

Hong Kong Institute of Speech Therapists Limited	Document No.	HKIST-A-IBA-v1
	Issue Date	18/09/2017
Institutional-Based Assessment for Speech Therapy Education Programmes in Hong Kong	Review Date	17/09/2020
	Page	1 of 11

Institutional-Based Assessment for Speech Therapy Education Programmes in Hong Kong

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1.0	

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Hong Kong Institute of Speech Therapists Limited	Document No.	HKIST-A-IBA-v1
	Issue Date	18/09/2017
Institutional-Based Assessment for Speech Therapy Education Programmes in Hong Kong	Review Date	17/09/2020
	Page	2 of 11

1.0 Introduction

We adopt the following definition of the role of Speech Therapists/ Speech-language therapists in Hong Kong:

“The speech and language therapy profession recognizes the rights of individuals to possess an effective form of communication and swallowing, and the need for efficient and effective service provision. Speech-language therapists undertake to provide a high quality service to individuals, service providers and the community and to maximize these functions through assessment and identification, intervention, appropriate liaison, management, advocacy, community education and research.”

(Speech Pathology Australia, 2011)

Transparent and objective educational requirement for Accredited Speech Therapist of the Hong Kong Institute of Speech Therapists Limited (HKIST) is an integral part of the Institute’s responsibility. These criteria ensure that graduates from institutions offering speech therapy programmes (hereafter Provider Institutions) in Hong Kong meet a common set of standards when practicing in Hong Kong. At the institutional level, this process can be considered as an endorsement in which the Institute determines if a degree programme fulfils the stated criteria and can produce qualified entry-level speech therapy graduates.

Hong Kong Institute of Speech Therapists Limited	Document No.	HKIST-A-IBA-v1
	Issue Date	18/09/2017
Institutional-Based Assessment for Speech Therapy Education Programmes in Hong Kong	Review Date	17/09/2020
	Page	3 of 11

2.0 Objective

2.1 The intent of the criteria is to evaluate speech therapy education programmes in Hong Kong in order to maintain high-standards and continuing improvement in the quality of professional education in speech therapy in Hong Kong. The HKIST recommends the following uses of the criteria:

2.1.1 To provide a benchmark against which speech therapy qualifications from other countries can be assessed for eligibility for HKIST Accredited Speech Therapist

2.1.2 To inform employers the expected standards of practice of entry-level speech therapists

2.1.3 To inform Provider Institutions of the standards and requirements of the professional education of speech therapists

2.2 HKIST will grant Accredited Speech Therapist title to graduates of speech therapy degree programmes that meet the required standards. The programmes endorsed by the HKIST permit only those students who have achieved the entry-level standard specified in the criteria to graduate.

Hong Kong Institute of Speech Therapists Limited	Document No.	HKIST-A-IBA-v1
	Issue Date	18/09/2017
Institutional-Based Assessment for Speech Therapy Education Programmes in Hong Kong	Review Date	17/09/2020
	Page	4 of 11

3.0 Standards for Accredited Speech Therapists – Institutional based Evaluation Framework

3.1 Governance and Administrative Structure of the Provider Institution

3.1.1 The Provider Institution should meet the required level in the Qualification Framework (2012).

Elaboration:

The Provider Institution should meet Level 5 or above of the Qualifications Framework of the Education Bureau (2012). That is, either a Bachelor's degree (Level 5) in Speech Therapy or equivalent, or a Master's Degree (Level 6) in Speech Therapy or equivalent. The institution should be a University Grants Committee (UGC) funded institution who possesses the self-accrediting status as granted by the Education Bureau to ensure the quality of the programme they offer.

3.1.2 The programme should employ appropriate academically and clinically qualified staff in all positions.

Elaboration:

- i. The Provider Institution employs a balance of academic and clinical staff to deliver the programme adequately.
- ii. The majority of teaching staff in the programme should hold a speech therapy qualification and be eligible for Accredited Speech Therapist of the HKIST.
- iii. The programme director should hold a doctoral degree and have a research emphasis in speech-language therapy or in speech or language science.

3.2 Curriculum (Academic and Clinical Education)

3.2.1 The course length should be sufficiently long for students' academic and clinical work.

Elaboration:

- i. A bachelor's degree would take a minimum of 105 weeks of full-time study preferably distributed over four academic years and one year of common core courses (Royal College of Speech & Language Therapists, 2010).
- ii. A master's degree would normally take a minimum of 80 weeks full-time equivalent study over at least two extended years and the bachelor's degrees of the individual should be a discipline that is related to speech therapy (Royal College of Speech & Language Therapists, 2010).

Hong Kong Institute of Speech Therapists Limited	Document No.	HKIST-A-IBA-v1
	Issue Date	18/09/2017
Institutional-Based Assessment for Speech Therapy Education Programmes in Hong Kong	Review Date	17/09/2020
	Page	5 of 11

3.2.2 The curriculum (academic and clinical) should provide the training that is in congruent with the competencies set in CBOS 2011 and the supplementary document.

Elaboration:

- i. The programme must provide appropriate academic and clinical experiences on a regular basis.
- ii. The programme should demonstrate how the requirements stated in CBOS 2011 and the supplementary document are met by describing the outcomes of students' knowledge and skills necessary for entry level for speech therapists in Hong Kong.

3.2.3 The clinical practicum should provide students with appropriate experience in the evaluation and treatment of children and adults and with a diversity of disorders of speech, language, hearing, and swallowing disorders.

Elaboration:

- i. The programme should have written policies and procedures that describe the nature of students' supervision and qualifications of clinical supervisors.
- ii. The programme should have a minimum of 300 clock hours of direct client contact and of which on average of at least 25 percent must be supervised.
- iii. Clinical experience and time spent in clinical settings should be distributed in a way that prepares students to provide speech therapy service to a diversity of populations. At least 30 clock hours must be completed in each of the four categories listed below.
 - Assessment in pediatric population
 - Assessment in adult population
 - Treatment in pediatric population
 - Treatment in adult population

3.3 Student Admission

3.3.1 The programme should have clear written criteria for accepting student cohorts for the study in speech therapy.

Elaboration:

- i. The Provider Institution should have admission criteria specific to the speech therapy program.

Hong Kong Institute of Speech Therapists Limited	Document No.	HKIST-A-IBA-v1
	Issue Date	18/09/2017
Institutional-Based Assessment for Speech Therapy Education Programmes in Hong Kong	Review Date	17/09/2020
	Page	6 of 11

3.3.2 Students of the programme should be informed about the degree requirements, ethical standard, programme's policy and procedures.

Elaboration:

- i. The programme can provide relevant information to students via student handbooks, orientation sessions and academic advising meetings.

3.4 Resources and Facilities

3.4.1 The Provider Institution should provide adequate support to ensure the curriculum could be delivered adequately.

Elaboration:

The Provider Institution should provide students with access to adequate space, library resources, clinical resources, state-of-the-art technology, equipment, research laboratories, and support services for students' successful attainment of learning objectives.

3.4.2 The programme should have access to adequate client base.

Elaboration:

The Provider Institution should have access to adequate clinical sites and client base to support students' clinical and educational experiences.

3.5 Evaluation

3.5.1 There is an evaluation plan for the speech-therapy programme.

Elaboration:

To ensure that students can achieve successful programme outcomes, the programme should have a regularly scheduled review of the course, normally in no more than 5-year cycles.

3.5.2 Students' progress in the clinical and academic curriculum should be evaluated each semester.

Elaboration:

Each student should be assessed as he/ she progresses across the programme. There should be separate evaluations conducted for the academic and clinical components of the curriculum.

3.5.3 Teaching effectiveness of lecturers, tutors and clinical supervisors are evaluated at regularly scheduled time.

Elaboration:

Hong Kong Institute of Speech Therapists Limited	Document No.	HKIST-A-IBA-v1
	Issue Date	18/09/2017
Institutional-Based Assessment for Speech Therapy Education Programmes in Hong Kong	Review Date	17/09/2020
	Page	7 of 11

Lecturers, tutors, and clinical supervisors play an important role in the educational experience of students. Teaching evaluations should be carried at regularly scheduled interval for the development of the programme.

4.0 The Evaluation Process

4.1 The principal objective of the evaluation process is to assess the standard and content of programme in relation to the context in Hong Kong and according to the international standards required for recognition of speech therapy qualifications in other countries.

The process involves examination of the Provider Institution's staffing, organization, quality assurance, examination of the course syllabi, entry standards, and other aspects that comprise the graduating student experience with reference to CBOS. The Provider Institution is recommended to submit the following documents so as to provide sufficient evidence that the programme meets the standards.

- i. Programme start-up review report (for new programmes)
- ii. Policy or statement of how they judge the quality of enrolled students (e.g., admission criteria and admission report)
- iii. A written report explaining how the programme maps on to each of the units of the modified CBOS document
- iv. Curriculum document
- v. Full course outline with the timing of assessments
- vi. University prospectus
- vii. Syllabus of each subject
- viii. Clinical hours and distribution
- ix. Nature of clinical supervision
- x. Qualification of clinical and academic staff (e.g., CVs)
- xi. Sample examinations including summative and formative assessments
- xii. Documentation of any ongoing programme review
- xiii. Student course evaluation
- xiv. External supervisor evaluation
- xv. Quality control mechanism (e.g., reports from external examiners, programme review)
- xvi. Access to adequate facilities and resources

4.2 The process can be considered as 4 steps:

Hong Kong Institute of Speech Therapists Limited	Document No.	HKIST-A-IBA-v1
	Issue Date	18/09/2017
Institutional-Based Assessment for Speech Therapy Education Programmes in Hong Kong	Review Date	17/09/2020
	Page	8 of 11

- 4.2.1 The Provider Institution prepares an application for Institutional Assessment to be submitted to HKIST for the Registration Committee. This application is first checked by the Registration Committee for the completeness of the submitted documents. If the Committee judges that the application is ready for review, it may proceed to Step 2.
- 4.2.2 A Review Panel consisting of a minimum of four members will be formed and selected by the Registration Committee. The members of the Review Panel will include:
- i. A tenured faculty member from Speech Therapy programme in Hong Kong excluding the programme under reviewed,
 - ii. A practising speech therapist selected from the Registration Committee,
 - iii. A overseas faculty member with relevant background and qualifications in accrediting speech therapy programmes, and
 - iv. A member appointed by HKIST among the Accredited Speech Therapists.

Review Panel members must inform the HKIST of any potential conflict of interest with regard to serving as a Review Panel Member to a particular programme before the review process. One of the above members except (i) (to avoid any conflict of interest) will become the Panel leader who coordinates the Panel meeting. The member in (i) can contribute to the discussion and review process but he or she does not have a vote on the panel.

- 4.2.3 The Registration Committee passes the document to the Review Panel. After reviewing all the received documents, the Review Panel initiates a half-day site visit coordinated by the Provider Institution. The aims of the site visit are to:
- i. provide an opportunity for discussion and clarification
 - ii. validate information given in the documentations
 - iii. obtain a complete picture for the assessments of the programme.

The visit includes, but is not limited to, meetings with the programme director, a full-time clinical supervisor, a sample of students in all years, and visit to the library, computing, research and other facilities relevant to the programme.

Hong Kong Institute of Speech Therapists Limited	Document No.	HKIST-A-IBA-v1
	Issue Date	18/09/2017
Institutional-Based Assessment for Speech Therapy Education Programmes in Hong Kong	Review Date	17/09/2020
	Page	9 of 11

4.2.4 The Panel Leader prepares the Panel's final report with the support of the HKIST Registration Committee based on the programme evaluation of the written application and the site visit results. The report indicates what status of evaluation is recommended. The HKIST will then communicate its findings and recommendations to the Provider Institution. Three outcomes are possible:

a) Full Endorsement

HKIST grants full endorsement when there is sufficient evidence that the programme scope, content, and assessments are deemed to have fulfilled the endorsement standard.

Once full endorsement is granted, the HKIST will issue a certificate to the Provider Institution. This is valid for 5 years subject to the conditions below. During that time the graduates from the programme will be accepted as eligible for Accredited Speech Therapist of the HKIST provided that the programme remains fully endorsed for the duration of their training.

Endorsement may be withdrawn if any of the followings occur:

- i. An annual report statement of changes to curriculum and assessments mapped against the Standards is not presented to or accepted by the HKIST.
- ii. There are substantive changes made to the assessments, curriculum or programme structure such that a programme is judged to no longer be in compliance with all accreditation standards, as indicated by clear evidence of circumstances that jeopardize the capability of the programme to provide acceptable educational experience for the students.
- iii. A programme has uncorrected issues noted earlier by the panel.

b) Provisional Endorsement

Provisional Endorsement is awarded when the HKIST finds, based on the Review Panel's report, that the assessments, currency and scope of programme content have not yet adequately demonstrate that the programme fulfils the standards, but that there are a limited number of changes which need to be made to reach those criteria.

Hong Kong Institute of Speech Therapists Limited	Document No.	HKIST-A-IBA-v1
	Issue Date	18/09/2017
Institutional-Based Assessment for Speech Therapy Education Programmes in Hong Kong	Review Date	17/09/2020
	Page	10 of 11

The HKIST will indicate which specified conditions must be achieved to allow full endorsement to be awarded.

When provisional endorsement is awarded, the HKIST Review Panel sets a date within 12 months of the initial provisional endorsement award by which specified conditions must be met. If the programme fails to comply with the specified requirements within that 12-month period it will be deemed “not endorsed”.

c) Not Endorsed

A programme is declared “not endorsed” when the HKIST finds, based on the Panel’s report, that the assessments, the currency and scope of programme content are deemed to have failed to fulfill the standards, and if it is clear that major adjustments to the curriculum and/or assessment processes are necessary before the programme can fulfill the standards, and that those adjustments are likely to take more than 12 months to implement. If a programme has had provisional endorsement for 12 months but is deemed to have not met the specified conditions, it will be deemed “not endorsed”.

5.0 Requirements for Institutional-based Assessment for Accredited Registration

Institutional-based Assessment is priority recommended for new degree programmes. The assessment will take place within the final year of the first cohort of the programme. It would be recommended if a Provider Institution who intends to launch a course on training STs to seek HKIST views to validate the programme standard before launching.

In the future, for previously-endorsed programmes, HKIST recommends the programme to be re-endorsed on a regular basis. Under this preliminary framework, the interval between endorsements can be 5 years. A shorter interval will be considered when a programme experiences substantive changes or when substantive problems are brought to the attention to the HKIST.

Hong Kong Institute of Speech Therapists Limited	Document No.	HKIST-A-IBA-v1
	Issue Date	18/09/2017
Institutional-Based Assessment for Speech Therapy Education Programmes in Hong Kong	Review Date	17/09/2020
	Page	11 of 11

6.0 Cost

6.1 Fees will be charged according to the costs of activities (e.g., invitation of reviewers) required

7.0 Review of the educational and training requirements

7.1 The educational requirements will be reviewed triennially and make necessary changes with reference to most-updated standard among speech therapists profession worldwide and adjust according to local needs.