

## Guidance Notes

### Application for Grant for Programme Area Accreditation under the Qualifications Framework Fund

#### *Introduction*

The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (the Government) launched the Qualifications Framework (QF) to promote lifelong learning with a view to enhancing the capability and competitiveness of our local workforce. The QF is a seven-level hierarchy covering qualifications in the academic, vocational and professional as well as continuing education sectors.

2. A robust quality assurance mechanism is in place to benchmark and safeguard the quality of learning programmes (programmes) under the QF, mainly through accreditation by the Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications (HKCAAVQ) <sup>1</sup>.

3. The Qualifications Register (QR), established by the Government, is the public face of the QF. All qualifications and programmes registered in the QR are quality assured and recognised under the QF.

4. The Education Bureau (EDB) established the QF Fund to provide a steady source of income to support the sustainable development and implementation of the QF.

5. Providers may apply for the Grant for Programme Area Accreditation (PAA Grant) to cover the fees for Programme Area Accreditation (PAA) and Periodic Institutional Review (PIR) <sup>2</sup> exercises conducted by the HKCAAVQ. Providers registered under the laws of Hong Kong are eligible to apply.

#### *Scope and Level of Subsidy*

6. The PAA Grant is available to providers who have successfully completed the accreditation exercises of the PAA or PIR. Applications for the PAA Grant should be made **no later than one year after the issuance of the relevant Statement of Accreditation Approval dated 3 January 2017 or after** by HKCAAVQ. The level of the PAA Grant is shown below:

Scope	Level of Subsidy (% of accreditation fee)	
	Non-profit-making providers <sup>3</sup>	Other providers
PAA / PIR fees	70%	35%

<sup>1</sup> The HKCAAVQ is responsible for the accreditation of learning programmes offered by non-self-accrediting institutions.

<sup>2</sup> PAA and PIR are different stages of the accreditation process conducted by the HKCAAVQ. For details, please refer to the website of the HKCAAVQ ([www.hkcaavq.edu.hk](http://www.hkcaavq.edu.hk)).

<sup>3</sup> Non-profit-making providers refer to approved charitable institutions or trust of a public character exempt from tax under the Inland Revenue Ordinance (Cap. 112). Other evidence submitted may not be accepted.

## ***Application Procedures***

7. The PAA Grant is available on reimbursement basis. Providers who wish to apply for the PAA Grant should submit application form (QFF-PAA) with relevant supporting documents to EDB upon successful completion of the accreditation exercises. The supporting documents required are listed in the form (QFF-PAA).
8. The application form (QFF-PAA) and supporting documents should be sent to Further Education Division of the Education Bureau on 7/F, East Wing, Central Government Offices, 2 Tim Mei Avenue, Tamar, Hong Kong.
9. To promote wider awareness and transparency of QF in Hong Kong, education and training providers are encouraged to feature key elements of QF in the certificates<sup>4</sup> awarded to graduates of learning programmes that have been accredited under QF and are within the validity period. The key elements include the QF logo, the QF level of the learning programme and its registration number on the QR. For programme having all three key elements featured in the certificate, the applicant should provide copy of the sample certificate as supporting document to EDB.
10. A flow chart on the application procedures is set out at **Appendix** for ease of reference.

## ***Processing of Application***

11. Upon receipt of the application form and all relevant supporting documents from the applicant, EDB will process the application and may contact the applicant for clarification if necessary. Depending on the number of applications received and the number of accreditation exercises and/or learning programmes involved, payment is expected to be made to the successful applicant normally within four months from the date of receipt of all valid supporting documents with proper certification. To facilitate the processing of applications, applicants are advised to ensure that all relevant supporting documents with proper certification are provided at the time of application.

## ***Terms and Conditions***

12. The Government reserves all rights to modify the above procedures at anytime considered necessary or appropriate by the Secretary for Education.
13. Providers who have received the PAA Grant are required to indicate in all promotion and publicity materials that the relevant qualifications and programmes covered by the PAA are QF-recognised. The QF logo<sup>5</sup> should also be shown. Providers may be required to provide information on the operation of the relevant programmes upon request by EDB.

---

<sup>4</sup> For details on the featuring of QF in certificates, please refer to the Guideline for Featuring QF in Certificates on QF website (<https://www.hkqf.gov.hk/en/support/dss/index.html>).

<sup>5</sup> For details on the use of the QF logo, please refer to the Guideline for the Use of QF Logo in the QR ([https://www.hkqr.gov.hk/HKQRPRD/export/sites/default/content/attachment/en/-EN-4\\_Advert-1\\_QF-Guidelines-for-the-Use-of-the-QF-Logo.pdf](https://www.hkqr.gov.hk/HKQRPRD/export/sites/default/content/attachment/en/-EN-4_Advert-1_QF-Guidelines-for-the-Use-of-the-QF-Logo.pdf)).

14. Providers are also required to undertake that they will abide by other terms and conditions which may be imposed by the Secretary for Education on and the relevant QF-recognised qualification(s) and programme(s) concerned.

15. Since the PAA Grant involves the use of public monies, applicants are obliged to ensure that the public monies disbursed to them are for the intended purposes in accordance with the provisions of the funding scheme. Wherever applicable, applicants should observe and comply with the Best Practice Checklist “Strengthening Integrity and Accountability – Government Funding Schemes Grantee’s Guidebook” published by the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC). The Guidebook can be accessed through ICAC’s website via [http://www.icac.org.hk/filemanager/en/Content\\_1031/GranteeBPC.pdf](http://www.icac.org.hk/filemanager/en/Content_1031/GranteeBPC.pdf).

### *Enquiries*

16. Providers may address enquiries to Further Education Division, Education Bureau on 7/F, East Wing, Central Government Offices, 2 Tim Mei Avenue, Tamar, Hong Kong (Telephone number: 3509 7425, Fax number: 2899 2967).

17. The application form can be downloaded from the QF website ([www.hkqf.gov.hk](http://www.hkqf.gov.hk)).

Education Bureau  
November 2019

## Grant for Programme Area Accreditation

### Application Procedures

