

Interim Progress Report of the MIRS Working Group

In accordance with the decision of the Council, the terms of reference for the Management-Initiated Retirement Scheme Working Group (“Working Group”), chaired by Mrs. Angela Cheung, a lay Council Member, and consisting of President and Vice President respectively of the Association of Lecturers, the Deputy Director (Academic) and Deputy Director (RAS), are as follows:

- (a) To explore the possibility of improving the retirement package for affected staff members who are on Frozen Pension terms; and
 - (b) To explore the possibility of assisting the affected staff members with seeking other employment opportunities.
2. To improve the retirement package for the affected staff members who are on Frozen Pension, the Working Group has unanimously proposed a supplementary ex-gratia payment for the affected staff members who are on Frozen Pension. This payment is additional to that which they are contractually entitled and represents a full and final settlement for those who accept it. The proposal was endorsed by the Council’s Standing Committee and subsequently approved by the Council. The affected staff members on Frozen Pension have been offered this supplementary ex-gratia payment and are requested to return the consent form to indicate their acceptance (or otherwise) of the supplementary ex-gratia payment by 28 February 2002. The Institute will bear the cost of this extra payment, which will amount to HK\$3.2 million.
3. In exploring the possibility of assisting the affected staff members with seeking other employment opportunities, the Working Group has:
 - (a) contacted Mrs. Fanny Law, Secretary for Education and Manpower, asking for her assistance in soliciting employment information from the Federation for Continuing Education in Tertiary Institutions (“Federation”). Subsequently, the Federation replied and requested the Working Group to submit the CVs of the affected staff members to the Federation. The message was relayed to all affected staff members. A number of affected staff members submitted their CVs to the Working Group, which has forwarded them to the Federation for onward transmission to its member institutions.
 - (b) written to Mr. Matthew Cheung, Director of Education, for his assistance in soliciting employment information from the Government schools, non-Government schools and the Education Department. The Education Department replied to say that from time to time, it conducts recruitment exercises and the affected staff members who meet the entry requirements of the posts concerned are welcomed to apply. This message has been conveyed to all affected staff members.

(c) consulted Dr. Pang King Chee, Deputy Director (Quality Assurance and Educational Services) about employment opportunities in the Early Childhood Learning Centre and the HKIEd Jockey Club Primary School (“Primary School”). Following the information supplied by Dr. Pang, the Working Group informed all affected staff members of the employment possibilities in the Primary School. One staff member applied for the Principal position in the Primary School and has been invited to attend the selection interview.

(d) liaised with Dr. Pang King Chee and Dr. Edwin Wong, Head of the Division of Continuing Professional Education (“CPE”) over employment opportunities in the CPE for the affected staff members. As a result CPE agreed to advance their recruitment exercise for the affected staff members who had applied for posts. All were shortlisted and attended the selection interviews. It is anticipated that, on the basis of the interview, offers will be made to two of them.

(e) discussed with the Civil Service Bureau (“CSB”) for clarifications on pension arrangements for the affected staff members if they are to take up employment in Government aided/subsidized schools, tertiary institutions and other educational institutions. The CSB replied and the Working Group has conveyed the advice to all affected staff members.

(f) written to all affected staff members to ascertain their level of interest in internal transfer within the Institute. Subsequently, a few affected staff members indicated their interest for internal transfer to other academic departments, and internal transfer committees have been established to consider these cases in March. Apart from teaching positions, the Working Group has also written to all affected staff members to ascertain their interest in applying for non-academic positions. Subject to the availability of an appropriate vacancy, the relevant internal transfer committee(s) will also be established to consider any such requests in March.

(g) written to the Director of Education, requesting him to consider recognizing the service of the affected staff members in both the HKIEd and the Education Department for the purpose of determining their salary point in case they should take up teaching positions in the Government and Government-funded primary schools and secondary schools. The Education Department replied to advise that, in principle, recognized teaching and lecturing experience would be counted for incremental purpose when affected staff are appointed to teaching posts in government/aided schools. The Education Department also advised that, however, for salary assessment, each and every case would have to be considered on its own merit. The advice has been conveyed to all affected staff members.

4. In addition to the above, the Working Group has:

(a) met the Anti-MIRS Committee, listened to their concerns, discussed the issues raised and followed up with those that were within the terms of

reference of the Working Group, while referring the remaining issues to the relevant body for actions/decisions.

(b) invited individual affected staff members, if they so wish, to write to the Chairman of the Working Group to express their individual concerns in relation to the Management-Initiated Retirement Scheme. Relevant issues raised by individual staff members that were outside the terms of reference of the Working Group were referred to the Council's Staffing Committee for consideration/decision.

(c) discussed access to library services, sports facilities and e-mail service for all affected staff members after they cease to be employed by the Institute. The Working Group recommended and the Institute has agreed that all affected staff members could continue to utilize the library and sports facilities as normal staff members until the normal date of their retirement age and have access to the library database, and that guest e-mail accounts could be offered to them upon request.

(d) through its Secretary and Members, provided advice and support to the affected staff members in writing application letters and curriculum vitae to the Federation and the internal transfer committees.

(e) posted on the Institute's Intranet brief notes for each and every meeting of the Working Group in order to keep staff members informed of the matters discussed by the Working Group and the progress.

5. To assist the affected staff members, the Institute has:

(a) agreed to pay the entire requested course fees (i.e. up to 90%) for this year of their staff development programme regardless of their departure in the course of the year.

(b) funded and provided information about professional counselling services to all affected staff members.

6. Finally, the Director of the Institute has met with the Anti-MIRS Committee and provided, on individual's request, testimonials to the affected staff members to facilitate them in seeking employment.

*Management-Initiated Retirement Scheme Working Group
The Hong Kong Institute of Education
26 February 2002*