

# 立法會 *Legislative Council*

LC Paper No. CB(2)2351/04-05(03)

Ref : CB2/BC/15/04

## **Bills Committee on Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications Bill**

### **Background brief prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat**

#### **Proposal to expand the scope of responsibility of the Hong Kong Council for Academic Accreditation**

#### **Purpose**

This paper gives a summary of the discussion held by members of the Panel on Manpower on the proposal to expand the scope of responsibility of the Hong Kong Council for Academic Accreditation (the Council) to undertake quality assurance under the Qualification Framework (QF).

#### **The Administration's proposal**

2. At its meeting on 17 March 2005, the Panel on Manpower was consulted on the Administration's proposal to expand the scope of responsibility of the Council to undertake quality assurance under QF.

3. The Administration informed the Panel that the Executive Council approved the establishment of a seven-level cross-sectoral QF and its associated quality assurance mechanism in February 2004. The introduction of QF would provide more diversified progression pathways and enhance the relevance and quality of education and training programmes. It would also bring wider recognition to the skills, knowledge and experience of workers, and promote lifelong learning. The Council would be entrusted with the role in assuring the quality of qualifications under QF. As the Hong Kong Council for Academic Accreditation Ordinance (Cap. 1150), which was enacted in 1990 to provide for the establishment and the functions of the Council, was insufficient to cater for the Council's new role in support of the launching of QF, legislative amendments were necessary. The proposed amendments

included -

- (a) renaming the Council as the Hong Kong Council for Academic and Vocational Accreditation to reflect its expanded activities under QF;
- (b) empowering the Council to develop and implement the standards and mechanism for academic or vocational qualifications accreditation to underpin QF, and conduct accreditation tests;
- (c) empowering the Council to administer and maintain a Qualifications Register (QR);
- (d) removing the restriction on the number of academics appointed to the Council;
- (e) empowering the Council to determine fees to be charged for accreditation tests and for registration of a study programme on QR, as well as to charge any such fees;
- (f) establishing review committees to review decisions in connection with the outcome of an accreditation test, or the entry of the qualification of a study programme into or the removal of an entry from QR; and
- (g) regulating advertisements relating to QF and QR.

#### **Discussion by the Panel**

4. Members raised a number of queries, including –
  - (a) whether more persons with expertise in vocational accreditation would be appointed to the Council;
  - (b) whether the staff establishment of the Council would be increased; and
  - (c) whether a heavier penalty should be imposed on persons repeatedly making false claims in relation to QF or QR.
5. A member also suggested that representatives of labour unions should be appointed to the Council.

6. Members may wish to refer to the extract from the minutes of the Panel meeting held on 17 March 2005 in the **Appendix** for details of the discussion.

Council Business Division 2  
Legislative Council Secretariat  
21 July 2005

# **EXTRACT**

## **立法會**

### ***Legislative Council***

Ref : CB2/PL/MP/1

LC Paper No. CB(2) 1328/04-05

(These minutes have been seen by the  
Administration)

#### **Panel on Manpower**

##### **Minutes of meeting**

**held on Thursday, 17 March 2005 at 2:30 pm  
in Conference Room A of the Legislative Council Building**

**Members present** : Hon LAU Chin-shek, JP (Chairman)  
Hon KWONG Chi-kin (Deputy Chairman)  
Hon Albert HO Chun-yan  
Hon LEE Cheuk-yan  
Hon CHAN Yuen-han, JP  
Hon LEUNG Yiu-chung  
Hon Jasper TSANG Yok-sing, GBS, JP  
Hon Andrew CHENG Kar-foo  
Hon LI Fung-ying, BBS, JP  
Hon Tommy CHEUNG Yu-yan, JP  
Hon Frederick FUNG Kin-kee, JP  
Hon Vincent FANG Kang, JP  
Hon WONG Kwok-hing, MH  
Hon Andrew LEUNG Kwan-yuen, SBS, JP  
Hon LEUNG Kwok-hung

**Member absent** : Hon Abraham SHEK Lai-him, JP

**Public Officers attending** : Item II

Mr Edward YAU  
Deputy Secretary for Education and Manpower

Ms Rebecca PUN  
Principal Assistant Secretary for Education and Manpower

Mr Peter CHEUNG  
Executive Director  
Hong Kong Council for Academic Accreditation

Ms Connie LOK  
Senior Registrar  
Hong Kong Council for Academic Accreditation

Item III

Mr Matthew CHEUNG Kin-chung  
Permanent Secretary for Economic Development and Labour  
(Labour)

Mrs Jennie CHAN  
Assistant Commissioner for Labour (Employees' Rights and  
Benefits)

Mr Ernest IP  
Senior Labour Officer (Labour Inspection)  
Labour Department

Mrs Vivian TING  
Principal Executive Officer (Tender)  
Financial Services and the Treasury Bureau

Mr HO Sai-biu  
Assistant Director (Grade Management and Development)  
Food and Environmental Hygiene Department

Mr Ricky CHUI Kin-ming  
Assistant Director (Finance)  
Leisure and Cultural Services Department

Mr MOK Kam-kwan  
Deputy Government Property Administrator  
Government Property Agency

Mr LEUNG Sai-chi  
Chief Manager/Management (Support Services 1)  
Housing Department

Mr LEE Kang-sum  
Chief Manager/Management (Support Services 3)  
Housing Department

Mr Ernest LEE  
Executive Director (Enforcement)  
Mandatory Provident Fund Schemes Authority

Item IV

Mr Matthew CHEUNG Kin-chung  
Permanent Secretary for Economic Development and Labour  
(Labour)

Mr Fred TING  
Deputy Commissioner for Labour (Occupational Safety and  
Health)

Mr TSO Sing-hin  
Assistant Commissioner for Labour (Occupational Safety)

**Clerk in attendance** : Mrs Sharon TONG  
Chief Council Secretary (2) 1

**Staff in attendance** : Mr Raymond LAM  
Senior Council Secretary (2) 5

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**II. Proposed amendments to the Hong Kong Council for Academic Accreditation Ordinance (Cap.1150)**  
(LC Paper No. CB(2)1053/04-05(03))

2. At the invitation of the Chairman, Deputy Secretary for Education and Manpower (DSEM) briefed members on the Administration's legislative proposal to expand the scope of responsibility of the Hong Kong Council for Academic Accreditation (the Council) to undertake quality assurance under the Qualifications Framework (QF).

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3. Regarding the composition of the Council, Mr WONG Kwok-hing suggested that representatives of labour unions should be appointed to the Council.
4. DSEM explained that about two-thirds of the members of the existing Council had an academic background. The Administration proposed to remove the restriction on the number of academics appointed to the Council. He said that the Administration was working in the direction of appointing members from a wide spectrum of background (including representatives of labour unions to the Council. However, such details would not be set out in legislation in order to maintain flexibility.
5. Mr WONG Kwok-hing asked whether the membership size of the Council would be sufficient for dealing with the increased workload. DSEM responded that the existing size of membership of the Council, which comprised a maximum of 21 members, would be adequate.
6. Mr LEUNG Kwan-yuen asked about the financial implications of the legislative proposal.
7. DSEM responded that, depending on the future development of the accreditation work of the Council, consideration might be given to providing funding support to the Council, if it was involved in the provision of service for a public purpose.
8. Ms LI Fung-ying asked whether consideration would be given to appointing Mainland experts in addition to overseas experts to the Council.
9. DSEM responded that Mainland experts, among other overseas experts, had been appointed to the Council.
10. Ms LI Fung-ying asked whether a heavier penalty would be imposed on repeated false claims.
11. Principal Assistant Secretary for Education and Manpower responded that any person who committed the offence of false claims was liable on conviction to a fine of \$50,000. In determining the sentence for a convicted person, the court would generally take into account factors such as the repeated commission of an offence.
12. Mr Vincent FANG asked whether more members with expertise in vocational accreditation would be appointed to the Council. He also asked whether the staff establishment of the Council would be increased.
13. DSEM responded that members from a wide spectrum of background would be appointed to the Council, including persons with expertise or experience in accreditation work, or persons of good standing in commerce, industry, profession,

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academic or vocational education and training. Where necessary, the staff establishment of the Council would be increased.

14. Regarding the proposed name of the Council, Mr TSANG Yok-sing questioned whether “職能” should be used as the Chinese counterpart of “Vocational”.

15. The Executive Director, Hong Kong Council for Academic Accreditation explained that the Council’s new title was to reflect the Council’s expanded role to cover accreditation of academic education, vocational education and skills training. Mr TSANG Yok-sing considered that setting out the Chinese counterparts in full would be more appropriate than in abbreviation. His view was shared by Miss CHAN Yuen-han.

16. Miss CHAN Yuen-han asked whether there were any transitional arrangements before the legislative proposal was passed by the Legislative Council. She said that it would be difficult for employees who had to work long hours to enrol in training courses. In this connection, the Administration should encourage employers to release employees for taking training courses.

17. DSEM responded that the Administration was setting up Industry Training Advisory Committees (ITACs), which were represented by employers, employees, professional bodies and other stakeholders, to develop competency-based qualifications for the industries. The Administration was working with ITACs in formulating an appropriate Recognition of Prior Learning mechanism for their respective industries to recognise the skills, knowledge and relevant experience of workers. To his knowledge, the subject of maximum working hours, which was outside the ambit of the Education and Manpower Bureau, was still being discussed by the Labour Advisory Board.

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Council Business Division 2  
Legislative Council Secretariat  
20 April 2005