



Executive Summary

Initial Institutional Licensure Neohorizon School of Business (NHBS) Dubai

13-16 February 2024

An External Review Team (hereafter ERT) appointed by the Commission for Academic Accreditation (CAA) of the Ministry of Education (MOE) of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) visited the Neohorizon School of Business (NHBS) campus from the 13th to the 16th of February 2024 to evaluate its Application for Initial Institutional Licensure (hereafter *Application*). The exit interview was held on the 16th of January 2024. During the review, the ERT reviewed relevant documents, toured the NHSB campus, and had extensive discussions with NHSB officials, faculty, students, and other stakeholders regarding the proposed program. The findings of the ERT reflect its observations at the time of the review as related to the *Standards for Licensure and Accreditation 2019* (hereinafter referred to as the *Standards*) and the *Procedural Manual for Initial Institutional Licensure 2019 (PM-IIL)*.

NHBS will rely on the Cheung Kong Graduate School of Business (CKGSB) as its long-term academic partner to provide academic services and as the guarantor of educational quality assurance. CKGSB will be the sole academic guarantor for NHSB for at least 10 years from its founding, after which the agreement between the two institutions will be automatically renewed unless both parties agree to dissolve it. CKGSB is an independent and privately funded school and a successful leader in business education in China that is committed to expanding knowledge by educating students to become leaders and creating a collaborative environment that embraces interdisciplinary thought, integrated entrepreneurship, cultural awareness, social responsibility, and advances in the cultivation of ideas into practical innovations. CKGSB now has 600 students in the MBA and 1400 in the EMBA, in addition to 22000 alumni in both programs.

NHBS has its principal address at offices 2, one central, PO 594, DWTC, Dubai. Upon Initial Institutional Licensure and Initial Program Accreditation, NHBS will begin to offer 2 academic programs at the master level, namely, the Master of Business Administration (MBA) and Executive Master of Business Administration (EMBA).

NHBS currently employs 1 resident faculty, 1 manager of campus facilities, 1 Dean, 1 Associate Dean, 1 staff member for student affairs, admission, and registration, 1 staff member for IT and library resources, and 1 for Quality Assurance.

The analysis of the IIL documentation highlighted a number of key issues for the ERT that showed NHBS to either not be compliant with the CAA *Standards* or that need further information to demonstrate compliance, and these areas are reflected in the Requirements and Suggestions in the report. Of concern to the ERT was the fact that the *Application* and



supporting material often presented contradictory information which may be the result of not having a qualified QA staff position given the early stage of its establishment. Although the ERT understands and accepts the approach of having CKGSB as the academic provider to NHSB, it is clear that some of their practices and structures do not translate well to the CAA *Standards*, as exemplified by the By-Laws having 52 Articles which in themselves presented contradictory material when considered in light of NHSB's proposed governance structures.

A significant amount of work needs to be undertaken to create and operationalize a meaningful QA function which is necessary to underpin and ensure the high quality of teaching and research that are a key aspirations for NHSB. The ERT applauds the intent to develop a research culture at NHSB which is tied to the high quality of faculty that are expected to be engaged through the partnership with CKGSB.

In terms of facilities, the ERT accepts that NHSB has a short-term solution with DCT that meets the basic requirements for the students and faculty but notes that there is a requirement for greater attention to aspects of Health and Safety issues and this has resulted in a number of requirements to ensure full compliance with the *Standards*.

It is clear to the ERT that NHSB needs to enact a comprehensive plan to recruit appropriately professionally qualified staff in key areas including QA, Finance, and IT to ensure that appropriate processes and practices are in place and to have appropriately qualified faculty.

The ERT makes its recommendations in a spirit of constructive engagement, with the aim of ensuring that the *Standards* are met, and to aid NHSB in its desired objective to secure initial institutional licensure.