

Letterhead of Hong Kong Polytechnic University Staff Association

By fax: 2877 8024

26 March 2001

Mrs Sharon Tong
Clerk to Panel
LegCo Panel on Manpower
Legislative Council
Hong Kong

Dear Mrs Tong,

LegCo Panel on Manpower
Admission of Mainland Professionals

On behalf of the Executive Council of this Association, I write to respond to your letter of 16 March 2001 addressed to Prof POON Chung-kwong, President of the Hong Kong Polytechnic University, inviting views from the university's academics on the Admission of Mainland Professionals Scheme.

I would like to express support for the Scheme both as an immigration issue and an economics issue, and also to express reservation from a manpower development perspective.

As an immigration issue, the Scheme extends the Hong Kong SAR's current liberal policy on the admission of foreign professionals to cover professionals from the Mainland. In fact, we do not see any reason why the SAR should discriminate against qualified Mainland professionals in preference for foreign professionals.

As an economics issue, the Scheme helps alleviate the SAR's immediate manpower shortage in particular professional sectors, generate enhanced economic activities and employment opportunities, and facilitate professional exchange between the mainland, the SAR and the rest of the world. The Scheme clearly brings economic benefits and it should therefore be supported.

From a manpower development perspective, on the other hand, the Scheme together with recent government action to cut university budgets beg the question of whether Government is gradually shifting towards a policy of "downsizing" local professional education providers (e.g. universities) and "outsourcing" professional education services to service providers outside the SAR. If this is indeed the case, then Government is extremely shortsighted and its action is most likely to damage the SAR's long-term competitiveness and future well-being.

Yours sincerely,

Terence Lo
PUSA Chairman