

Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications Bill

Questions Raised at the Meeting of the Bills Committee on 17 March 2006 and the Administration's Response

At the meeting of the Bills Committee held on 17 March 2006, Members raised the following questions:

- (i) the different channels for obtaining qualifications under different levels of the Qualifications Framework (QF) and advancement to higher QF levels;
 - (ii) the differences, if any, in the mode of assessment for academic courses and that under Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) for junior and higher QF levels; and
 - (iii) whether the Education and Manpower Bureau (EMB) will consider providing subsidies in relation to accreditation fees.
2. This paper records the responses made by the EMB at the meeting.

Progression Pathways under the QF

3. There are two ways for individuals to obtain qualifications recognised under the QF. On the one hand, individuals may take a course recognised under the QF and attain the relevant qualification. On the other hand, workers may attain recognised qualifications for the units of competency relevant to their experience, knowledge and skills under the RPL mechanism.

Modes of Assessments for Academic Courses and RPL

4. For academic courses, assessment is conducted mainly in the form of written examinations, tests, dissertations and course work to see if a trainee has reached the required academic level upon graduation. Regarding the RPL, as its aim is to recognise workers' skills and

knowledge based on the units of competency under the Specification for Competency Standards, its mode of assessment is practically-oriented.

5. As proposed by the EMB and agreed consequently by some of the Industry Training Advisory Committees (ITACs), greater flexibility and allowance would be given to the attainment of qualifications at the junior levels (QF Levels 1 and 2) by taking into account workers' experience that is related to the competencies. If a worker applying for Level 1 or Level 2 qualifications under RPL can present valid evidence of years of working experience, such as attestation of job and post issued by employers, business registration certificates, or other supporting information (including certificates and diplomas issued by training providers, attestation of members' job and post by labour unions, relevant licence and qualification obtained in the Mainland or overseas, etc.) as basis proving his possession of the relevant competencies, he will be granted recognition of Level 1 or Level 2 competency standards in relation to his experience. ITACs of respective industries will propose the requirements for years of working experience and specific requirements for proof of such.

6. In giving recognition to higher levels of qualifications (QF Level 3 or above), a higher standard of proof is required. Apart from considering the years of working experience of the applicant with respect to relevant competence, certain assessment on the applicant has to be conducted, the form of which may include interviews, skill demonstrations, practical examinations, etc.

Accreditation Fees

7. We understand the stakeholders' concerns on accreditation fees. We have stated that the overall development costs for the Hong Kong Council for Academic Accreditation to establish a quality assurance mechanism to underpin the QF would be borne by the EMB, and they would not be transferred to the accreditation fees.

Education and Manpower Bureau
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