

**BUREAU NUMBER FOR SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTIONS**

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Bureau Serial No.

S-EMB001

Question Serial No.

Oral

Examination of draft Estimates of Expenditure 2001-02

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO  
ORAL/SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Head : 146 Government Secretariat – Subhead :  
Education and Manpower  
Bureau

Programme : (2) Education

Controlling Officer : Secretary for Education and Manpower

Bureau Secretary : Secretary for Education and Manpower

Question : (a) How many candidates sat for the 2001 administration of the Language Proficiency Assessment (LPA), what is the unit cost for assessing each candidate, and how many of the candidates are serving teachers?  
  
(b) How many candidates does the Administration expect will sit for the 2002 administration of the LPA and what is the expected unit cost for assessing each candidate?

Asked by : Hon. SZETO Wah

Reply : (a) In the March 2001 administration, there were 429 candidates for the English subject, 145 of whom are serving teachers. On the Putonghua side, there were 312 candidates, 82 of whom were serving teachers.

For the papers administered by the Hong Kong Examinations Authority (HKEA), the fixed cost (for paper setting, moderation and pre-tests) for one administration of the assessment covering both the English and Putonghua subjects is about \$4 million; the variable cost for each subject is on average about \$850, which would be recovered from the candidates' assessment fees (except serving teachers who will be provided with one attempt of the papers free of charge). Therefore, the unit cost to Government for a candidate for the 2001 administration is about \$6,000.

The classroom language assessment is conducted by the Education Department and the costs are absorbed by the Department.

(b) The LPA is mainly for new teachers, particularly overseas graduates, and indeed for any member of the public who wishes to become an English or Putonghua teacher. Serving teachers may also wish to attempt the assessment to find out their proficiency level. These figures may vary each year and so the Administration has not made any estimation in terms of the number of candidates and the unit cost.

Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mrs Fanny Law

Name in block letters

Post Title

\_\_\_\_\_  
Secretary for Education and Manpower

Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
26 March 2001



Economies	<i>Participation of relevant age group in</i>		Year
	<i>Degree programmes</i>	<i>Sub-degree programmes</i>	
Hong Kong	17%	11%	1999
<b><i>OECD Economies</i></b>			
Australia	53%	N.A.	1998
Japan	36%	33%	1998
Germany	28%	14%	1998
U.K.	48%	27%	1998
U.S.A.	44%	14%	1998

The above figures (except those for Hong Kong) include private and public degree programmes, and take into account non-local students pursuing studies in respective countries. Some economies also include part-time programmes undertaken by mature students. By contrast, the figures for Hong Kong only take into account the publicly-funded programmes offered by the University Grants Committee-funded institutions and the Vocational Training Council, and excludes places offered by the Open University of Hong Kong, the Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts and the non-local degree and professional programmes offered in Hong Kong. Information on France and non-OECD economies such as Singapore and Taiwan is unavailable.

In deciding on the number of FYFD places, the Government has to strike a balance between quantity and quality, in particular, the number of candidates who meet the minimum admission requirements of local universities and the number of students who opt to study overseas each year.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Name in block letters \_\_\_\_\_ Mrs Fanny Law

Post Title \_\_\_\_\_ Secretary for Education and Manpower

Date \_\_\_\_\_ 26 March 2001



Bureau Serial No.

S-EMB004

Question Serial No.

S111

Examination of draft Estimates of Expenditure 2001-02  
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO  
WRITTEN/SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Head : 146 Government Secretariat                      Subhead :  
Education and Manpower Bureau

Programme :                      (2) Education

Controlling Officer : Secretary for Education and Manpower

Bureau Secretary : Secretary for Education and Manpower

Question :                      To follow up on the question of Bureau Serial No. EMB 020 (Question Serial No. 1156), the reply showed the number of places provided by UGC-funded institutions in the fields of information technology (IT) and financial services. Does the Administration have the rough figures of places in the same fields provided by self-financed programmes, the Open University of Hong Kong and other training organisations? Furthermore, it is mentioned in your reply that with Government's policy objective of increasing the age participation rate for tertiary education to 60%, places are expected to increase. Nevertheless, in view of the anticipated manpower shortage in the IT and financial services fields, does the Administration plan to address the problem by increasing the number of places in the related disciplines and strengthening training?

Asked by :                      Hon Andrew CHENG Kar-foo

Reply :                              The intake of self-financed IT and Business and Finance programmes offered by the University Grants Committee (UGC)-funded institutions and the Open University of Hong Kong (OUHK) in 2000/01<sup>3</sup> are set out below –

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<sup>3</sup> In our reply to Q1156, the figures for UGC-funded programmes reflect the actual intake in 1999-2000. The planned intakes for 2000-01 are 2 961 and 5 917 for IT and Business/Finance programmes respectively.



(a) IT Programmes

	<b>UGC-funded Institutions</b>	<b>OUHK</b> (two rounds of intake per year)
Sub-degree	2 640	160
Undergraduate	420	1 501
Postgraduate	593	1 008
<b>Total</b>	<b>3 653</b>	<b>2 669</b>

(b) Business and Finance Programme

	<b>UGC-funded Institutions</b>	<b>OUHK</b> (two rounds of intake per year)
Sub-degree	151	300
Undergraduate	356	1 289
Postgraduate	407	474
<b>Total</b>	<b>914</b>	<b>2 063</b>

The VTC plans to offer in the 2001-02 academic year 800 places in two Higher Diploma courses in business studies, as a pilot scheme and on a self-financed basis. If the pilot scheme proves successful, this will be expanded to offer more places with a wider choice of Higher Diploma courses including courses in Information Technology.

We will continue to encourage institutions to offer more self-financed places, which are more responsive to changing market demand. A number of providers are actively exploring the expansion of IT programmes in conjunction with prestigious non-local IT training institutes. It is our new policy objective to support the progressive increase in the age participation rate for tertiary education to 60% in ten years' time. As a planning target, we envisage that the annual intake to post-secondary education programmes will increase by about 28 000 in due course. A significant portion of these programmes will be in the fields of IT and financial services.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Name in block letters \_\_\_\_\_ Mrs Fanny Law

Post Title \_\_\_\_\_ Secretary for Education and Manpower

Date \_\_\_\_\_ 26 March 2001

Bureau Serial No.

S-EMB005

Question Serial No.

S112

Examination of draft Estimates of Expenditure 2001-02

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO  
WRITTEN/SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Head : 146 Government Secretariat      Subhead : 111 Hire of services and  
         Education and Manpower Bureau    professional fees

Programme : (1) Employment

Controlling Officer : Secretary for Education and Manpower

Bureau Secretary : Secretary for Education and Manpower

Question : To follow up the question of Bureau Serial No. EMB 003  
(Question Serial No. 0060), when will the two surveys  
mentioned in the reply be completed? What are the details  
about providing \$250,000 to support the functions of Hong  
Kong APEC Study Centre?

Asked by : Hon Andrew CHENG Kar-foo

Reply :

On the first question, the survey on the terms of employment of personal care workers in homes for the elderly relating to the Supplementary Labour Scheme is expected to be completed in the latter half of 2001, and the opinion survey on age discrimination in employment in early 2002.

On the second question, the Hong Kong APEC Study Centre was established in September 1999 to promote multi-disciplinary research on social, political and economic development and to link up with other Study Centres in the region for the promotion of cultural and intellectual exchanges. In support of its activities, the Administration has agreed to provide a matching grant of a maximum of \$250,000 per annum. Since its inception, the Centre's activities include hosting regional conferences on Gender Research, Strategic Development of China's Western Development etc., research on topics such as the Generation Gap, Women and Technology, and an opinion survey among Hong Kong residents on their perceptions of Hong Kong in relation to APEC.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Name in block letters \_\_\_\_\_ Mrs Fanny Law

Post Title \_\_\_\_\_ Secretary for Education and Manpower

Date \_\_\_\_\_ 26 March 2001

Bureau Serial No.

S-EMB006

Question Serial No.

S113

Examination of draft Estimates of Expenditure 2001-02  
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO  
WRITTEN/SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Head : 146 – Government Secretariat - Subhead  
Education and Manpower Bureau :

Programme : (1) Employment  
Controlling Officer : Secretary for Education and Manpower  
Bureau Secretary : Secretary for Education and Manpower

Question : To follow up the question of Bureau Serial No. EMB001  
(Question Serial No. 0058), when will funds be sought for the  
Skills Upgrading Scheme mentioned in the reply?

Asked by : Hon CHENG Kar-foo, Andrew

Reply : We have earmarked \$400 million for the Skills Upgrading  
Scheme and plan to seek the approval of the LegCo Finance  
Committee for the funding allocation in April/May.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Name in block letters \_\_\_\_\_ Mrs Fanny Law

Post Title \_\_\_\_\_ Secretary for Education and Manpower

Date \_\_\_\_\_ 26 March 2001

Bureau Serial No.

S-EMB007

Question Serial No.

S114

Examination of draft Estimates of Expenditure 2001-02

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO  
WRITTEN/SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Head : 146 Government Secretariat      Subhead :  
Education and Manpower Bureau

Programme :            (1) Employment

Controlling Officer : Secretary for Education and Manpower

Bureau Secretary : Secretary for Education and Manpower

Question :            To follow-up the question of Bureau Serial No. EMB013  
(Question Serial No. 0784), does the Administration have  
plan to make public the various consultancy studies  
mentioned in the reply? What is the specific timetable?

Asked by :            Hon Andrew CHENG Kar-foo

Reply :

- (1) The details of whether or not the major findings/recommendations of the consultancy studies for policy making and assessment commissioned by Education and Manpower Bureau and the departments under its purview in 2000-01 will make public and the specific timetable are provided below –

(a) Studies commissioned by Education and Manpower Bureau (under Head 146) –

<b>Scope</b>	<b>Name of consultants (if available)</b>	<b>Consultancy fees in 2000-01</b>	<b>Status (in plan / in progress / finished)</b>	<b>To make public the major findings/recommendations (Yes/No)</b>	<b>Specific Timetable</b>
Study on the Manpower Needs of the Legal Services Sector of Hong Kong	GML Consulting Limited	\$300,000	In progress	Yes	Mid 2001
Review of Prince Philip Dental Hospital	PriceWaterhouse Coopers Consultants HK Ltd	\$930,000	Finished	Yes	To be decided
Survey on Opinions of Employers on Major Aspects of Performance of Local 1999 First Degree Graduates	MDR Technology Limited	\$225,000	In progress	Yes	Second half of 2001
Comparative Study on the Governance Arrangements of Early Childhood Education, the Professional Training Practices and the interface of Early Childhood Education with Primary Education	Hong Kong Institute of Education	\$400,000	Finished	For reference by Education Commission	Not Applicable
Survey on supply and demand for domestic helpers	Mercados Solutions (Asia) Ltd	\$131,000	In progress	Yes	To be decided

<b>Scope</b>	<b>Name of consultants (if available)</b>	<b>Consultancy fees in 2000-01</b>	<b>Status (in plan / in progress / finished)</b>	<b>To make public the major findings/recommendations (Yes/No)</b>	<b>Specific Timetable</b>
Consultancy review of school improvement programme	PA Consulting Group	\$621,000	Finished	Reported to Public Works Sub-committee	June 2000
Study on the employment prospects of people aged 40-49	HK Institute of Economics and Business Strategy, the University of Hong Kong	\$500,000	Finished	Yes	Nov 2000
Survey on employers and employees to assess the implications of China's entry into the WTO on the local market	Census and Statistics Department	\$2,736,800	Finished	Yes	Nov 2000

(b) Studies commissioned by Education Department (under Head 40) –

<b>Scope</b>	<b>Names of consultants (if available)</b>	<b>Consultancy fees in 2000-01</b>	<b>Status of consultancy studies (in plan / in progress / finished)</b>	<b>To make public the major findings/recommendations (Yes/No)</b>	<b>Specific Timetable</b>
Study on Promoting Parent Education	The Chinese University of Hong Kong	\$500,000	In progress	Yes	To be decided
Consultancy Study on Effectiveness of Graduate Teachers in Public Primary Schools	The Hong Kong Institute of Education	\$1,000,000	Being finalised	To be decided	To be decided

<b>Scope</b>	<b>Names of consultants (if available)</b>	<b>Consultancy fees in 2000-01</b>	<b>Status of consultancy studies (in plan / in progress / finished)</b>	<b>To make public the major findings/ recommendations (Yes/No)</b>	<b>Specific Timetable</b>
Evaluation Study on the Implementation of the Medium of Instruction Guidance in Secondary Schools (S1 – S3)	The Chinese University of Hong Kong	\$1,070,000	In progress	Yes	To be decided
Consultancy study to review the progress and achievements of the use of information technology in school education (Phase I – stage I)	The Centre for Information Technology in School and Teacher Education, University of Hong Kong	\$500,000	In progress	Yes	Early 2002
A study on the multiplicity of handicap among students of special schools, practical schools and skills opportunity schools	The Hong Kong Institute of Education	\$1,660,000	In progress	To be decided	To be decided

(c) Studies commissioned by other departments/agencies under Education and Manpower Bureau (under Head 173 SFAA, Head 177 NDPB, Head 190 UGC) –

<b>Commissioned by</b>	<b>Scope</b>	<b>Names of consultants (if available)</b>	<b>Consultancy fees in 2000-01</b>	<b>Status of consultancy studies (in plan / in progress / finished)</b>	<b>To make public the major findings/ recommendations (Yes/No)</b>	<b>Specific Timetable</b>
University Grants Committee	A Comparative Study of Tuition Reviews in the World	Professor Zhuang Minxuan of HKU	\$75,000	Finished	Yes	Can be downloaded from UGC's Homepage

<b>Commissioned by</b>	<b>Scope</b>	<b>Names of consultants (if available)</b>	<b>Consultancy fees in 2000-01</b>	<b>Status of consultancy studies (in plan / in progress / finished)</b>	<b>To make public the major findings/ recommendations (Yes/No)</b>	<b>Specific Timetable</b>
University Grants Committee	A Documentary Study of Arrangements for Credit Accumulation and Transfer in Higher Education	Oxford Consulting Associates, HK	\$78,695	Finished	Yes	Can be downloaded from UGC's Homepage
University Grants Committee	Review of Teaching and Learning Quality Process Reviews	Dr D.F. Westerheijden of University of Twente, the Netherlands	\$23,559	Finished	Yes	Can be downloaded from UGC's Homepage
University Grants Committee	A Literature Survey on Voucher for Higher Education	Centre for Higher Education Policy Studies, the Netherlands	\$66,750	Finished	Yes	Can be downloaded from UGC's Homepage
University Grants Committee	Management Review of the UGC Secretariat	PriceWaterhouseCoopers Consultants HK Ltd.	\$376,000	Finished	Yes	Can be downloaded from UGC's Homepage
Student Financial Assistance Agency	Survey on student expenditure and the level of contribution from siblings to the family	MDR Technology Limited	\$960,000	Finished	Yes	To be decided, pending further consultation with Joint Committee on Student Finance, EMB and FB.



<b>Commissioned by</b>	<b>Scope</b>	<b>Names of consultants (if available)</b>	<b>Consultancy fees in 2000-01</b>	<b>Status of consultancy studies (in plan / in progress / finished)</b>	<b>To make public the major findings/recommendations (Yes/No)</b>	<b>Specific Timetable</b>
Vocational Training Council	Consultancy review on trade testing	PolyU Technology & Consultancy Co.Ltd.	\$780,000	Finished	Yes. Will consult training boards, employer associations and trade unions in May 2001	To be decided
Employees Retraining Board	Users Opinion Survey	Policy 21 Ltd, the University of Hong Kong	\$368,800	In Progress, near completion	Yes	April 2001

(2) Details of consultancy studies to be commissioned in 2001-02 are as follows –

(a) Studies to be commissioned by Education and Manpower Bureau (under Head 146) –

<b>Scope</b>	<b>Names of consultants (if available)</b>	<b>Consultancy fees in 2001-02</b>	<b>Status of consultancy studies (in plan / in progress / finished)</b>	<b>To make public the major findings/recommendations (Yes/No)</b>	<b>Specific Timetable</b>
Study on the Manpower Needs of the Legal Services Sector of Hong Kong (continuation from 2000-01)	GML Consulting Limited	\$768,000	In progress	Yes	mid 2001

<b>Scope</b>	<b>Names of consultants (if available)</b>	<b>Consultancy fees in 2001-02</b>	<b>Status of consultancy studies (in plan / in progress / finished)</b>	<b>To make public the major findings/ recommendations (Yes/No)</b>	<b>Specific Timetable</b>
Survey on Opinions of Employers on Major Aspects of Performance of Local 1999 First Degree Graduates (continuation from 2000-01)	MDR Technology Limited	\$525,000	In progress	Yes	Second half of 2001
Survey on Opinions of Employers on Major Aspects of Performance of Local 2000 First Degree Graduates (continuation from 2000-01)	-	\$750,000	Under planning	Yes	Second half of 2002
Surveys on the terms of employment of personal care workers in homes for the elderly relating to the Supplementary Labour Scheme	-	\$500,000	Under planning	To be decided	To be decided
Organisational set-up for the provision of training/ retraining in Hong Kong	-	\$1,200,000	Under planning	Yes	End 2001
Pilot Exercise to survey graduates of local teacher education programmes	-	\$450,000	Under planning	To be decided	To be decided
Opinion survey on age discrimination in employment	-	\$200,000	Under planning	Yes	1st quarter of 2001

## (b) Studies to be commissioned by Education Department (under Head 40)–

<b>Scope</b>	<b>Names of consultants (if available)</b>	<b>Consultancy fees in 2001-02</b>	<b>Status of consultancy studies (in plan / in progress / finished)</b>	<b>To make public the major findings/ recommendations (Yes/No)</b>	<b>Specific Timetable</b>
Study on Promoting Parent Education (continuation from 2000-01)	The Chinese University of Hong Kong	\$500,000	In progress	Yes	To be decided
Evaluation Study on the Implementation of the Medium of Instruction Guidance in Secondary Schools (S1 – S3) (continuation from 2000-01)	The Chinese University of Hong Kong	\$2,950,000	In progress	Yes	To be decided
Evaluation Study on the Implementation of the Medium of Instruction Guidance in Secondary Schools (S4 – S5)	-	\$1,250,000	Under planning	Yes	To be decided
Consultancy study to review the progress and achievements of the use of information technology in school education (Phase I – stage I) (continuation from 2000-01)	The Centre for Information Technology in School and Teacher Education, University of Hong Kong	\$800,000	In progress	Yes	Early 2002
Consultancy study to review the progress and achievements of the use of information technology in school education (Phase I –stage II)	-	\$3,700,000	Under planning	Yes	To be decided

<b>Scope</b>	<b>Names of consultants (if available)</b>	<b>Consultancy fees in 2001-02</b>	<b>Status of consultancy studies (in plan / in progress / finished)</b>	<b>To make public the major findings/ recommendations (Yes/No)</b>	<b>Specific Timetable</b>
A study on the multiplicity of handicap among students of special schools, practical schools and skills opportunity schools (continuation from 2000-01)	The Hong Kong Institute of Education	\$76 000	In progress	Yes	End 2001

(c) Studies to be commissioned by other agencies under Education and Manpower Bureau (under Head 177 NDPB) -

<b>Commissioned by</b>	<b>Scope</b>	<b>Names of consultants (if available)</b>	<b>Consultancy fees in 2001-02</b>	<b>Status of consultancy studies (in plan / in progress / finished)</b>	<b>To make public the major findings/ recommendations (Yes/No)</b>	<b>Specific Timetable</b>
Employees Retraining Board	Labour Market Analysis and Opinion Surveys	-	\$500,000	Under planning	Yes	To be decided

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Name in block letters \_\_\_\_\_ Mrs Fanny Law

Post Title \_\_\_\_\_ Secretary for Education and Manpower

Date \_\_\_\_\_ 26 March 2001

Bureau Serial No.

S-EMB008

Question Serial No.

S100

Examination of draft Estimates of Expenditure 2001-02

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO  
WRITTEN/SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Head 177 Subventions :  
Non-departmental Public Bodies

Subhead :

Programme : (2) Vocational Training Council - part

Controlling Officer : Secretary for Education and Manpower

Bureau Secretary : Secretary for Education and Manpower

Question : On the question of using education facilities to provide more healthy outlets for youngsters, will the Administration consider making sports and other recreational facilities of Vocational Training Council controlled institutes available to the public?

Asked by : Hon Emily Lau

Reply : As many of the Vocational Training Council (VTC) institutes also run evening programmes, their premises are open to all VTC students until late in the evening. Nevertheless, the VTC also has established policy and procedure to make available its premises and facilities to outside organisations (including youth organisations, charitable bodies and voluntary agencies), where it does not affect the operations of the institutes concerned.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Name in block letters \_\_\_\_\_ Mrs Fanny Law

Post Title \_\_\_\_\_ Secretary for Education and Manpower

Date \_\_\_\_\_ 26 March 2001

Bureau Serial No.

S-EMB009

Question Serial No.

S105

Examination of draft Estimates of Expenditure 2001-02

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO  
WRITTEN/SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Head : 90

Subhead : -

Programme : (1) Labour Relations

Controlling Officer : Commissioner for Labour

Bureau Secretary : Secretary for Education and Manpower

Question : (To follow up the question of EMB188 on the waiting time for arranging conciliation meetings.)

In the past 3 years, the average waiting time for arranging conciliation meetings at the Hong Kong East, Hong Kong West, Kowloon South and Kwai Chung branch offices of the Labour Department all failed to meet the target (within 4 weeks). Does the Administration have any special measures to shorten the waiting time for arranging conciliation meetings by the above 4 branch offices?

Asked by : Hon LEE Cheuk-yan

Reply :

The number of claims received by the four branch offices of Hong Kong East, Hong Kong West, Kowloon South and Kwai Chung have recorded a drastic increase after the economic downturn in 1997. The percentage increase of claims received in these four branches was higher than the percentage increase in respect of the total number of claims received by all the branch offices.

We have taken the following measures to help shorten the waiting time for

arranging conciliation meetings in these four branch offices :-

- demarcating the boundaries for these branch offices to rationalize the distribution of case load;
- work simplification measures to streamline operation; and
- arranging internal staff redeployment to cope with the upsurge in workload of these offices on a need basis.

As a result, the achievement rate for meeting the target time for arranging conciliation meeting in 2000 was the highest in the last three years. It is only the influx of claims in the last few months of the year that made it difficult for the target to be met in a small percentage of cases.

In any case, for clients with particular needs, we would provide express service in arranging conciliation meetings.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Name in block letters \_\_\_\_\_ Mrs Pamela TAN

Post Title \_\_\_\_\_ Commissioner for Labour

Date \_\_\_\_\_ 26 March 2001

Bureau Serial No.

S-EMB010

Question Serial No.

S106

Examination of draft Estimates of Expenditure 2001-02

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO  
WRITTEN/SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Head : 90

Subhead : -

Programme : (2) Employment Services

Controlling Officer : Commissioner for Labour

Bureau Secretary : Secretary for Education and Manpower

Question : (To follow up the question of EMB193 on the usage rate of the Interactive Employment Service)

It was stated in the reply of the Administration regarding the Interactive Employment Service website of the Labour Department that "since its launch in March 1999, the site has recorded 77 261 000 hits. The average number of daily hits in 2000 was about 121 000". Please clarify if the unit for calculating these figures is "人次", "頁次" or "擊點" (as compared to the reply of EMB 195).

Asked by : Hon LEE Cheuk-yan

Reply : The unit used in the reply to question EMB 193 should have been '頁次' i.e. the same unit used in the reply to EMB 195. The inconsistency is a translation error and is regretted.



Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Name in block letters \_\_\_\_\_ Mrs Pamela TAN

Post Title \_\_\_\_\_ Commissioner for Labour

Date \_\_\_\_\_ 26 March 2001

Bureau Serial No.

S-EMB011

Question Serial No.

S115

Examination of draft Estimates of Expenditure 2001-02

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO  
WRITTEN/SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Head : 90

Subhead : -

Programme : (4) Employee Rights and Benefits

Controlling Officer : Commissioner for Labour

Bureau Secretary : Secretary for Education and Manpower

Question : According to the reply to Question Serial No. 0869 (Bureau Serial No. EMB194), the percentage of applicants who received ex gratia payment from the Protection of Wages on Insolvency Fund with a payment time of 8 to 10 weeks gradually rose from 18.51% in 1998 to 26.73% in 2000. What was the reason for that?

Asked by : Hon Andrew CHENG Kar-foo

Reply :

The main reasons for the increase in the percentage of applications requiring 8 to 10 weeks for payment are as follows :-

- There was an overall increase in workload arising from the increased number of insolvency cases processed\*.
- Despite fewer applications processed, there was a marked increase in the number of insolvency cases involving small-sized establishments compared with the previous two years. Experience shows that longer time is normally required to process such applications due to incomplete employment records or the absence of such records for verification purposes.

It is however worth noting that while the percentage of applications requiring 8 to 10 weeks for payment has increased slightly, the average payment time in 2000, at 5.3 weeks, was the same as that for 1999 and roughly the same as that for 1998 (5.0 weeks).

\* Note :

Year	Applications	Cases
1998	13 253	1 702
1999	15 802	2 381
2000	13 582	2 550

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Name in block letters \_\_\_\_\_ Mrs Pamela TAN

Post Title \_\_\_\_\_ Commissioner for Labour

Date \_\_\_\_\_ 26 March 2001

Bureau Serial No.

S-EMB012

Question Serial No.

S116

Examination of draft Estimates of Expenditure 2001-02

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO  
WRITTEN/SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Head : 90

Subhead : -

Programme : (1) Labour Relations

Controlling Officer : Commissioner for Labour

Bureau Secretary : Secretary for Education and Manpower

Question : In the reply to the Question Serial No. 0062 (Bureau Serial No. EMB150), the Labour Department stated the decrease in the number of consultation meetings conducted last year was due to the gradual recovery of the economy. It also tallied with the general decrease in the number of wage reduction, retrenchment and insolvency cases in 2000. What are the actual figures for the decrease in the number of wage reduction, retrenchment and insolvency cases in 2000 when compared with 1999 and 1998?

Asked by : Hon Andrew CHENG Kar-foo

Reply :

The decrease in the number of wage reduction, retrenchment and insolvency cases known to the Labour Department in 2000 over that of 1998 and 1999 is given below :-

	No. of cases in 1998	No. of cases in 1999	No. of cases in 2000	Decrease in 2000 over 1998	Decrease in 2000 over 1999
Wage reduction	23	31	10	- 57%	- 68%
Retrenchment	238	112	77	- 68%	- 31%
Insolvency	131	108	91	- 31%	- 16%
Total	392	251	178	- 55%	- 29%

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Name in block letters \_\_\_\_\_ Mrs Pamela TAN

Post Title \_\_\_\_\_ Commissioner for Labour

Date \_\_\_\_\_ 26 March 2001

Bureau Serial No.

S-EMB013

Question Serial No.

S117

Examination of draft Estimates of Expenditure 2001-02

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO  
WRITTEN/SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Head : 90

Subhead : -

Programme : (3) Safety and Health at Work

Controlling Officer : Commissioner for Labour

Bureau Secretary : Secretary for Education and Manpower

Question : In the reply to the Question Serial No. 1199 (Bureau Serial No. EMB212), the Education and Manpower Bureau has mentioned that the Census and Statistics Department will be commissioned to conduct a sub-topical survey on rest breaks in the first quarter of 2001, what are the details of the plan? What sort of data the Administration plans to collect?

Asked by : Hon Andrew CHENG Kar-foo

Reply :

The survey on rest breaks is being conducted by the Census and Statistics Department as a sub-topic of the General House Survey in the first quarter of 2001. Its objective is to obtain information on the existing practices of rest breaks and meal breaks provided to employees particularly their frequency and duration. The survey results are expected to be available in mid-2001. In the light of the survey results, the Administration will consider whether new regulations to provide for rest breaks should be made to protect workers' safety and health at work. We will also consult the Labour Advisory Board.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Name in block letters \_\_\_\_\_ Mrs Pamela TAN

Post Title \_\_\_\_\_ Commissioner for Labour

Date \_\_\_\_\_ 26 March 2001

Bureau Serial No.

S-EMB014

Question Serial No.

Oral

Examination of draft Estimates of Expenditure 2001-02

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO  
WRITTEN/SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Head : 40 – Education Department      Subhead (No. & title) :

Programme : 4003 Special Education

Controlling Officer : Director of Education

Bureau Secretary : Secretary for Education and Manpower

Question : What is the number or proportion of students considered to fall within the definition of “gifted students”?

Asked by : Hon LO Wing-lok

Reply :

To follow international trends and allow teachers to be more flexible in supporting gifted students, the present policy adopts a broad definition of giftedness, focusing on the concept of multiple intelligences. With this definition, the proportion of students with superior performance in specific areas that can benefit from pull-out programmes might constitute 2-4% students in schools.

Signature

Name in block letters

Matthew CHEUNG Kin-chung

Post Title

Director of Education

Date

27 March 2001



Bureau Serial No.

S-EMB015

Question Serial No.

Oral

Examination of Draft Estimates of Expenditure 2001-02

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO  
WRITTEN/SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Head : 40-Education Department      Subhead :

Programme : 4005 Other Direct Services and Subventions

Controlling Officer : Director of Education

Bureau Secretary : Secretary for Education and Manpower

Question : On the assumption that the Government is fully subsidising early childhood education, what is the financial implication?

Asked by : Hon LEE Cheuk-yan

Reply :

A ball-park indicative cost figure of a 3-year early childhood education for a population of 220 000 children in the relevant age group is about \$3,200 million a year. In arriving at this rough cost estimate, we have assumed that kindergartens employ 100% qualified teachers and adopt a teacher to pupil ratio of 1:15.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Name in block letters      Matthew CHEUNG Kin-chung  
\_\_\_\_\_

Post Title      Director of Education  
\_\_\_\_\_

Date      26 March 2001  
\_\_\_\_\_

Bureau Serial No.

S-EMB016

Question Serial No.

S098

Examination of Draft Estimates of Expenditure 2001-02

**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO  
WRITTEN/SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Head : 40-Education Department      Subhead :

Programme : 4005 Other Direct Services and Subventions

Controlling Officer : Director of Education

Bureau Secretary : Secretary for Education and Manpower

Question : In order to upgrade the quality of kindergarten education, how much resources will be deployed in 2001-02 to assist kindergarten to hire graduate teacher? Looking further ahead, please give the milestones for increasing the percentage of graduate teachers in kindergarten and whether there is a target for achieving 100% graduate teachers?

Asked by : Hon Emily LAU

Reply :

To enhance the quality of kindergarten education, Government requires all kindergartens to employ at least 60% of qualified kindergarten teachers (QKTs) by 2000/01. The Kindergarten Subsidy Scheme (KSS) was introduced in 1995 to assist kindergartens in meeting this target progressively without having to increase their fees substantially. The subsidy is now disbursed on the basis of a class grant calculated according to the actual number of operating classes in each kindergarten. The revised estimate for the KSS in 2000-01 is \$126.6 million. To cater for increased number of KSS classes, the provision sought in the 2001-02 Estimates is \$151.4 million. In considering the adequacy of Government's financial commitment for kindergarten education, it is relevant to bear in mind that, apart from KSS, Government also provides:

- reimbursement of rents and rates for non-profit-making kindergartens
- fee remission for needy families
- teacher training

In addition to the existing in-service training to upgrade serving teachers, the Administration has drawn up plans to enhance the professional competence of KG teachers and child care workers as follows:

- To require all new KG teachers and child care workers to possess at least 5 passes in Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination (including Chinese and English) from the 2001/02 school year.
- To provide sufficient one-year pre-service QKT training places to pave the way for the requirement of all new KG teachers and child care workers to possess pre-service QKT qualification by the 2003/04 school year. An initial 200 training places were provided in 2000/01, increasing to 600 in 2001/02, 1200 in 2002/03 and 1100 in 2003/04. The estimated required resources are \$4 M in 2000-01, \$15 M in 2001-02, \$33 M in 2002-03 and \$40 M in 2003-04.
- To provide sufficient two-year in-service Certificate of Education level training places for all serving KG principals and child care center supervisors to acquire this professional qualification by 2005/06. The cost is estimated to be \$10 M in 2001-02, \$28 M in 2002-03, \$35 M in 2003-04 and \$33 M in 2004-05.
- To provide 120 places of leadership training course for serving KG principals and child care center supervisors. The estimated cost is \$2 M annually from 2001-02 onwards.
- To raise the entry qualification of new KG teachers and child care workers to sub-degree or higher level as a medium to long-term goal.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Name in block letters \_\_\_\_\_ Matthew CHEUNG Kin-chung

Post Title \_\_\_\_\_ Director of Education

Date \_\_\_\_\_ 26 March 2001

Bureau Serial No.

S-EMB017

Question Serial No.

Oral

Examination of draft Estimates of Expenditure 2001-02  
**CONTROLLING OFFICER'S REPLY TO  
WRITTEN/SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTION**

Head : 160 Radio Television Hong Kong

Programme : (3) School Educational Television Production

Controlling Officer : Director of Broadcasting

Bureau Secretary : Secretary for Education and Manpower

Question : The Government has stated in the 2001-02 Draft Estimates that the target output of school ETV production will be reduced from 212 programmes in 2000-01 to 175 programmes in 2001-02. How much resources and manpower are saved as a result of the reduction?

Asked by : The Honourable CHAN Kwok-keung

Reply : In 2001-02, the expenditure on producing school ETV programmes is estimated to be \$6.6 million less than that for the previous year. (This does not include the savings achieved under the Enhanced Productivity Programme, which is estimated to be \$1.3 million.) The extra productions above the level of 175 programmes in the years 1999 and 2000 were met by hiring outside contractors or handled by temporary non-civil service staff. Hence, the lowering of the output level has no implications on the permanent staff being employed.

Signature :

Name in block letters : CHU Pui-hing

Post Title : Director of Broadcasting

Date : 26. 3.2001