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MACAO SPECIAL ADMINISTRATIVE REGION

Administrative Regulation No. 17/2018

Higher education quality evaluation system

The Chief Executive, after consulting with the Executive Council, decrees pursuant to sub-paragraph 5) of Article 50 of the Basic Law of the Macao Special Administrative Region and to Article 40 of the Law No. 10/2017 (Higher Education Regime), that the following shall have the legal effect of complementary administrative regulation:

CHAPTER I

General provisions

Article 1

Object

This administrative regulation establishes the higher education quality evaluation system of the Macao Special Administrative Region, hereinafter referred to as “the Macao SAR”.

Article 2

Scope of application

The provisions of this administrative regulation shall apply to:

- 1) All higher education institutions of the Macao SAR, authorized, established and recognized under the law;
- 2) The higher education programs offered by the higher education institutions of the Macao SAR;

3) The higher education activities carried out in the Macao SAR by higher education institutions based outside of the Macao SAR, especially the provision of higher education programs conferring degrees, diplomas or certificates, considering the possible adaptation to the Macao SAR without quality loss and reduction of the scientific, academic and pedagogical rigor of the programs already offered by them at the location of their headquarters.

Article 3

Purpose

The purpose of the higher education quality evaluation system of this administrative regulation is to:

- 1) Establish an effective mechanism for regulating the principles and operation of all activities related to the institutional and program evaluation;
- 2) Set the requirements for ensuring the quality of higher education, aiming to promote the continuous self-improvement of higher education institutions;
- 3) Promote the development of higher education;
- 4) Encourage the quality of academic activities;
- 5) Increase the academic, pedagogical and research level of higher education;
- 6) Ensure the quality and continuous improvement of higher education programs.

Article 4

Fundamental structure

Without prejudice to compliance with the principles of equity, objectivity, impartiality and transparency provided for in Article 38 of Law No. 10/2017, this higher education quality evaluation system is based on the following structural elements:

- 1) Periodicity;
- 2) Cooperation between external quality assurance entities and evaluated higher education institutions and between these, the Government and the public services competent in the scope of the higher education evaluation;

- 3) Authenticity, veracity, accuracy, integrity and timeliness of the information provided;
- 4) Intervention of external quality assurance entities, organically and functionally independent of the higher education institutions being evaluated;
- 5) Participation of the higher education institutions being evaluated in the external assurance processes, including the adversarial procedures;
- 6) Appeal of decisions.

CHAPTER II

Higher education quality evaluation

Section I

Structure and periodicity

Article 5

Composition and modalities of quality evaluation

1. The higher education quality evaluation is composed of:
 - 1) Institutional evaluation;
 - 2) Program evaluation.
2. The institutional evaluation is divided into the modalities of:
 - 1) Institutional accreditation;
 - 2) Institutional quality audit.
3. The program evaluation is divided into the modalities of:
 - 1) Program accreditation;
 - 2) Program review.

Article 6

Periodicity of the quality evaluation

1. The periodicity of carrying out the quality assurance shall correspond to the maximum period of duration of the validity period, within which a subsequent one shall be completed in accordance with the provisions of this administrative regulation.
2. Without prejudice to a special regime or situations in which the administration sets a shorter validity period for a certain evaluation process, the periodicity of the evaluation and the general evaluation validity period shall be, in general, of seven years, removing the exemption from the subsequent new evaluation within that period.
3. For the purpose of verifying compliance with the provisions of the preceding two paragraphs, when the validity period of a particular evaluation is different from the general validity period of the evaluations, the respective period shall be set by order of the Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture, duly substantiated, to be published in the Official Gazette of the Macao Special Administrative Region, hereinafter referred to as the “Official Gazette”.
4. For the purposes of institutional accreditation and institutional quality audit, the general validity period shall be counted from the date of confirmation of the evaluation outcome by the Tertiary Education Services Office, hereinafter referred to as “GAES”.
5. For the purposes of program accreditation and program review, the general validity period shall be counted from the publication date of the notice of the respective program registration in the Official Gazette or from the date of confirmation of the evaluation outcome by the GAES.
6. The adjustment of the duration of the evaluation period shall be set by order of the Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture and published in the Official Gazette.

Section II

Institutional evaluation

Subsection I

Modality of institutional accreditation

Article 7

Institutional accreditation

1. The modality of institutional accreditation is applicable to higher education institutions of the Macao SAR, considered in whole or in part, at the level of organizational units or disciplines.
2. The institutional accreditation is optional.
3. Whenever a higher education institution in the Macao SAR takes the initiative to undertake the institutional accreditation for the purpose of obtaining the status to self-regulate and offer new programs, it shall be mandatorily subject to the regime established in this administrative regulation for the institutional accreditation.

Article 8

Objective of the institutional accreditation

The institutional accreditation is aimed at verifying the compliance with the requirements of the higher education quality evaluation system of the Macao SAR, especially the administration and management evaluation, the development of academic planning, management and supervision, financial management and distribution of resources, the development and system of teaching and non-teaching staff and quality assurance of the institutions.

Article 9

Institutional accreditation outcomes

The evaluation outcomes for institutional accreditation are listed in a detailed report to be issued by the external quality assurance agency, indicating the outcomes of “Meeting Accreditation Standards”, “Meeting Accreditation Standards with Condition(s)” or “Not Meeting Accreditation Standards”.

Subsection II

Modality of institutional quality audit

Article 10

Institutional quality audit

The institutional quality audit is applicable to the higher education institutions of the Macao SAR and is mandatory and periodic.

Article 11

Objective of the institutional quality audit

The institutional quality audit is aimed to carefully and systemically examining the operation of higher education institutions and the activities developed by them, and making a periodic review, in order to perceive the excellence of the work in its operation and, for continuous improvement, identify the scope for improvement.

Article 12

Outcomes of the institutional quality audit

The evaluation outcomes of the institutional quality audit are listed in a detailed report to be issued by the external quality assurance entity, including, specially, notations of excellence and recommendations for improvement.

Article 13

First audit and subsequent ones

1. Higher education institutions which are in operation at the date of entry into force of this administrative regulation shall be carried out the first institutional quality audit within the seven-year period of the first evaluation cycle.
2. Higher education institutions established after the entry into force of this administrative regulation shall be carried out the first institutional quality audit within one year since they have their first batch of graduates.
3. Higher education institutions are subject to a new institutional quality audit, to be completed by the end of the validity period of the last institutional quality audit.

Article 14

Extraordinary audit

At any time, the Government may, on its own initiative, through the GAES, mandate an extraordinary institutional quality audit of any higher education institution.

Article 15

Optional quality audit

Higher education institutions may at any time, on their own initiative, undergo institutional quality audit procedures within the framework of their internal quality evaluation processes.

Article 16

Effects on the validity or exemption of the quality audit

The quality audits carried out in accordance with Articles 14 and 15 shall not necessarily entail setting a new validity period or the exemption of the institutional quality audit provided for in Articles 10 and 13, however, the Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture shall consider the respective outcomes in order to set a new period for the institutional quality audit.

Article 17

Exemption from the quality audit

1. Higher education institutions which obtain the institutional accreditation after the entry into force of this administrative regulation may submit to the Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture the request for exemption from the institutional quality audit during the validity period of the abovementioned institutional accreditation.
2. For the purposes of the exemption provided for in the preceding paragraph, the GAES can propose adjustments in the management and operation of the higher education institution, in the form of requirements or conditions, for the attribution or maintenance of the mentioned exemption.

Section III

Program evaluation

Subsection I

Modality of program accreditation

Article 18

Program accreditation

1. The program accreditation is applicable to:

- 1) New programs launched by higher education institutions without the status to self-regulate and offer new programs;
- 2) New programs launched by higher education institutions granted the status to self-regulate and offer new programs, but that are beyond the approved scope of this status;
- 3) Programs mentioned in the preceding two sub-paragraphs and those that have been in operation at the date of entry into force of this administrative regulation that are subject of substantial changes.

2. For the purposes of the preceding paragraph, it is considered that:

- 1) Higher education institutions that have had the status to self-regulate and offer new programs at the date of entry into force of Law No. 10/2017, or will be approved to do so in accordance with the provisions of this administrative regulation, are qualified to self-regulate and offer new programs;
- 2) New programs refer to those registered one year after the entry into force of this administrative regulation;
- 3) Programs with substantial changes are those in which changing circumstances have had an impact on the program design, structure, content, duration, functioning, teaching and learning and other modifications defined in the guidelines for the program evaluation procedure.

Article 19

Objectives of program accreditation

The program accreditation aims to assess whether the new programs offered by the higher education institutions, or those that undergo substantial changes, reach the objectives established for the quality of higher education programs, satisfy the organization's legal requirements of its operation and reach the intended learning outcomes.

Article 20

Program accreditation outcomes

The evaluation outcomes of the program accreditation are listed in a detailed report to be issued by the external quality assurance entities, indicating the outcome of "Meeting Accreditation

Standards”, “Meeting Accreditation Standards with Condition(s)” or “Not Meeting Accreditation Standards”.

Subsection II

Modality of program review

Article 21

Program review

The program review is applicable to:

- 1) Higher education programs offered by higher education institutions in the Macao SAR that are in operation on the date of entry into force of this administrative regulation, for the first review of the higher education programs in operation;
- 2) Programs launched by higher education institutions after the entry into force of this administrative regulation;
- 3) Programs offered by higher education institutions in the Macao SAR that have already undergone program accreditation or program review in accordance with the provisions of this administrative regulation.

Article 22

Objective of the program review

The program review aims to, through a periodic and continuous evaluation, guarantee the quality and the continuous improvement of the program offered by higher education institutions of the Macao SAR, in accordance with the quality conditions established and the applicable legal and regulatory provisions and verify the fulfilment of the requirements for the launch and operation.

Article 23

Outcomes of the program review

The evaluation outcomes of the program review are contained in a detailed report to be issued by the external quality assurance agencies, specially including, notations of excellence and recommendations for improvement.

CHAPTER III

Evaluation guidelines and participating parties

Section I

Higher education quality evaluation guidelines

Article 24

Guidelines

Without prejudice to the provisions of this administrative regulation and other applicable legislation, the aspects to be observed in the quality evaluation, especially the technical standards, the procedures, relevant documentation to be presented, the methodology and other instructions that shall be followed, are established in the guidelines.

Article 25

Competence

1. The GAES is responsible for approving, amending and cancelling the evaluation guidelines for quality evaluation, monitoring and verification of the execution of evaluation and for the investigation of the respective proceedings.
2. The GAES shall be responsible for the disclosure of the guidelines to interested parties, as well as for their respective amendments and updates.
3. The guidelines shall be submitted for prior affirmation to the Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture.

Article 26

Transparency and disclosure

1. The higher education institutions of the Macao SAR and organizations, entities, agencies, evaluation experts or other participating parties involved in quality evaluation processes shall comply with the guidelines in their most up-to-date version.

2. The guidelines referred to in the preceding paragraph shall take effect only after publication on the GAES website and shall be applied immediately to the processes in progress, unless specified otherwise.

Section II

External quality assurance entity, observer and technical support

Article 27

External quality assurance entity

1. The evaluation exercises are mainly carried out by an external quality assurance entity.
2. The institutions shall, in accordance with their needs and development considerations, choose an appropriate external quality assurance entity to carry out the evaluation exercise in accordance with the guidelines.

Article 28

Observer

1. The GAES may indicate, in the evaluation exercise, observers responsible for monitoring and verifying compliance with the guidelines by the external quality assurance entity.
2. In the performance of their duties, observers shall have the right to attend meetings and access documents related to the evaluation exercise.
3. Observers shall be subject to compliance with the code of conduct and procedures outlined in the guidelines.

Article 29

Technical support

For the purposes of implementing and monitoring the provisions of this administrative regulation and other legislation governing higher education quality evaluation, the GAES may

seek advice from technical advisors or specialists from the Macao SAR or outside of the Macao SAR, obtain technical assistance services, or seek the issuing of opinions by other specialized entities, academics entities or individuals, including for the establishment of the Quality Evaluation Panel.

CHAPTER IV

Funding

Article 30

Financial support for evaluation exercises

1. In promoting the continuous improvement of the quality of higher education of the Macao SAR, the Macao SAR Government provides funding for evaluation exercises to ensure that the requirements provided in the higher education quality evaluation system and their implementation and operation are met.
2. The amounts of funding to be granted and the requirements and conditions to be observed in the distribution and use of resources in the implementation and operation of the higher education quality evaluation system are defined by the Higher Education Fund.

CHAPTER V

Evaluation procedure

Article 31

Evaluation plan

1. The evaluation plan indicates the timeline of the evaluation and is submitted to the GAES for approval upon submission of an application, indicating the external quality assurance entities chosen and accompanied by all necessary information.
2. The GAES may request the submission of documents or further clarifications whenever it deems necessary, in the respective deadline.

Article 32

Approval of evaluation proposal

1. In order to approve the evaluation proposal, the GAES considers in particular that:
 - 1) The external quality assurance entity chosen meets the requirements of the guidelines;
 - (2) The evaluation exercise is carried out in accordance with the evaluation guidelines;
 - (3) The evaluation exercise is carried out within the period defined in the legal provisions or in the guidelines for the evaluation exercise.
2. Whenever it deems necessary, the GAES may request opinions from the Quality Evaluation Panel.
3. Without prejudice to the non-approval of the evaluation proposal, the GAES may require higher education institutions to reformulate or submit a new evaluation proposal when they consider that the one submitted does not comply with the guidelines or that the rationale presented is insufficient and not duly substantiated.

Article 33

Execution of evaluation exercise

1. The evaluation exercise shall take place and be completed within the period and deadline prescribed.
2. The external quality assurance entity shall carry out the evaluation exercise in accordance with the evaluation guidelines and the approved evaluation proposal.

Article 34

Evaluation outside the prescribed period and deadline

1. The GAES provides official support to higher education institutions, in particular by helping them to contact an external quality assurance entity in order to promote and initiate the exercise of institutional quality audit or the program review in any of the following situations:
 - 1) When the evaluation in the modalities of institutional quality audit or program review is not carried out by the higher education institutions in the period and deadline prescribed for that purpose;

- 2) When it is reasonable to expect that the evaluation exercise will not be completed within the period or timeframe provided for that purpose.
2. Higher education institutions shall not refuse the support provided by the GAES in the situations referred to in the preceding paragraph and shall bear the costs of the evaluation carried out under those conditions.
3. For evaluations conducted out of the period and deadline prescribed for that purpose, it is not allowed to establish a new validity period for evaluations, the periodicity and deadline should remain the same.
4. In the situations provided for in sub-paragraphs 1) and 2) of paragraph 1 for program review and without prejudice to the provisions of the preceding paragraph, the Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture may decide to suspend the enrolment for new students in the programs of the immediately following academic year and until the higher education institutions have completed the program review.

Article 35

Submission of the evaluation report

1. At the end of the evaluation, a preliminary report shall be prepared by the external quality assurance entity in order for the higher education institution to be heard in the procedure after which the evaluation report will be issued with the corresponding outcome.
2. Having received the evaluation report, the higher education institution shall send it to the GAES within 45 days from the date of receipt.
3. The evaluation report sent to the GAES shall be issued in accordance with the evaluation guidelines and must mandatorily include the authentication by the external quality assurance agency or the signature of the responsible person.

Article 36

Confirmation of the evaluation outcome

1. The GAES confirms the evaluation outcomes indicated in the evaluation report and may, in support of the decision, seek opinion from the Quality Evaluation Panel.

2. The decision on the confirmation of the outcome may be appealed in accordance with the law.

Article 37

Evaluation action plan

1. After the evaluation exercises in the modalities of institutional quality audit and program review have been carried out, and the evaluation outcome has been confirmed, the higher education institution shall draw up the evaluation action plan, taking the opinion and suggestions contained in the evaluation report for consideration.
2. After obtaining the agreement of the external quality assurance entity, the higher education institution, shall forward the action plan to the GAES for communication and registration purposes, within 45 days of the mentioned agreement.
3. In the annual report submitted to the GAES by the higher education institutions in accordance with higher education legislation, it is mandatory to include a part on the progress of the work relating to the action plan.
4. In addition to the information provided in accordance with the preceding paragraph, the GAES can require the higher education institution to submit specific reports on the progress of the works relating to the action plan whenever it is verified or reasonably foreseen that the institution will not work on the improvement nor meet the requirements indicated in accordance with the evaluation action plan.

Article 38

Disclosure of the evaluation report

The GAES has the full right to disclose in whole or in part the evaluation report, even in cases where no confirmation of the evaluation outcome has been obtained according to paragraph 1 of Article 36.

CHAPTER VI

Status to self-regulate and offer new programs

Article 39

Application conditions

1. The status to self-regulate and offer new programs depends on application to the GAES by the higher education institutions that obtain the classification of “Meeting Accreditation Standards” in the institutional accreditation outcomes.
2. In cases where the higher education institutions have obtained, in the institution accreditation outcomes, “Meeting Accreditation Standards with Condition(s)”, and the outcomes have already been confirmed by the GAES, they can only submit the application to the GAES after fulfilling the conditions listed in the evaluation report, and must submit the proof that certifies the satisfaction of the respective conditions.

Article 40

Scope and duration

1. The scope of the status to self-regulate and offer new programs includes:
 - 1) All or part of the higher education institution, at the level of organizational units or disciplines;
 - 2) All or part of the levels of academic levels.
2. The duration of the status to self-regulate and offer new programs is identical to the evaluation period of the institutional quality audit.
3. The scope and duration of the period of status to self-regulate and offer new programs shall be determined by the order of the Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture and published in the Official Gazette.

Article 41

Continuity

1. Higher education institutions which have obtained the status to self-regulate and offer new programs under this administrative regulation and intends to maintain their respective status must restart the institutional accreditation process and complete it before expiry of the validity period of the status to self-regulate and offer new programs.

2. The continuity of status to self-regulate and offer new programs depends on the outcome of the new institutional accreditation.

3. The provisions of paragraph 3 of the preceding Article apply to the scope and duration of the new validity period of the status to self-regulate and offer new programs.

Article 42

Suspension of the status

1. The suspension of the status to self-regulate and offer new programs occurs in the following situations:

1) Failure of the higher education institution to maintain the existing requirements at the time of accreditation;

2) When the loss of pedagogical quality of the higher education institution becomes evident.

2. On the basis of a proposal from the GAES accompanied by the facts and reasons for the suspension, the decision of the suspension shall be the subject of an order issued by the Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture and published in the Official Gazette, setting the duration of the suspension which is limited by the validity period of status to self-regulate and offer new programs.

3. During the period of suspension of the status to self-regulate and offer new programs, an improvement plan to be fulfilled by the higher education institution is agreed with the GAES except if the time until the end of the validity period for the status to self-regulate and offer new programs does not allow for it.

4. In order to follow up and monitor compliance with the improvement plan, the GAES may require the higher education institution to submit reports or documents and provide further clarification whenever necessary.

5. In order to analyze the effectiveness of the improvement plan, the GAES may request opinions from the Quality Evaluation Panel.

Article 43

Status reinstatement

1. The reinstatement of the status to self-regulate and offer new programs can only occur after the successful completion of the improvement plan and operates by removing the suspension of the status.

2. The removing of the suspension and the status reinstatement is proposed by the GAES and determined by the order of the Secretary of Social Affairs and Culture, applying with the necessary adaptations, the provisions of paragraph 2 of the preceding Article.

Article 44

Termination of the status

The termination of the status occurs immediately and automatically whenever the higher education institution, after the suspension of the status, fails to successfully complete the improvement plan or when the time until the deadline expiry of the status to self-regulate and offer new programs does not permit it.

Article 45

Exception

1. The provisions of this Chapter shall not apply to higher education institutions which, on the date of entry into force of Law No. 10/2017, already have the right to launch new programs, during the period in which the right is maintained.

2. The exception provided for in the preceding paragraph shall cease when there are grounds for suspension or termination of that right.

CHAPTER VII

Special conditions

Article 46

New institutions

Higher education institutions that begin their operations after the entry into force of this administrative regulation shall submit the academic year development plan to the GAES by the date of the first institutional quality audit, at least one month prior to its commencement.

Article 47

Programs involving the professional qualification for the exercise of professional functions

In the planning of programs offering the qualification to perform specific professional functions in the Macao SAR or when there is a substantial change in those, the higher education institutions or collaborating entities shall identify and consider the requirements of their respective professional qualification.

Article 48

Organization of new programs and substantial changes of programs

1. Higher education institutions intending to establish or modify programs within their scope of status to self-regulate and offer new programs in accordance with the provisions of this administrative regulation shall complete their respective procedures according to the provisions of this administrative regulation and the respective statutes or regulations before submitting the application for registration of the launch or modification of the program to the GAES.
2. Higher education institutions that have obtained the status to self-regulate and offer new programs and wish to establish or modify programs outside their scope area must proceed to the program accreditation, obtaining the outcome of “Meeting Accreditation Standards” or “Meeting Accreditation Standards with Condition(s)” together with full compliance with the respective condition, before submitting applications for approval or amendment, and before registering the program to the GAES.
3. Higher education institutions which have not obtained the status to self-regulate and offer new programs, when establishing programs or having substantial changes in the programs, must conduct program accreditation under this administrative regulation before submitting applications for approval or amendment, and before registering of the program to the GAES.

Article 49

Non-local higher education programs

1. Higher education institutions based outside of the Macao SAR that offer non-local higher education programs are accredited according to the quality system of the place where the headquarter of the institution is located and must submit to the GAES the respective documentation for the purpose of evaluating the quality of the mentioned programs.

2. The GAES may entrust academic experts, academic organizations or external quality assurance entities to evaluate the quality of the respective programs to be provided, and the collaborating entity shall bear the resulting expenses.
3. To non-local higher education programs subject to quality assurance in accordance with the preceding two paragraphs, paragraphs 2 and 3 of Article 6 shall be applied with the necessary adaptations.
4. Where necessary, the GAES may require the higher education institution based outside the Macao SAR to follow the process of quality evaluation of the program and the submission of additional documents or clarifications.

Article 50

Other situations

1. In the verification of situations not prescribed in this administrative regulation, the GAES can require studies and follow-up to verify the compliance with the requirements for quality evaluation, and may also request an opinion from the Quality Evaluation Panel to justify the proposals to be submitted to the Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture for further decision.
2. In the case of suspension of a program operation, admission of new students, or in the absence of new enrolments for a period equal to or greater than seven consecutive years, the higher education institutions that have a valid status to self-regulate and offer new programs and which intend to admit new enrolments and have the programs operating again, must complete the procedures according to the provisions of this administrative regulation and the statutes or regulations of the respective institution.
3. In the situations referred to in the preceding paragraph, in cases where higher education institutions do not have a valid status to self-regulate and offer new programs, the procedure of program accreditation shall be completed again before admitting enrolment and having the program operating again.
4. In programs approved before the entry into force of this administrative regulation, when there are students enrolled only within the first evaluation cycle, the higher education institution must complete the first program review within a period of seven years from the commencement date of the respective academic year.

CHAPTER VIII

Exemption of evaluation

Article 51

Conditions for evaluation exemption

1. The academic or pedagogical unit obtaining professional accreditation may, according to the scope and duration of the professional accreditation, request to the GAES its exemption of the program review during the respective period.
2. If the programs already in operation obtain professional accreditation, higher education institutions may, according to the scope and duration of professional accreditation, request from the GAES the program review exemption of these during the respective period.
3. The application for the exemption from evaluation shall be submitted to the GAES by the higher education institutions in accordance with the following conditions:
 - 1) If the professional accreditation is still within the validity period, the higher education institutions may submit the application with the respective information;
 - 2) The duration of the exemption is preferably equal to that of the professional accreditation and shall be decided upon and disclosed after all circumstances have been considered;
 - 3) After expiry of the professional accreditation of the programs, a new program review or new professional accreditation shall take place within a one-year period;
 - 4) In order to maintain the validity of the exemption, higher education institutions must submit the application with the information on the professional accreditation renewal of the programs benefiting from the exemption.
4. If higher education institutions obtain approval in the institutional accreditation, the institutional quality audit may be exempted during that period, in accordance with Article 17.

CHAPTER IX

Technical support

Article 52

Quality Evaluation Panel

1. The Quality Evaluation Panel has an advisory nature and is responsible for the discussion, analysis and comment on the cases and matters subject to its deliberation by the GAES.
2. The Quality Evaluation Panel shall be composed of a maximum of seven members, of local and non-local experts and academics, from the field of higher education and evaluation, with one of them being the Chairman.
3. The members shall be appointed by the order of the Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture, published in the Official Gazette, for a renewable term with a maximum of three years.

Article 53

Functioning

1. The Quality Evaluation Panel operates in accordance with its internal regulations in ordinary and extraordinary meetings.
2. The Quality Evaluation Panel may consist of groups for the analysis of cases, consisting of an odd number of at least three of its members, which shall disband immediately after submission to the GAES of the results of the analysis, including the opinions or reports issued.
3. It shall be incumbent upon the Chairman to:
 - 1) Represent the Quality Evaluation Panel;
 - 2) Convene and preside over ordinary meetings;
 - 3) Approve the agenda of ordinary meetings;
 - 4) Assess and authorize a group for the analysis of cases;
 - 5) Indicate one of the members as substitute to the Chairman in his/her absences or impediments.

Article 54

Administrative and financial support

The administrative and logistical support to the Quality Evaluation Panel is provided by the GAES which also bears the financial expenses necessary for its operation.

Article 55

Remuneration

The remuneration of the members of the Quality Evaluation Panel shall be determined by the order of the Secretary for Social Affairs and Culture and published in the Official Gazette.

CHAPTER X

Transitory and final provisions

Section I

Transitory provisions

Article 56

Previous institutional quality audit

The higher education institutions which, on the date of entry into force of this administrative regulation, have already undertaken an institutional quality audit or have commenced the respective procedures provided that they comply with the principles prescribed in this administrative regulation, may be exempted from the institutional quality audit regarding the first evaluation cycle, being applicable to this, the provisions of Article 17, with the necessary adaptations.

Article 57

Previous program accreditation

The higher education institutions which, on the date of entry into force of this administrative regulation, have their programs accredited or are in the process of program accreditation, may request the acceptance of the validity of the mentioned accreditation, provided that they comply with the principles prescribed in this administrative regulation, under its terms and for the purposes of its provisions.

Article 58

Previous program review

The higher education institutions which, on the date of entry into force of this administrative regulation, have already carried out program reviews or are going through program review procedures, may be exempted from the program review related to the first evaluation cycle, provided the compliance with the principles prescribed in this administrative regulation, under the terms and for the purposes of its provisions.

Article 59

Scheduling the first program review cycle

The programs in operation at the date of entry into force of this administrative regulation are subject to program review in accordance with the present administrative regulation and with the table hereby annexed to it, which forms an integral part thereof.

Section II

Final provisions

Article 60

Entry into force

1. This administrative regulation shall enter into force on 8 August, 2018, without prejudice to the provisions of the following two paragraphs.
2. The accreditation of the new higher education programs launched or of the previously existing ones but which are subject to substantial changes will take place only one year after the entry into force of this administrative regulation.
3. One year after the entry into force of this administrative regulation, all requests to offering non-local higher education programs are subject to the program quality review according to the requirements defined for that type of program.

Approved on 27 July, 2018.

Hereby published,

The Chief Executive, Chui Sai On.

ANNEX

(Referred to in Article 59)

Scheduling the first program review cycle

1st evaluation cycle	work progress
1st to 4th year	Higher education institutions must have at least 50% of their programs complete Program Review
5th to 6th year	Higher education institutions must have at least 80% of their programs complete Program Review
7th year	Higher education institutions must have 100% of their programs complete Program Review