

Dear Legislative Council Members,

The three elected Council members of the Hong Kong Institute of Education would like to present the following comments and requests on the Management-Initiated Retirement Scheme (MIRS) of the Institute to the Legislative Council.

Concerning MIRS:

It is deeply regrettable that the actual implementation of MIRS:

1. did not follow the Council's instruction that targeted staff be treated with dignity and their identity be kept confidential;
2. aroused many colleagues' strong suspicion that the selection criteria had not been faithfully and properly applied, because these colleagues could not see how some targeted colleagues who were respected for their contributions to HKIED could now be said to match the stated criteria for compulsory early retirement;
3. breached many colleagues' trust in the Institute's management since the promises of dignified treatment and confidentiality had been blatantly broken, and the application of selection criteria was questionable.

Judging from the strong sentiment displayed by colleagues at the meeting held at PTU on 13 October (attended by over 200 staff members) and at the peaceful demonstration held on 16 October at Taipo Campus (attended by about 270 staff and students), we are very sure that colleagues are very disappointed at and angry about what the Management has been doing. We firmly believe that the Council must take immediate, concrete action to deal with the matter. **Therefore we request that the Council should:**

- (1) freeze the MIRS immediately and re-start negotiation,**
- (2) appoint an independent committee to conduct investigations into the matter, and**
- (3) take any necessary actions to remedy the damage caused by the MIRS and to restore staff's confidence.**

Wong Ping Ho Leung Yan Wing Yeung Kim Wai
18 October 2001

At the Annual General Meeting of the Association of Lecturers at the Hong Kong Institute of Education, held on 26th September 2001, the following motion was unanimously carried:

The Association of Lecturers at the Hong Kong Institute of Education has no confidence in the leadership, management and decision-making processes at the Institute. The Association calls upon Council to initiate a full and thorough review of the entire management structure and all decision making procedures, to bring an end to the system of patronage in regard to staffing decisions, and to acknowledge that the implementation of the Management Initiated Retirement Scheme (MIRS) did not follow the stated procedures, its conduct lacked integrity, and it was neither dignified nor confidential as staff had been promoted.

Dr. Ken Volk
President, ALHKIEd

Mr. Wong Ping Ho
Vice President, ALHKIEd

Dr. Sharon Bryant
Secretary, ALHKIEd

**Factors related to the ALHKIEd's
Motion of No-Confidence**

The Motion of No-Confidence in the leadership, management and decision making processes at HKIEd, though critical, is intended to be empowering. Although Council may feel *politically* that it should issue a statement supporting the Directorate, we hope that *strategically* it will respond positively to the call for a *full and thorough review*. Council is also to be reminded that the recent Management Initiated Retirement Scheme is only *one* of many concerns that arise from the actions of the Directorate that need to be reviewed.

MIRS related:

1. Altering the processes and procedures of MIRS that were published and presented to staff without consulting or informing staff, thus catching targeted staff completely unaware.
2. Treating targeted staff without professional dignity and confidentiality, as promised in forum discussions, thus causing the present situation of protest and instability
3. Using “criteria” that are open to abuse, because they can be loosely interpreted. In some departments *any* staff may be targeted, while in others staff not meeting the basic definition of “qualification normally needed to teach at a university level” are not targeted, leading to gross inconsistencies and mistrust in the process.

In addition, and over a long period of time:

1. Allowing an atmosphere of mistrust to develop and continue in many areas, as evident in the recent Institute-commissioned Theall Report (copies are available on request).
2. Adopting a hierarchical and impositional form of decision making throughout the management structure where the appraisal of staff is entirely downward rather than sideways and upward.
3. Failing to follow stated criteria for substantiation and renewal of contract, e.g. the most recent round of substantiation.
4. Proliferating modules and failing to implement course development in which efficiency and true modularization occurs.
5. Creating and maintaining a management structure of departments, schools, centres, and endless committees that results in constant tension, constant reduplication of effort in administration and excessive and unnecessary staff workload.
6. Maintaining a costly and inefficient administrative sector.
7. Creating a school structure that lacks credibility in terms of department attachment to schools and which perpetuates the problems inherent in the previous matrix system.
8. Failing to address the excessive timetabled teaching and teaching practice supervision hours, which severely impacts on the attempts of all staff to produce high levels of research.
9. Reducing existing classroom space in order to house non-teaching and administrative activities.
10. Changing the conditions of service in the Staff Handbook by edict and without consulting staff.
11. Allowing cultures of intimidation by constant bullying to exist within certain sectors of the Institute.
12. Producing conditions of service that are not compatible with the Institute’s slogan of Joy in Learning.
13. Failing to respect the academic expertise of staff by constantly importing ‘experts’ to instruct staff, and by cowering to the often conflicting criticisms of external academics, many of whom do not know the particular context of our courses, modules and students.