. Course Credits:			
4. Year effective as a common core course:	Academic Year		Term
5. Latest course offering:	Academic Year		Term
6. To be effective as an SSC from:	Academic Year		Term
7. Common Core Area (Check the area(s) and the associated area ILO(s) that this course will contribute to):			
☐ Humanities			
	☐ H1	Comprehend and narrate human phenomena from the perspectives of humanities disciplines.	
	☐ H2	Appreciate and articulate diverse human values, feelings, reason and creativity in various forms of expression.	
☐ Social Analysis			
	☐ SA1	Analyze key societal and behavioral issues by applying relevant social scientific approaches in different contexts.	
	☐ SA2	Communicate a concern about key societal issues as responsible citizens.	
☐ Science and Technology			
	☐ ST1	Comprehend and apply the basic principles of science and methods of scientific inquiry.	
	☐ ST2	Evaluate the social and philosophical implications of scientific discoveries and technological development.	

Part B: Instructor / Course Coordinator

	Name	Department	Position
☐ Coordinator			
☐ Instructor			

Part C: Alignment with the SSC Selection Criteria

Please explain, with reference to previous course teaching experience and evidence provided in this proposal form, how this course has aligned with the SSC selection criteria in its course design, content, pedagogy and delivery, and assessment. [Examples of practices for illustrating the selection criteria can be found [here](#).]

SSC Selection Criterion 1: Exemplifying the attainment of the Common Core goals

- (a) **Broadening horizons:** to allow students to gain intellectual breadth and an appreciation of intellectual achievements across and beyond the main academic disciplines of their studies

- (b) **A passion for learning:** to spark students' passion for learning and enhance their higher order intellectual abilities: analysis and evaluation; judgment and critical thinking; defining and solving problems

- (c) **A lifelong pursuit of excellence:** to provide a foundation for students' life-long development through personal growth, preparation for future careers and opportunities to make contributions to the community

SSC Selection Criterion 2: Supporting the attainment of the desired attributes for HKUST graduate, ABC LIVE

Individual SSC is expected to address at least one of the following four graduate attributes. Check the appropriate box(es) below to indicate the attribute(s) this course has served to achieve.

- ☐ **(L) Leadership and teamwork:** A capacity for leadership and teamwork, including the ability to motivate others, to be responsible and reliable, and to give and take direction and constructive criticism

- ☐ **(I) International outlook:** An international outlook, and an appreciation of cultural diversity

- ☐ **(V) Vision and an orientation to the future:** Adaptability and flexibility, a passion for learning, the ability to develop clear, forward-looking goals, and the self-direction and discipline to achieve these goals

- ☐ **(E) Ethical standards and compassion:** Respect for others and high standards of personal integrity. Compassion and a readiness to contribute to the community

SSC Selection Criterion 3: Transcending disciplinary areas

Part D: Endorsement

Department (Please specify)	Name of DH or Designee	Signature	Date
School/AIS (Please specify)	Name of Dean or Designee	Signature	Date

Please send the completed Proposal Form and supporting documents to Undergraduate Core Education Team, Academy of Interdisciplinary Studies. The supporting documents should include, but not limited to, course outlines, assessment samples, student evaluation, and quality assurance activities adopted for ensuring the continued attainment of the SSC objectives. For enquiry, please call 2358 5089 or email to uceo@ust.hk.

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Common Core Course Change/Deletion

Effective: _____
(Term, Academic year)

Course Code: _____ Title: _____

Current Common Core Area in the 36-credit program framework: (Please tick all relevant boxes)

- ☐ Humanities (SSC: ☐ Yes ☐ No)
 ☐ Social Analysis (SSC: ☐ Yes ☐ No)
 ☐ Science and Technology (SSC: ☐ Yes ☐ No)
 ☐ Arts
- ☐ Quantitative Reasoning
 ☐ English Communication
 ☐ Chinese Communication
 ☐ Healthy Lifestyle

Current Common Core Area in the 30-credit program framework: (Please tick all relevant boxes)

- ☐ Undergraduate experiential Opportunities Programs
- ☐ Arts
 ☐ Humanities
 ☐ Science
 ☐ Technology
 ☐ Social Analysis
- ☐ Cognitive Foundations of University Education: Critical Thinking and Data Literacy
- ☐ Behavioral Foundations of University Education: Habits, Mindsets, and Wellness
- ☐ English Communication
 ☐ Chinese Communication

A. Change in Common Core Status / SSC Designation:

- ☐ Remove this course from the 36-credit common core course list
- ☐ Remove this course from the 30-credit common core course list
- ☐ Remove this course's SSC designation in this common core area: ☐ H ☐ SA ☐ S&T

B. Changes made to Course ILOs / Common Core Area(s) / Others:

(Please tick all relevant boxes and provide details)

	<u>From:</u>			<u>To:</u>		
	<u>Course ILO</u>	<u>Weighting (%)</u>	<u>Contribution to Area ILOs</u>	<u>Course ILO</u>	<u>Weighting (%)</u>	<u>Contribution to Area ILOs</u>
☐ Course ILOs and Contribution to Area ILOs						
☐ Common Core Area						
☐ Category under the Area						
☐ Others (please specify:)						

C. Changes made to Common Core Competencies: (Please check all relevant sub-competencies)

Broad Competencies	Sub-Competencies	From:		To:	
		Teach	Assess	Teach	Assess
Communication	CM01 Language accuracy and form				
	CM02 Language meaning				
	CM03 Language use				
	CM04 Mode of communication				
Personal Development	PD01 Aesthetics				
	PD02 Lifelong learning				
	PD03 Self-awareness				
Problem Solving	PS01 Application of creative thinking				
	PS02 Application of critical thinking				
	PS03 Evaluation of information and sources				
	PS04 Problem definition				
Social Responsibility	SR01 Civic engagement				
	SR02 Collaboration				
	SR03 Cultural awareness				
	SR04 Ethical awareness				

Reasons for Proposing the Changes:

- For changes involving course ILOs, please provide an assessment of how the revised course ILOs can serve to achieve the stated area ILOs, how the teaching and assessment arrangements will help to deliver the revised course ILOs and assess students' achievement, and the corresponding change in course objectives (if applicable).
- For changes involving adding an additional area ILO, please provide an assessment of how the course ILOs can contribute to the achievement of this additional area ILO.
- For changes involving competencies, please provide an assessment of the pedagogical approaches in teaching and/or assessing the revised sub-competencies.

Endorsement

Department

Name of DH or Designee

Signature

Date

School/AIS

Name of Dean/Director or Designee

Signature

Date

To be completed by UCE Team, Academy of Interdisciplinary Studies

Form received on: _____

The proposed change requires CRP review and CUCE approval: ☐ Yes ☐ No

Remarks: _____

Notes:

Changes requiring CRP review and CUCE approval: Changes in course level; adding a new common core area; or making more than 2 changes to teaching or assessing sub-competencies (e.g., removing "teach" and "assess" from one sub-competency and adding "teach" to another sub-competency).

Changes not requiring CRP review or CUCE approval: Changes in course ILOs or contribution to area ILOs; changes in category under an area; making 1 or 2 changes to teaching or assessing sub-competencies (e.g., adding "teach" and "assess" to one sub-competency); removing course from the common core course list; removing course from a common core area; or removing its SSC designation in a common core area. These changes will be reported to the CUCE annually.

Common Core Questions in Student Feedback Questionnaire

(I) Group A questions and the corresponding mapping to the Common Core area intended learning outcomes (ILOs)

Area	SFQ Group A Question		Mapping to Area ILO	
H	H1a	My ability to understand and describe human issues from a humanities angle has been enhanced.	H1	Comprehend and narrate human phenomena from the perspectives of humanities discipline.
	H2a	My ability to understand diverse human values, feelings, reason and creativity in various forms of expression has been enhanced.	H2	Appreciate and articulate diverse human values, feelings, reason and creativity in various forms of expression.
SA	SA1a	My ability to analyze key social or behavioral issues has been enhanced.	SA1	Analyze key societal and behavioral issues by applying relevant social scientific approaches in different contexts.
	SA2a	I am more able to express my concern or thoughts about key social issues.	SA2	Communicate a concern about key societal issues as responsible citizens.
S&T	S&T1a	My understanding of the basic principles of science and my ability to relate them to daily life has been enhanced.	S&T1	Comprehend and apply the basic principles of science and methods of scientific inquiry.
	S&T2a	I am more able to evaluate how scientific discoveries and technological development impact on the society.	S&T2	Evaluate the social and philosophical implications of scientific discoveries and technological development.
QR	QR1a	My ability to use quantitative methods to define, analyze and solve problems in daily life has been enhanced.	QR1	Use mathematical models or quantitative methods to formulate, analyze and solve problems that they encounter in their daily and professional lives.
	QR2a	I am more able to process quantitative data and to use the data to reach a conclusion in a logical way.	QR2	Choose an appropriate method to represent and process a given set of quantitative data and to draw inferences from such data in a systematic and logical way.
Arts	A1a	My ability to appreciate the arts in terms of theory, history and practice has been enhanced.	A1	Appreciate the theory, history and practice of the arts.
	A2a	My ability to express myself through one or more art forms or media has been enhanced.	A2	Express themselves through various art forms or media.
E-Comm	E2a	The course has helped me to use English in my studies.	E1	Use English to achieve communicative purposes appropriate to the academic and social context.
	E3a	The course has helped me to use English in social situations.		
C-Comm	C1a	I am more able to communicate in Putonghua or Standard Written Chinese.	C1	Students with Chinese background will be able to use Putonghua and Standard Written Chinese to achieve communicative purposes appropriate to the context, be it academic, social or professional.
	C2a	I am more able to use Putonghua for basic communicative purposes.	C2	Students with non-Chinese background will be able to achieve basic communicative purposes in Putonghua.

(II) Group B questions

Area	SFQ Group B Question	
H	Hb1	The course has aroused my interest in learning more about issues of importance from the angle of the humanities.
SA	SAb1	The course has aroused my interest in learning more about social or behavioral issues.
S&T	S&Tb1	The course has aroused my interest in learning more about science and technological issues.
QR	QRb1	The course has aroused my interest in learning more about mathematical models or quantitative methods.
Arts	Ab1	The course has aroused my interest in learning more about the arts.
E-Comm	Eb1	The course has aroused my interest in learning more about English.
C-Comm	Cb1	The course has aroused my interest in learning more about Putonghua and Standard Written Chinese.
	Cb2	The course has aroused my interest in learning more about Putonghua.

Common Core Questions in First Year Experience Survey

1. Please indicate your level of interest on the following categories of common core courses.

	<i>Nil</i>	<i>Low</i>	<i>Moderate</i>	<i>High</i>	<i>Very High</i>	<i>Not Applicable</i>
Science & Technology	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Social Analysis	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Humanities	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Quantitative Reasoning	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Arts	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

2. In each of the following common core areas, please indicate whether sufficient courses are being offered for your choice.

	<i>Too Few</i>	<i>Less than Sufficient</i>	<i>About Right</i>	<i>More than Sufficient</i>	<i>Too Many</i>	<i>Not Applicable</i>
Science & Technology	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Social Analysis	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Humanities	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Quantitative Reasoning	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Arts	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

3. Please rate the importance of the following in helping you to achieve your career goals.

NI=Not Important at All, SI=Slightly Important, MI=Moderately Important, I=Important, VI=Very Important, NS=Not Sure

	NI	SI	MI	I	VI	NS
A. Intellectual breadth across academic disciplines	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
B. The ability to appreciate human achievements (arts, culture, science, technology, etc.)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
C. The passion and interest in learning	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
D. Be able to think analytically and solve problems	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
E. Be able to find, evaluate and use information effectively and ethically	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
F. Language and communication skills	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
G. Personal qualities, e.g. social adaptability, a willingness to accept challenges, and an ability to work independently and in collaboration, etc.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
H. Personal values and integrity	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I. Strategies to manage my life (physical, social, psychological, study, etc.)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

4. Please indicate your level of agreement on the following statements about the common core courses you have studied.

SD=Strongly Disagree, D=Disagree, N=Neutral, A=Agree, SA=Strongly Agree, NA=Not Applicable						
The Common Core Courses have	SD	D	N	A	SA	NA
A. helped me gain intellectual breadth across academic disciplines	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
B. helped me appreciate human achievements (arts, culture, science, technology, etc.)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
C. aroused my interest for learning	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
D. helped me think analytically and develop problem solving skills	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
E. enabled me to find, evaluate and use information effectively and ethically	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
F. helped me develop language and communication skills	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
G. helped me develop personal qualities, e.g. social adaptability, a willingness to accept challenges, and an ability to work independently and in collaboration, etc.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
H. helped me shape my personal values	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I. helped me develop strategies to manage my life (physical, social, psychological, study, etc.)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

5. Is there any topic or subject that you wish the University to offer as a common core course?

☐ No

☐ Yes, please specify: _____

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COMMON CORE COURSE INSTRUCTOR SELF-REVIEW FORM

(To be Completed by Course Instructor)

Access to Information / Data in this Form by the Relevant Parties in the University

Instructor self-review is central to the common core course review process, which involves the instructors, the schools/departments, the common core course review panels and the Committee on Undergraduate Core Education. The information provided by the instructor on this form will be shared with these relevant parties to facilitate the review for improvement and enhancement of this course.

Section 1 Course Information

Course Offering Term :
 Course Offering School :
 Course Offering Unit :
 Course Code :
 Course Title :
 Section(s) :
 Instructor :
 Common Core Area :

Section 2 Achievement of Course ILOs (CILOs) & Area ILOs (AILOs)

Please indicate your assessment on each of the following statements by ticking the appropriate box

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1) This course has achieved the following course intended learning outcomes (CILOs):	N.A.	5	4	3	2	1

CILO-1 xxx

CILO-2 xxx

Note: The above CILOs are approved by the CUCE and published on the UCE website. If you would like to change the CILOs for the next offering, please submit a [course change form](#) to the UCE.

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
2) This course has achieved the following area intended learning outcomes (AILOs):	N.A.	5	4	3	2	1

Common Core Area

AILO-1: xxx

AILO-2: xxx

Note: The above contribution to the common core area(s) is approved by the CUCE. If you would like to change the AILO mappings for the next offering, please submit a [course change form](#) to the UCE.

Section 3 Reflection on Student Feedback, Good Practices and Challenges

3) Student Feedback (from mid-term survey, end of term SFQ, or other solicited or unsolicited feedback)

What have your students said about your course? How do you feel about their comments?

4) Good Practices

Which teaching and learning activities / assessment tasks used in this course would you consider as good practices?

5) Challenges Faced and Solutions Proposed / Attempted

What challenges have you faced during your teaching of this course and how are they overcome? What areas would you like to work on?

COMMON CORE COURSE REVIEW SYSTEM
School Triggered Review Report
(To be Completed by Schools)

School Triggered Review Report

Cancel

TGR

Course Code and Course Title

Area: XXX

Review Term: XXX

Triggered Term: XXX

Course Report Due: XXX

[View SFQ / ISR / Past Reviews Info](#)

Issues Identified and Recommended Actions

Please summarize the findings from the School's review and discussion on this course. The School may make reference to SFQ and ISR information during the review.

Text here...

Please summarize the issues identified, and recommend follow-up actions, support or resources as appropriate for addressing them.

Issue Identified:

Text here...

Recommended Action	Action by	Proposed Completion Date	Actual Completion Date	Remarks	Delete

Attachment 0

-

Cancel

THE HONG KONG UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Guidance Notes on Conducting the School Triggered Review

Triggered review is part of the Common Core Course Review process, which is conducted biannually. This review aims to allow the course-offering school to take a timely review of the triggered course and help identify issues that might have made an impact on its delivery and student learning, and suggest follow-up actions to address them as appropriate.

Courses are triggered for review when their Student Feedback Questionnaire (SFQ) course overall mean score in the offering term is below the “trigger criterion”. The Committee on Undergraduate Core Education (CUCE) adopts SFQ course overall mean of 3.20 as the minimum threshold trigger criterion. Schools may set a higher trigger score than 3.20.

Schools are strongly recommended to involve the course instructor and the course-offering department in undertaking the triggered review. Schools may require that findings from the course instructor and the course-offering department be considered at the departmental committee first, before they are submitted to the School for endorsement. The triggered review report submitted by Schools will be reviewed by the relevant Course Review Panel (CRP) and CUCE.

Schools may make reference to the following notes in conducting the triggered review and preparing the report.

Collecting and Reviewing Data

The Common Core Course Review System (CRS) provides some longitudinal data to help Schools and instructors to get a basic view about the triggered course. Schools and instructors are most welcome to collect other information deemed appropriate and relevant to help identify issues that could have made an impact on the course teaching and student learning. The following two tables provide some elaborations on what to look for from the reference data.

Data available in CRS	What to look for
SFQ course overall mean; SFQ common core question mean	▪ What is the general trend of these means? Do they show a declining or fluctuating pattern? ▪ Did the mean drop significantly in the term when the course was triggered?
Instructor Self-Review (ISR) feedback	▪ How did the instructor comment on the course before? ▪ Did the instructor identify any challenges and suggest any improvement actions? How effective were these actions in tackling the challenges?
Course outlines; Assessment samples	▪ Were the course topics pitched at common core students? ▪ Had the course undergone some changes in those terms with a lower mean? What changes were introduced, and how did they affect the teaching? Were these impacts also reflected in other sections of the SFQ report (such as students’ written comments)? ▪ Was the course taught by one instructor or co-taught by two or more instructors? If the latter, what were the arrangements for coordinating teaching among the instructors? How did the arrangements go? ▪ How effective were the teaching activities and assessment tasks in helping students learn the topics and attain the course intended learning outcomes?

	▪ Were there any class or teaching activities that had posed a challenge to course teaching? What were these activities and the challenge posed? ▪ What was the class size? Did it have any impact on the effectiveness of the teaching pedagogy and how? ▪ Was the course workload (readings, assessment tasks etc.) heavy, light or about right? ▪ Were the assessment tasks difficult, easy or about right?
Other possible data	What to look for
Student written feedback in SFQ	▪ What did the students say about the course? Did they mention any aspects of the course that they considered as unsatisfactory or less effective, and why?
Student demographics	▪ What were the background of the enrolled students, e.g. year of study, major, local/non-local/exchange etc.? Would this affect how students learn in this course or their evaluation of this course, and how?
Course grade distribution	▪ What was the course grade distribution like? Could it reflect that students were able to achieve the course intended learning outcomes?

Identifying Issues and Recommending Actions to Address the Issues

It is considered a good practice that the School could engage the Department and instructor(s) concerned in the early stage of the review process, and provide details about the issues identified and the recommended actions. This could facilitate the CRP and CUCE to understand the course circumstances and how the recommended actions could help to address these issues.

Depending on the issues identified, the recommended action may involve tuning the teaching arrangement, course content, assessment tasks, class activities, TA support, etc. The recommended actions should be as specific as possible, indicating the responsible party for each action item and the target completion date.

Schools are required to document in the School Triggered Review Report the following:

- 1) Summary of their findings and discussion on the triggered course during the review process, quoting reference to SFQ, ISR and other relevant information as noted or discussed; and
- 2) Details about the issues identified and the considerations for the recommended follow-up actions (if any).

Schools are expected to support and facilitate the implementation of the follow-up actions, and monitor their progress through the CRS. The outcomes would be reported in the next cycle review of the course, if it is not subject to triggered review again in its next offering.

Reminders for Conducting the School Triggered Review

- Fully involve the course instructor(s) and the Department at the early stage
- Evaluate teaching and learning quality of the course but not instructor's performance
- Adopt a supportive, not punitive, approach
- Focus on ways to improve rather than a hunt for problems and mistakes
- Be comprehensive in preparing the triggered review report

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COMMON CORE COURSE REVIEW SYSTEM

School Cycle Review Report

(To be Completed by Schools)

School Cycle Review Report

Cancel

CYR

Course Code and Course Title

Area: XXX

Review Year: XXX

Review Period: XXX

Course Report Due: XXX

[View SFQ / ISR / Past Reviews Info](#)**(1) This course has achieved its course intended learning outcomes (CILOs).**

☐ Strongly Agree
 ☐ Agree
 ☐ Neutral
 ☐ Disagree
 ☐ Strongly Disagree

Please provide consideration / evidence to explain this observation:

Text here...

(2) This course has achieved its associated area intended learning outcomes (AILOs).

Area: XXX

☐ Strongly Agree
 ☐ Agree
 ☐ Neutral
 ☐ Disagree
 ☐ Strongly Disagree

Please provide consideration / evidence to explain this observation:

Text here...

(3) Good Practices for Sharing

Please recommend good practices of teaching, learning and assessment (if any) for sharing with other departments and instructors. These good practices may have been identified by the School from Instructor Self-Review (ISR) reports, or from students' written comments in SFQ or other sources.

Text here...

(4) Issues Identified and Solutions Proposed / Attempted

☐ No issues identified
 ☐ Some minor issues identified *
 ☐ Some significant issues identified *

*Please provide details of the issues identified, and recommend follow-up actions, support or resources as appropriate for addressing them. These issues may have been identified by the School from challenges reported by instructors in their Instructor Self-Review (ISR), or from students' written comments in SFQ or other sources.

Attachment 0

-

Cancel

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THE HONG KONG UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Guidance Notes on Conducting the School Cycle Review

Cycle review is part of the Common Core Course Review process, which is conducted annually. It is an in-depth review of the teaching and learning effectiveness of a common core course on a 4-year cycle. It aims to assure that common core courses are able to achieve their course intended learning outcomes (ILOs) and associated area ILOs, and to help schools enhance the quality of their common core courses through sharing of good practices, and identifying opportunities for improvement.

Schools are expected to coordinate and conduct cycle reviews, with inputs from the course-offering departments and instructors. It is recommended that this cycle review process be integrated with the School's teaching and learning quality assurance process. The cycle review report submitted by Schools will be reviewed by the relevant Course Review Panel (CRP) and the Committee on Undergraduate Core Education (CUCE).

Schools may make reference to the following notes in conducting the cycle review and preparing the report.

Reviewing Data

Schools are expected to provide their view on whether the reviewed courses have achieved their course ILOs and their associated area ILOs. The Common Core Course Review System (CRS) provides some longitudinal data to help Schools get a basic view about these courses. Schools are most welcome to provide other information deemed appropriate and relevant to inform the review. The following two tables provide some elaborations on what to look for from the reference data.

Data available in CRS	What to look for
SFQ course overall mean; SFQ common core question mean	▪ What is the general trend of these means? Do they show a generally upward or declining trend, or a fluctuating pattern? ▪ Were the means of the reviewed course better, worse or similar as compared with those of other common core courses in the same department, school and common core area? ▪ What observations could be drawn from these data to confirm whether the course ILOs and area ILOs had been achieved?
Instructor Self-Review (ISR) feedback	▪ How did the instructor(s) feedback on the course in previous offerings? What ratings did the instructors give regarding the achievement of course ILOs and area ILOs? ▪ Did the instructor identify some good practices and challenges he/she had faced? What were they? Did he/she find ways to address these challenges?
Course outlines; Assessment samples	▪ What were the course objectives? Were the course topics pitched at common core students? How were the course topics aligned with the course ILOs and area ILOs? ▪ Had the course undergone some changes during the 4-year period of the cycle review? What changes were introduced, and did they affect the teaching (both positively and undesirably) and how? Were these impacts also reflected in other sections of the SFQ report (such as students' written comments)? ▪ What teaching activities were used in the course to help students learn the topics and attain the course intended learning outcomes? How effective were they? Were any of these considered as innovative? Did some of these pose a challenge to course teaching?

	▪ What was the class size? Did it have any impact on the effectiveness of the teaching pedagogy and how? ▪ What assessment tasks were used in the course to assess whether students had achieved the course intended learning outcomes? How effective were they? Would any of these be identified as innovative? Did some of these pose a challenge to assessment? What were the challenges and possible resolutions? ▪ Did the course use assessment rubrics to determine students' final grade? If not, what criteria were used to assess students' performance? Were these (assessment rubrics or other criteria) effective in grading student performance? What were the challenges and possible resolutions?
Other possible data	What to look for
Student written feedback in SFQ	▪ What did the students say about the course? Did they mention any aspects of the course that they considered as outstanding, good, unsatisfactory or less effective, and why?
Student demographics	▪ What were the background of the enrolled students, e.g. year of study, major, local/non-local/exchange etc.? Would this affect how students learn in this course or their evaluation of this course, and how?
Grades and passing rate of key assessment tasks	▪ Did the results reflect that students were able to achieve the course ILOs?

Achievement of Course ILOs and Common Core Area ILOs

Schools are required to complete one School Cycle Review Report for each course being reviewed. With reference to the data that are reviewed, the Schools are required to indicate in the School Cycle Review Report their level of agreement (using a "Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree" scale) on the extent the course has achieved the course ILOs and area ILOs, and provide their considerations and evidence to explain this observation.

Sharing Good Practices

Schools are encouraged to identify good practices of teaching, learning and assessment from the reviewed courses (if any) for sharing with other schools, departments and instructors.

These good practices may be identified through various data sources, such as student written feedback in SFQ, solicited or unsolicited student feedback, instructor feedback, internal and external review reports, peer reviews, selection of teaching awards, focus group discussions, interviews with instructors or teaching teams etc.

Apart from describing what the good practices are and what have been done, Schools are strongly encouraged to provide the contextual information that explain why the practices are adopted, what issues or circumstances are to be addressed, and the pre-conditions (if any, such as resource consideration) that are necessary to execute the practices successfully. This would greatly facilitate other units and instructors in their consideration of whether a particular good practice can be adopted for use in their courses.

Identifying Issues and Recommending Solutions to Address the Issues

When issues are identified through the review of the reference data provided by the CRS or collected through other sources, Schools are required to note these issues in the School Cycle Review Report, and provide details about the issues identified and recommend follow-up actions, support or resources as appropriate for addressing the issues. The recommended actions should be as specific as possible, indicating the responsible party for each action item and the target completion date.

Schools are expected to support and facilitate the implementation of the follow-up actions, and monitor their progress through the CRS. The outcomes would be reported in the next cycle review of the course.

Reminders for Conducting the School Cycle Review

- Make reference to data that inform the review
- Involve the course instructor(s) and the Department in the review process
- Adopt a supportive, not fault-finding, approach
- Encourage sharing of good and effective practices
- Be comprehensive in preparing the cycle review report, providing details of the review outcomes, good practices and consideration

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THE HONG KONG UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Common Core Teaching Excellence Award

Purpose

1. The implementation of the Common Core Program provides students with an exciting and excellent opportunity to enrich their undergraduate educational experience. The successful delivery of this Common Core Program depends on the contribution of instructors, together with the full support from their School and department / unit, in developing and teaching a good collection of common core courses.
2. The Common Core Teaching Excellence Award is established to recognize outstanding common core course instructors who have made substantial contribution to the design and/or the teaching of exemplary common core courses, and to promote these courses to the students in the University community.

Eligibility

3. Any instructor or team of instructors who has designed and/or taught a common core course or common core courses between 1 January and 31 December of the award year is eligible to be nominated for the award. Each instructor or team of instructors can only be nominated once in an award year. An instructor or a team of instructors who has received the Award or the Honorary Mention in a particular year cannot be nominated again in the subsequent three years.

Nomination Process

4. Nomination can be made by one or more members of the University community, including at least one student. Each nominator should submit a statement explaining why the instructor or the team of instructors is nominated. This statement can be submitted separately by each individual nominator, or as a joint statement by all nominators. All nominations must be submitted using the prescribed nomination form. The nomination should have the consent of the instructor(s) concerned, and be endorsed by the Head of the course offering department / unit.
5. The nominator should specify one common core course or common core courses that is designed, and/or taught by the nominated instructor or team of instructors, during the award year. The nominee(s) are expected to be responsible for designing the specified course(s) and/or teaching one complete section or all sections of the specified course(s).

Criteria for Award

6. Nominations will be evaluated with regard to the following three broad criteria, the details of which are set out in Annex 1.
 - (a) Excellence in course design and teaching innovation;
 - (b) Delivery of an exemplary common core course; and
 - (c) Innovative assessment of student learning.

Selection Process

7. Upon acceptance of the nomination, the nominee(s) will be asked to provide a teaching portfolio not exceeding 6 A4-size pages to the Selection Committee for consideration. The guidelines for preparing the teaching portfolio are given in Annex 2.

8. Nominations will be considered by the Committee on Undergraduate Core Education (CUCE), on the recommendation of a Selection Committee. The Selection Committee comprising the following members will be established after the close of the nomination period. Any faculty member who is or has been involved in the design / teaching of a nominated course, as well as the nominator of any course should not serve on the Award Selection Committee.

Convener & Member:

Chair of the Committee on Undergraduate Core Education

Members:

- One faculty representative (preferably one who is familiar with common core courses or program) from each of the Schools of Science, Engineering, Business & Management, Humanities & Social Science, and the Academy of Interdisciplinary Studies nominated by the respective Dean / Director
- One student representative nominated by the HKUST Students' Union
- One alumni representative nominated by the HKUST Alumni Association

Secretariat:

Academic Director (Undergraduate Core Education), Academy of Interdisciplinary Studies

The Award and the Presentation

9. Only **one** Award and up to **three** Honorary Mentions will be awarded in each award year.

10. The award-winning instructor or team of instructors will receive a cash award of HK\$20,000. Each individual instructor will also be presented a plaque engraved with the name of the instructor(s) and the course(s).

11. For each Honorary Mention, the instructor or team of instructors will receive a cash award of HK\$10,000. Each individual instructor will also be presented a certificate printed with the name of the instructor(s) and the course(s).

12. The cash award presented to a team of instructors will be shared equally among the instructors. They may also agree collectively on alternative way of allocation among themselves. Instructors receiving the cash award will decide on its use at their own discretion.

13. The Award and Honorary Mention(s) will be presented in the name of the Committee on Undergraduate Core Education at an Award Presentation Ceremony.

Criteria for the Common Core Teaching Excellence Award

The following table serves to provide some examples of practices for meeting the three criteria for the Common Core Teaching Excellence Award. Nominees are not expected to have achieved all of these examples in their course. They are expected to elaborate on those practices that are most appropriate to their teaching context.

Criteria	Examples of Practices for Meeting the Criteria
Excellence in course design and teaching innovation	<u>Course Design</u> (including the development of a new course, or the refinement or re-development of an existing course) - Supporting the achievement of common core area ILOs through the development of clear course ILOs - Taking into account the diverse background and abilities of students in course design - Making reference to current research and the knowledge derived therein in the development of course materials, and successfully integrating them into the learning process - Challenging students to consider social, cultural or philosophical issues - Drawing on students' life experience and making good connections between theories and applications to the real world <u>Teaching Innovation</u> - Adopting non-conventional teaching pedagogy such as blended or experiential learning approach to inspire and motivate students to approach an unfamiliar discipline and arouse their interest in it - Adopting and developing educational innovations to stimulate and support student learning - Employing appropriate teaching and learning activities to address varied student needs - Encouraging active and interactive learning inside or outside the classroom
Delivery of an exemplary common core course	- Attaining the three goals of the Common Core Program: (a) Broadening horizons; (b) A passion for learning; and (c) A lifelong pursuit of excellence (http://uce.ust.hk/web/about/about_mission.html) - Facilitating students in the development of the University's desired graduate attributes – ABC LIVE (http://uce.ust.hk/web/about/about_outcomes.html) - Providing an exemplary model, promoting good practices in the delivery of common core - Monitoring the effectiveness of course delivery by using systematic evaluation methods such as SFQ course overall ratings, written comments, and ratings of common core questions regarding attainment of common core area ILOs and arousing students' learning interest
Innovative assessment of student learning	- Developing clear articulation between assessment and achievement of the learning outcomes - Using a variety of assessment methods to monitor students' learning processes - Providing timely feedback to students for continuous improvement

THE HONG KONG UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
Common Core Teaching Excellence Award

Guidelines for Preparing Teaching Portfolio

A teaching portfolio is a summary of evidence explaining how the instructor(s) has met the criteria of the Common Core Teaching Excellence Award in the course(s) specified in the nomination form. The portfolio should not be just a collection of teaching materials but should be a self-reflection about the effectiveness and quality of teaching and learning activities. Some indication of future development for the course(s) would also be beneficial.

The teaching portfolio should **not** exceed 6 A4-size pages. The evidence and materials presented in the portfolio should be relevant to the course(s) specified in the nomination form. Appendices may be added where deemed necessary.

The following elements should be included in the teaching portfolio:

1. Teaching Philosophy

- A self-reflective statement of the teaching philosophy about common core teaching, the teaching goals and strategies for the course(s) specified in the nomination form, and explain how the teaching philosophy is implemented in the course design, teaching practice and assessment activities of the course(s)

2. Teaching Arrangements

- Describe one's involvement in the course(s) as a course designer and/or course instructor; and in the case of a team of instructors, describe the involvement of each team member in course design and teaching
- Provide the class size, number of enrolment, pre-enrolment (if any), and student demographics
- Explain the reasons for pre-enrollment, if applicable

3. Course Outline

- Course description
- Enrollment requirement, if any
- Course objectives and intended learning outcomes
- Teaching and learning activities
- Assessment tasks and their respective weighting in the final grade
- Weekly course topics, required and recommended readings or activities

4. Achievement of the Selection Criteria

(a) Excellence in course design and teaching innovation

- (i) Course design (*including the development of a new course, or the refinement or re-development of an existing course*)
 - Elaborate how the course(s) learning outcomes have supported the achievement of intended learning outcomes of its associated common core area
 - Specify those course materials that have been developed with reference to current research and the knowledge derived therein, if any, and explain how they have been integrated into the learning process
 - Explain how the course design has enhanced student learning and provide the evidence,

if any

- Explain how the course(s) has challenged students to consider social, cultural or philosophical issues, and met the needs of students with diverse background and abilities
- Describe how the course(s) has drawn on students' life experience and made good connections between theories and applications to the real world

(ii) Teaching innovation (*please provide sample class video-recordings (if available) to demonstrate their delivery in-class*)

- Give examples of non-conventional teaching pedagogy such as blended or experiential learning approach to inspire and motivate students to approach an unfamiliar discipline and arouse their interest in it
- Specify the educational innovations developed or adopted to stimulate and support student learning
- Describe the teaching and learning activities adopted to address varied student needs
- Describe how active or interactive learning is promoted inside or outside the classroom

(b) Delivery of an exemplary common core course

- Explain how the course(s) has attained the three goals of the Common Core Program
- Describe how the course(s) has supported students in developing the University's desired graduate attributes – ABC LIVE
- Illustrate how the course(s) has served as an exemplary model and helped promote good practices in the delivery of common core courses
- Explain what measures have been adopted to monitor the effectiveness of course delivery and how feedback is incorporated to enhance teaching
- Provide the SFQ instructor overall mean, course overall mean and common core questions mean scores in the form of a table, and benchmark them with the data of the respective department or unit

(c) Innovative assessment of student learning

- Elaborate how assessment activities have supported the achievement of course and common core area intended learning outcomes
- Describe how and when feedback has been communicated with students for their continuous improvement
- Give examples of graded student assessment showing excellent, average and poor work, and feedback on these work

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