

Legislative Council Manpower Panel Progress Report on the Skills Upgrading Scheme

PURPOSE

This paper reports on the progress on the Skills Upgrading Scheme from September 2001 to March 2002 for Members' information.

BACKGROUND

2. In response to the ongoing restructuring of our economy, we launched the "Skills Upgrading Scheme" in early September 2001. The Scheme aims to provide focused skills training for in-service workers with secondary or lower education to upgrade their skills so as to maintain their competitiveness in the labour market. A Steering Committee on the Skills Upgrading Scheme chaired by Secretary for Education and Manpower comprising representative from employers, employees, training institutions and the Government was set up in November 2000. Six industries, namely printing, Chinese catering, retail, import and export trade, transportation and wearing apparel/textile, were identified for the initial phase of the Scheme. Sector-specific industry working groups were set up for the six industries to develop training packages to meet the current needs of the respective industries.

PROGRESS OF FIRST PHASE PROGRAMME

3. The first batch of courses were launched in early September 2001. As at 31 March 2002, a total of 256 courses have been launched for a total of 5 392 trainees. Of these, 3 162 trainees from 192 classes have completed their training. Details of the course, breakdown by industry, are as follows:

Industry	No. of courses started	No. of trainees involved	No. of courses completed	No. of trainees who have completed training
Printing	96	1 523	75	994
Chinese catering	40	894	39	744
Import / Export trade	45	1 130	28	429
Wearing Apparel / textile	34	852	20	377
Transport	20	504	14	285

Retail	21	489	16	333
Total	256	5 392	192	3 162

4. So far, the overall trainee enrolment rate¹ is 98%, course retention rate² 82% and passing rate³ 91%. According to the feedback collected from trainees at the end of the courses and an independent evaluation of the Skills Upgrading Scheme carried out by Policy 21 Ltd. of the University of Hong Kong, the vast majority of the trainees (between 84% to 90%) were satisfied with the course contents, the performance of the trainers and the training providers. Of those who did not express satisfaction, most of them considered the course duration too short. Comments from trainees have been referred back to the respective industry working groups for consideration and suitable refinements were made accordingly.

Training Institutions

5. The respective industry working groups are responsible for drawing up the detailed selection criteria to identify suitable course providers to run the courses. The training providers are selected according to their track record, location of training venues, facilities, trainers' qualifications, and the training cost in accordance with the Government's procurement procedures. The list of training providers approved for the first phase programme is at **Annex**.

Quality Assurance

6. To monitor the quality of training provided by course providers, the respective industry working groups arrange for representatives to pay regular visits to training providers. Such visits are of three types:

(a) Administrative inspections

Surprise administrative inspections are conducted to check whether the class arrangements conform to the approved conditions, e.g. proper keeping of attendance records, identity of trainers, commencement and finishing times of the classes, location of the training site, etc. Such surprise inspections are conducted randomly with more inspections being carried out for longer courses. Up to

¹ This is the percentage of the total number of trainees enrolled against the total number of planned training places.

² This is the percentage of the total number of trainees completing the course against the total number of trainees enrolled.

³ All trainees are required to pass an end of course assessment before a certificate is awarded. This is the percentage of the total number of trainees passing the assessment against the total number of trainees completing the courses.

31 March 2002, a total of 120 administrative inspections had been carried out.

(b) Academic inspections

Academic inspections are conducted by industry working group representatives with the relevant background who sit in the class to observe how the trainers are conducting their classes. Each trainer will be observed at least once for shorter courses (lasting less than 3 months) and at least twice for longer courses (lasting more than 3 months). Up to 31 March 2002, a total of 322 academic inspections had been carried out.

(c) Invigilation of end of course assessments

The industry working groups arrange for representatives to invigilate the end of course assessments to ensure that training bodies are conducting the assessments strictly in accordance with the approved procedures. By the end of March 2002, a total of 192 such invigilations had been conducted.

7. Investigation and assessment reports are prepared after all these various inspections and submitted regularly to the respective industry working groups for monitoring purpose. On two occasions, trainers were not found to be performing satisfactorily. The respective industry working groups have written to the training providers to instruct them to take actions to effect improvement and will closely monitor developments.

SECOND PHASE PROGRAMME

8. To enable workers from other industry sectors to benefit from the Scheme, the Steering Committee invited other interested industries to submit applications to join the second phase programme in September 2001. Seven industries, namely tourism, hairdressing, property management, insurance, electrical and mechanical engineering trade, hotel and real estate agents trades have consequently been approved to join the Scheme, in addition to the six industries being covered. Courses for the tourism, insurance, hairdressing, electrical and mechanical engineering and the property management sectors will be launched in early July 2002. The courses for the real estate sector are expected to be launched in September 2002 while the launch of the courses for the hotel sector would be decided later taking into account the specific seasonal cycle of the industry.

Education and Manpower Bureau
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Chinese Catering

- Association of Restaurant Managers (現代管理(飲食)專業協會)
- Institute of Vocational Education (Haking Wong) (香港專業教育學院黃克兢分校)
- Hospitality Industry Training and Development Centre (旅遊服務業培訓發展中心)
- Eating Establishment Employees General Union (飲食業職工總會)

Printing

- Hong Kong Printing Industry Workers Union (香港印刷業工會)
- Vocational Training Council Printing Industry Training Centre (職業訓練局印刷業訓練中心)
- Graphic Arts Association of HK, Ltd. Printing Materials Testing and Analytic Centre (香港印藝學會印刷物料測試及分析中心)
- Advanced Printing Technology Centre (印刷科技研究中心)

Wearing Apparel/Textile

- Clothing Industry Training Authority (製衣業訓練局)
- Vocational Training Council Textile Industry Training Centre (職業訓練局紡織業訓練中心)
- Hong Kong Wearing Apparel Industry Employees General Union (香港服裝業總工會)

Import/Export Trade

- Hong Kong College of Technology Retraining Centre (香港專業進修學校再培訓中心)
- The Federation of Hong Kong and Kowloon Labour Unions (港九勞工社團聯會)
- Federation of Trade Unions Occupational Retraining Centre (香港工會聯合會職業再訓練中心)
- Vocational Training Council Import/Export and Wholesale Trades Training Centre (職業訓練局出入口／批發業訓練中心)
- Caritas Adult and Higher Education Service (明愛成人及高等教育服務)
- Hong Kong Christian Service – Kwun Tong Vocational Training Centre (香港基督教服務處觀塘職業訓練中心)

Transport

- City University of Hong Kong School of Continuing and Professional Education (香港城市大學專業進修學院)
- Vocational Training Council Hong Kong Centre for Transport and Logistics (職業訓練局香港運輸及物流資源中心)
- HK Storehouses and Transportation Staff Association (香港倉庫運輸員工協會)
- Logistics Cargo Supervisors Association (物流理貨職工會)
- Federation of Trade Unions Occupational Retraining Centre (香港工會聯合會職業再訓練中心)

Retail

- Retail Management Association/Vocational Training Council Retail Trades Training Centre (香港零售管理協會／職業訓練局零售業訓練中心)
- Hong Kong Christian Service – Kwun Tong Vocational Training Centre (香港基督教服務處觀塘職業訓練中心)
- The Hong Kong Management Association (香港管理專業協會)
- Hong Kong College of Technology Retraining Centre (香港專業進修學校再培訓中心)
- Hong Kong Confederation of Trade Union – Employees Retraining Centre (香港職工會聯盟再培訓中心)