

Hong Kong Baptist University

Guidelines on the Implementation of the University Language Policy (ULP) 2019/20

Basic Principles

1. The Medium of Instruction (MOI) for classroom teaching (in all forms) at HKBU is English, except for those courses that are granted exemption.
2. The language policy should adhere to the following general principles:
 - a) *While appreciating the benefits of mother-tongue education, for the sake of a good English learning environment, the Faculties* are generally in support of the University's policy of using English as the "default" language of instruction.*
 - b) *It was understood that the use of English as the "default" language of instruction would not preclude the use of Chinese (Cantonese or Putonghua) in the teaching of materials, texts and courses related to Chinese language and culture, such as Chinese language and literature and journalism; Chinese philosophy and history; Chinese music; as well as Chinese medicine. These and other similar courses would be taught in Chinese¹.*
 - c) *For courses with a comparative or interdisciplinary element involving Chinese materials, text and culture, the use of Chinese would be considered as at least one of the languages of instruction².*
 - d) *For disciplines intended for training graduates to work in a Chinese language context, there would be a justification for some of the courses to be taught in Chinese³.*

* "Faculty/Faculties" is a generic and collective term referring to Faculties, Schools and the Academy of Visual Arts (AVA) of HKBU.

¹ Chinese courses such as CHI and SCM belong to this category.

² Courses such as HMW, SOC and others belong to this category.

³ Courses such as SOWK, EDUC, CTV/AF and China Business-related belong to this category.

- e) *It would be up to the academic units to determine the MOI for individual courses when they work on the curriculum, and that the University would entrust the decision on MOI for courses to the respective academic units instead of setting a particular percentage threshold for the offering of courses with English-Medium of Instruction (EMI). In any case, with the understanding that **English** is the official MOI of the University, academic units should observe that EMI courses should always be the majority except for foreign language courses which would be conducted as far as feasible in the appropriate languages⁴.*
- f) *Mixed-mode of MOI is NOT allowed while the proposal for offering courses in more than one MOI section to provide different choices of MOI for students is welcome. Academic units should declare the dominant MOI for courses concerned.*
- g) *Academic units so exempted from the ULP for any subset of their courses must nevertheless make sufficient English-medium courses available to non-Chinese speaking students thereby enabling them to be able to complete their given Major programmes as pedagogically appropriate and justifiable. (Concrete Action 7, Report of the Task Force on Review of University Language Policy, approved by the Senate on 12 Feb 2018)*

Collaborative arrangement

3. Since the 2012/13 academic year, a regular exercise is to be conducted to collect from Faculties the annual submission of the Language Policy Implementation (“LPI Plans”) and the lists of courses with proposed Medium of Instruction (“MOI Plans”) to be offered in the academic year.

⁴ Foreign language courses including French, German, Japanese, Spanish and Italian offered by the Language Centre belong to this category.

4. Faculties are responsible for implementing the language policy, and QAC will oversee the overall implementation by scrutinizing the implementation plans and progress review submitted by the Faculty Boards (via the Quality Assurance Sub-Committee on Sub-degree Programmes (QF Level 4) (QASC (QF L4)) for sub-degree courses)⁵. The QAC will then submit a report to the Senate.

Monitoring mechanism

5. The MOI of courses should be determined on the basis of academic merits in line with course pedagogical design rather than to hinge on the availability of faculty members. In this connection, it would be desirable to conduct the annual planning of the MOI of courses together with that of Teaching Assignment at the Faculty/Programme level to ensure the quality of teaching and learning in a holistic manner. As such, Faculties are requested to submit the *MOI Plans* along with the Teaching Assignment plans in early **April** each year. The corresponding *LPI Plan* for 2019/20 should then be prepared by making reference to the *MOI Plans*.
6. MOI of individual courses have been recorded on the academic transcripts since the 2013 intake for reference of the stakeholders in assessing the graduates for their career and academic pursuits.
7. In order to ensure that accurate information on the MOI could be included in the University Student Handbook for advance reference of students prior to course registration, it was resolved that all applications for exemption from the ULP (i.e., English as the default MOI) should be submitted to the QAC for consideration and endorsement according to the annual submission schedule.
8. All non-English as MOI (non-EMI) applications will have to be duly endorsed by the respective Department Heads and Faculty Deans and the QASC (QF L4) (*applicable for sub-degree courses*)⁵. Applications subsequently endorsed by the QAC would be submitted to the Senate for final approval prior to the publication of the University Student Handbook.

⁵The Senate, at its 2nd meeting (2017/18) held on 4 December 2017, approved the implementation of the formalized management structure of Self-financed Sub-degree Programmes in which two QASCs would be set up to monitor the quality of sub-degree programmes pitched at QF Levels 1-3 and QF Level 4 respectively.

9. Non-EMI applications not included in the annual submission will **NOT** be considered.

10. Academic Units should take note of the following points regarding the special arrangements on the offering of new courses under the respective circumstances:
 - a) For new courses to be introduced in the middle of the academic year (should be minimal), applications for non-EMI courses should be submitted to the QAC via the respective Department Heads and Faculty Deans (also via the QASC (QF L4) for sub-degree courses)⁵ by **May** of the academic year such that approval of the Senate could be sought in time.

 - b) For new courses to be offered under the new programme to be launched in the academic year, the Programme Director should submit applications for exemption from the ULP (for non-EMI courses if applicable) to the QAC via the Department Head and Faculty Dean (and also the QASC (QF L4) for sub-degree courses)⁶ along with the accreditation documents (i.e., Accreditation Report and Written Responses). The Accreditation Panel's approval to the introduction of the new programme should NOT be regarded as the University's official approval to the programme for delivering its courses in a language other than English. The QAC would deliberate on the exemption applications at the same time when the Accreditation Report and the Written Responses to the Report are being considered.

 - c) At any rate, the Programme Director should note that the exemption, if approved, is NOT a once and for all arrangement as such exceptional arrangement should be subject to regular review in future along with the annual review and submission of *LPI Plans*.

Quality Assurance Committee

30 October 2018