

Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications Bill

Consultation on the Qualifications Framework and its associated Quality Assurance Mechanism

At the meeting of the Bills Committee on the Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications Bill (the Bill) held on 10 October 2005, the Education and Manpower Bureau (EMB) was requested to provide information on the consultation on the Qualifications Framework (QF) and the contents of the Bill.

Consultation and Pilot Studies on the Proposed establishment of a QF and its associated Quality Assurance Mechanism

2. In November 2002, the EMB launched a three-month public consultation on the proposed establishment of a QF and its associated quality assurance mechanism in Hong Kong. The Legislative Council (LegCo) Panel on Manpower was also consulted. During the public consultation period, we received a total of 59 written submissions and organised more than 20 meetings and consultation sessions with various educational institutions, employers' associations, trade organisations, professional bodies and trade unions (see Annex A). While there was general support for the establishment of a QF and its associated quality assurance mechanism, some respondents considered that the QF was too academically-oriented and might overlook the skills and experience of people with low educational attainment. Some suggested that there should be more levels of qualifications and some expressed concern about the accreditation procedures and criteria of assessment under the quality assurance mechanism.

3. Having carefully considered the views from various sectors, we briefed the Manpower Development Committee (MDC) on the results of the public consultation in February 2003. In order to test the applicability of the proposed QF in different industry settings and to examine the feasibility of developing competency standards, we conducted pilot studies in 2003 in six industries, namely Accountancy, Chinese Catering, Electrical & Mechanical Services, Information Technology, Retail, and Watch & Clock industries. All the key

stakeholders, including the employers, employees, professional bodies, education and training providers, and accrediting body, were actively involved in the pilot studies. The results of the studies confirmed that the proposed QF was a suitable framework for different industries and it was feasible to develop competency standards for industries in Hong Kong. In October 2003, the results of the pilot studies and the proposed way forward to establish the QF were reported to the MDC.

4. In June 2003, we organised two seminars for the industries, employers' associations, trade unions, professional bodies, Hong Kong Council for Academic Accreditation (HKCAA), education and training providers with a view to enhancing the stakeholders' understanding of the QF. The seminars attracted a total of 150 participants. We also organised workshops in the same month to give an account of the concept and development process of the Specifications for Competency Standards (SCSs). A total of 55 people, mainly staff members from education and training providers, participated in the workshops.

5. In order to alleviate the concerns of trade unions, we arranged a visit for representatives of the Hong Kong Confederation of Trade Unions, Federation of Hong Kong and Kowloon Labour Unions, and Hong Kong Federation of Trade Unions to Australia in November 2003. The delegation met representatives of local trade unions, training organisations, Industry Training Advisory Boards, professional bodies and government departments. The visit enabled them to gain a better understanding of the implementation of the QF in Australia.

6. The LegCo Panel on Manpower was briefed in January 2004 and the members generally supported the setting up of a QF. However, some members expressed concern that the proposal might have an adverse impact on the employment of workers with low educational attainment as their skills, knowledge and working experience might not be recognised under the QF.

7. The Executive Council approved the establishment of the QF and its associated quality assurance mechanism in February 2004. In March 2004, we briefed the LegCo Panel on Manpower on the way forward to implement the QF. In July 2004, the LegCo held a motion debate on the implementation of the QF. The SEM elaborated on the

objectives and the major areas of work of implementing the QF in his response. A progress report on the implementation of the QF was submitted to the LegCo in September 2004.

Consultation on the Implementation of the QF

8. There is a greater and more imminent need to implement the QF in the vocational sector, so that more progression pathways may emerge for young people who do not have the aptitude or interest to pursue academic studies. We have been visiting major employers' associations, trade organisations and labour unions to promote the QF and clarify any possible misunderstanding and concern that they might have. We have also organised a series of consultation sessions with stakeholders in the industries, encouraging them to participate in the work of the relevant Industry Training Advisory Committee (ITACs). A list of the organisations that we consulted is at Annex B.

9. So far, ITACs have been formed for eight industries, namely Printing & Publishing, Watch & Clock, Chinese Catering, Hairdressing, Property Management, Electrical & Mechanical Services, Jewellery, and Information & Communications Technology. Separately, we invited some 80 representatives of the Hong Kong Federation of Trade Unions, Hong Kong Confederation of Trade Unions and Federation of Hong Kong and Kowloon Labour Unions (see Annex C) to attend a sharing session in August this year to further exchange views on the implementation of the QF.

10. Meanwhile, the HKCAA conducted three briefing sessions in January 2005 for over 100 training providers under the Skills Upgrading Scheme to explain its new role and the new quality assurance procedures under the QF. Between January and July this year, the HKCAA met with over 100 providers and explored how their programmes should be quality assured under the QF. These providers included the training providers offering programmes under the Continuing Education Fund, Skills Upgrading Scheme and employees retraining programmes; Construction Industry Training Authority; Clothing Industry Training Authority; Employees Retraining Board; Hong Kong Productivity Council; and Hong Kong Management Association.

11. In March 2005, the HKCAA conducted a Demand Forecast Study and interviewed over 80 training providers (see Annex D) to gather their views on the quality assurance mechanism underpinning the QF. The training providers generally supported the quality assurance mechanism and considered recognition of the QF brandname as a key motivation for pursuing quality assurance services.

12. The EMB and the HKCAA jointly held two briefing sessions in March and April 2005 to introduce the operational arrangements of the Qualifications Register (QR) to universities and their continuing education arms, as well as the community colleges. The QR will be a web-based database of information on qualifications, courses and providers that are recognised under the QF. The HKCAA also introduced the operational arrangements of the QR to some 220 training providers between May and September 2005.

13. In February this year, the MDC was consulted and endorsed the proposed quality assurance mechanism and the legislative amendments to the HKCAA Ordinance. The LegCo Panel on Manpower was consulted in March 2005 and generally supported the proposals.

14. Over the past nine months, the first four ITACs that have drafted their SCSs (i.e. Chinese Catering, Watch & Clock, Hairdressing, and Printing & Publishing ITACs) discussed the proposal to appoint assessment agencies under the Recognition of Prior Learning Mechanism. The ITACs agreed to the appointment of assessment agencies which recognise individuals' skills, knowledge and experience so that practitioners do not need to start from scratch or to repeat training.

15. The MDC has been regularly briefed on the progress of the implementation of the QF. We also reported the progress to the LegCo Panel on Manpower in January and October this year. We shall continue to report to the MDC and the LegCo Panel on Manpower on the latest development.

Education and Manpower Bureau
November 2005

**Organisations Consulted on the Consultancy Report on
the Proposed establishment of a Qualifications Framework and
its associated Quality Assurance Mechanism**

(November 2002-February 2003)

Legislative Council

- Panel on Manpower, Legislative Council

Universities/Post-secondary education

- University Grants Committee (UGC) Secretariat
- Eight UGC-funded universities
- Open University of Hong Kong
- Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts
- Other post-secondary institutions

Education Advisory Body

- Education Commission

Continuing Education

- Federation for Continuing Education in Tertiary Institutions
- Other continuing education institutions

Vocational education and training

- Employees Retraining Board (ERB)
- Training providers under ERB
- Vocational Training Council (VTC)
- Training Boards and General Committees under VTC
- Construction Industry Training Authority
- Clothing Industry Training Authority

Major Trade Associations/Employers' Associations

- The Chinese General Chamber of Commerce
- Federation of Hong Kong Industries
- Employers' Federation of Hong Kong
- The Chinese Manufacturers' Association of Hong Kong
- Hong Kong General Chamber of Commerce
- Kowloon Chamber of Commerce
- The American Chamber of Commerce in Hong Kong
- Other major trade associations

Labour Unions

- The Hong Kong Confederation of Trade Unions
- The Hong Kong Federation of Trade Unions
- The Federation of Hong Kong & Kowloon Labour Unions
- Hong Kong and Kowloon Trades Union Council
- Labour unions of different industries

Professional Bodies

- Continuing Professional Development Alliance (CPD Alliance)
- Members of CPD Alliance
- Statutory professional bodies
- Other professional bodies

Secondary Education

- Secondary schools councils/associations
- Senior secondary schools
- Pre-vocational schools

Teachers/Parents Associations

- Hong Kong Professional Teachers' Union
- Hong Kong Federation of Education Workers Ltd.
- Committee on Home-School Co-operation
- Other regional Parents-Teachers Associations

Assessment/Accreditation Agencies

- Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority
- Hong Kong Council for Academic Accreditation

Other Bodies

- Hong Kong Productivity Council
- Travel Industry Council of Hong Kong

**List of Organisations Consulted on
the Implementation of the Qualifications Framework**

Employers' Associations

- The Chinese General Chamber of Commerce
- Federation of Hong Kong Industries
- Employers' Federation of Hong Kong
- The Chinese Manufacturers' Association of Hong Kong
- Hong Kong General Chamber of Commerce

Major Labour Unions

- The Hong Kong Federation of Trade Unions
- The Hong Kong Confederation of Trade Unions
- The Federation of Hong Kong & Kowloon Labour Unions

Professional Bodies

- Hong Kong Institute of Human Resource Management
- Continuing Professional Development Alliance

Chinese Catering

- Chiu Chow Overseas Food Trade Merchants Association Ltd.
- Estates' Restaurants (HK) Merchant Association Ltd.
- Hong Kong Catering Industry Association
- Hong Kong Federation of Restaurants and Related Trades
- The Association for Hong Kong Catering Services Management Ltd.
- The Association of Restaurant Managers Ltd.
- The Hong Kong Restaurant & Eating-House Merchants General Association
- Catering and Hotels Industries Employees General Union
- Chinese and Western Food Workers Union
- Kwun Sang Catering Professional Employees Association
- HK Eating Establishment Employees General Union
- Catering Trade Administrative Employees Association
- Hong Kong and Kowloon Restaurant and Café Workers General Union

Printing & Publishing

- The Hong Kong Printers Association
- Institute of Print-Media Professionals
- The Graphic Arts Association of Hong Kong
- Hong Kong Printing Industry Workers Union
- The Hong Kong Packaging Institute
- The Hong Kong Publishing Professional Society Ltd.
- Hong Kong Publishing Federation Ltd.

Watch & Clock

- Hong Kong Watch Manufacturers Association Ltd.
- The Federation of Hong Kong Watch Trades & Industries Ltd.
- HK & Kowloon Clock & Watch Trade Workers Union
- Hong Kong Department Stores & Commercial Staff General Union
- HK Polytechnic University Institute for Enterprise
- HK Institute of Vocational Education - Lee Wai Lee
- Hong Kong Productivity Council

Hairdressing

- Asia Pacific Hairdressers and Cosmetologists Association
- The Hong Kong Association of Hair Design
- Hong Kong Hairdesigners Associations
- HK Beauty and Hair Care Employees' Union
- HK Hair Dressing & Make-up Trade Workers General Union
- Gold Club
- Pivot Point College...Hong Kong
- Leo Hair & Beauty Training Centre
- Farida Hair & Beauty Education Centre

Electrical & Mechanical Services

- The Hong Kong Federation of Electrical and Mechanical Contractors Limited
- Hong Kong Plumbing and Sanitary Ware Trade Association Ltd.
- The Association of Registered Fire service Installation Contractors of Hong Kong

- The Hong Kong Air Conditioning And Refrigeration Association
- Registered Ventilation Contractor's Association
- Lift & Escalator Contactors Association
- The Hong Kong E&M Contractors' Association Ltd.
- The Hong Kong Institution of Engineers
- Fire and Security Engineering Employees Association
- Hong Kong and Kowloon Electrical Engineering and Appliances Trade Workers Union
- Hong Kong and Kowloon Electrical Engineering and Appliances Trade Workers Union
- The Federation of Hong Kong Electrical and Mechanical Industries Trade Unions
- Hong Kong General Union of Lift and Escalator Employees
- Hong Kong Plumbing General Union
- Hong Kong Shipbuilding, Machinery Manufacturing and Steel Industries Employees General Union
- Hong Kong Electrical Engineering Professional Employees Association
- Hong Kong Electric Holdings Ltd. Works Union
- Association of Hong Kong railway Transport Professional

Property Management

- The Hong Kong Association of Property Management Companies Limited
- Hong Kong Institute of Real Estate Administration
- The Hong Kong Institute of Housing
- The Chartered Institute of Housing Asian Pacific Branch
- VTC Real Estate Services Training Board
- Hong Kong General Union of Security & Property Management Industry Employees
- Hong Kong Property Management & Technical Employees Association
- Hong Kong Housing Management Employees Union
- Property Management Administrative and Clerical Staff Association
- Hong Kong Building Management and Security Workers General Union

Jewellery

- Hong Kong Jewellery & Jade Manufacturers Association
- Hong Kong Jewelry Manufacturers' Association
- Diamond Federation of Hong Kong, China Limited
- Hong Kong Jewellers' & Goldsmiths' Association
- Hong Kong Gold & Silver Ornaments Workers & Merchants General Union
- The Kowloon Pearls, Precious Stones, Jade, Gold & Silver Ornament Merchants Association
- Hong Kong Gemstone Manufacturers Association Ltd.
- Hong Kong & Kowloon Gold Ornaments & Jewellery Trade Workers' Union
- Hong Kong Department Stores & Commercial Staff General Union

Information and Communications Technology

- Internet & Telecom Association of Hong Kong
- Information and Software Industry Association
- Hong Kong IT Industry Council, Federation of Hong Kong Industries
- Hong Kong Wireless Technology Industry Association
- Hong Kong Information Technology Federation Ltd.
- Hong Kong Internet Service Providers Association
- Hong Kong ASP Industry Consortium
- Hong Kong Institution of Engineers (IT Division)
- Professional Information Security Association
- Hong Kong Computer Society
- The Hong Kong Association for Computer Education
- Internet Professionals Association
- The British Computer Society (Hong Kong Section)
- Hong Kong Telecommunication Professionals Association
- Communications Workers General Union
- Computer Information Technology Employees Association
- Hong Kong Information Technology & Network Engineering Employees Association

Beauty Care

- HK Health & Beauty Business Union
- The Cosmetic & Perfumery Association of HK Ltd.
- B1 Federation of Beauty Industry(H.K.)
- Hong Kong Association of Professional Aestheticians International (APAI)
- Association of International Beauty Therapists Ltd.
- International Professional Make-up Artists Federation (iPMA)
- Hong Kong Hair & Beauty Merchants Association
- CIDESCO International (China)
- The International CICA Association of Esthetics
- Professional Beauty Instructors Association of Hong Kong
- International Federation of Aestheticians (INFA)
- HK Beauty and Hair Care Employees' Union
- HK Hair Dressing & Make-up Trade Workers General Union
- HK Services Industry Employees Association

Automobile

- The Institute of The Motor Industry Hong Kong
- The Hong Kong Automotive Knowledge and Technology Centre
- The Motor Traders Association of Hong Kong
- Service Managers Association
- H. K. Vehicle Repair Merchants Association Ltd
- Hong Kong Auto Parts Industry Association
- Hong Kong Automobile Association
- Society of Automotive Engineer—Hong Kong
- Motor Transport Workers General Unions
- Non-franchised Public Buses Workers Association

Accountancy

- The Association of Chartered Certified Accountants
- Hong Kong Society of Accountants
- CPA Australia

Logistics

- Hong Kong Logistics Association
- The Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport
- Transport Logistics Training Board of VTC
- Hong Kong CFS and Logistics Association
- Hong Kong Container Terminal Operators Association Limited
- Hong Kong Sea Transport and Logistics Association
- Hong Kong Shipowners Association
- Hong Kong Container Tractor Owner Association Limited
- Hong Kong Association of Aircargo Truckers Limited
- Hongkong Association of Freight Forwarding and Logistics Limited
- Carrier Liaison Group
- Hong Kong International Courier
- Hong Kong Godown Association Limited
- Institute of Seatransport

Retail Management

- Hong Kong Retail Management Association
- Commodities Promotion & Retailing Employees General Union
- Hong Kong Department Stores & Commercial Staff General Union

Security Services

- Security & Guarding Services Industry Authority
- Security Services Training Board of VTC
- The Hong Kong Security Association

Banking & Financial Services

- Advisory Committee on Human Resources Development in the Financial Services Sector
- Hong Kong Institute of Bankers
- Hong Kong Monetary Authority
- Hong Kong Federation of Trade Unions
- Hong Kong Federation of Insurers
- Hong Kong Confederation of Insurance Brokers
- Professional Insurance Brokers Association
- Hong Kong General Insurance Agents Association Ltd
- Insurance Institute of Hong Kong Ltd

- Office of the Commissioner of Insurance
- Hong Kong Insurance Industry Employees Union
- Clerical & Professional Employees Association
- Hong Kong Securities Institute
- Securities & Futures Commission
- Chinese Gold & Silver Exchange Society

Estate Agents

- Estate Agent Association
- Estate Agents Management Association
- Property Agencies Association
- Hong Kong Chamber of Professional Property Consultants Limited
- Estate Agents Authority
- Hong Kong Real Estate Agencies General Association

Remarks:

The above list may not exhaust the large number of organisations consulted.

**List of Attendance of Labour Unions for
the Sharing Session on the Qualifications Framework
on 31 August 2005**

1. The Hong Kong Federation of Trade Unions
2. The Hong Kong Confederation of Trade Unions
3. The Federation of Hong Kong & Kowloon Trade Unions
4. Kwan Sang Catering Professional Employees Association
5. Chinese & Western Food Workers Unions
6. Hong Kong International Terminals Group Employees General Union
7. Hong Kong Housing Management Employees Union
8. Hong Kong and Kowloon Gold Ornaments & Jewellery Trade Workers' Union
9. Computer Information Technology Employees Association
10. Hong Kong & Kowloon Electrical Engineering and Appliances Trade Workers Union
11. Commodities Promotion and Retailing Employees General Union
12. Communications Workers General Union
13. Association of Government Technical and Survey Officers
14. Hong Kong Beauty and Hair Care Employees' Union
15. Hong Kong Information Technology & Network Engineering Employees Association
16. Hong Kong Electrical Engineering Professional Employees
17. China Light & Power Co. Ltd. Chinese Employees Union

18. Hong Kong Gaseous Fuel Engineering Employees Association
19. Hong Kong Electric Holdings Limited Workers Union
20. Hong Kong Insurance Industry Employees Union
21. Hong Kong Banking Employees Association
22. Ceylon Union of Teachers (to be established)
23. Harbour Transportation Workers General Union
24. Hong Kong Wearing Apparel Industry Employees General Union
25. Clerical and Professional Employees Association
26. Property Management Administrative and Clerical Staff Association
27. Hong Kong Property Management & Technical Employees Association
28. Hong Kong Shipbuilding, Machinery Manufacturing and Steel Industries Employees General Union
29. Hong Kong and Kowloon Ship-building Trade Workers Union
30. Motor Transport Workers General Union
31. Hong Kong Department Stores & Commercial Staff General Union
32. Eating Establishment Employees General Union
33. Logistics Cargo Supervisors Association
34. Hong Kong Printing Industry Workers Union
35. Hong Kong General Union of Lift and Escalator Employees
36. Hong Kong Hair Dressing & Make-up Trade Workers General Union
37. The Hong Kong General Union of Security & Property Management Industry Employees

**List of Institutions surveyed under
the Demand Forecast Study conducted by
Hong Kong Council for Academic Accreditation (HKCAA)**

Post-secondary Institutions accredited by HKCAA

- Hang Seng School of Commerce
- Hong Kong College of Technology
- Hong Kong Institute of Technology
- The Hong Kong Learning Community College
- Caritas Bianchi College of Careers
- Caritas Francis Hsu College
- CCC Kung Lee College
- Hong Kong Arts Centre - The Art School
- Po Leung Kuk Community College of Hong Kong
- Vocational Training Council

Providers taking part in the Government-subsidised Training Programmes

- Caritas Hong Kong (Adult and Higher Education Service)
- Christian Action
- Heung To College of Professional Studies
- Hong Kong Travel and Tourism Training Centre
- Hong Kong Young Women's Christian Association
- Methodist Centre
- New Territories Association Retraining Centre
- Scout Association of Hong Kong – Education Centre
- The Young Men's Christian Association of Hong Kong
- ABRS
- Advanced Printing Technology Centre Limited
- ET Business College
- FormalWin Consultants Ltd
- Hong Kong Communication Art Centre
- Hong Kong School of Commerce
- Social Resources Development Centre
- Xianggang Putonghua Yanxishe Ltd

- INTI College Hong Kong
- Philip Institute of Financial Learning
- Computer Academy
- Dai-ichi Japanese Language and Culture School
- Dynamics Design.Net
- Excel Education Centre
- Hong Kong Financial Institute Limited
- Hong Kong Institute of Continuing Education
- Hornington School
- International Transport & Logistics Association
- Po Leung Kuk Regional College of Continuing Education (New Territories)
- The Japan Society of HK
- Transformatics College
- Welkin Computer Training
- West Coast Institute of Management and Technology
- James Safety Consultants Limited

(The Government-subsidised training programmes include the Continuing Education Fund, Skills Upgrading Scheme, the courses subsidised by the Employees Retraining Board, etc.)

Providers of Registered Non-local Courses

- Hong Kong Academy of Chinese Medicine
- (Hong Kong) Continuous Professional Education Centre
- Asia Institute of Higher Education o/b Haiman Ltd
- Centre for International Programs Ltd
- China Representative Office, University of Wolverhampton
- Consort Management Consultants Ltd
- East Asia Work Based Learning Centre O/B Institute of Professional Continuing Education Ltd
- Hong Kong College of Engineering
- Hong Kong Institute of Bankers
- Hong Kong Institute of Marketing
- Hong Kong Project Management Exchange Centre Ltd
- Seventh-day Adventist Schools Organization (HK) Ltd
- Hong Kong Sports Institute

Providers of Continuing Professional Development Programmes for the Insurance Sector

- AXA China Region Insurance Co. Ltd
- Bank of America (Asia) Ltd
- CIGNA Worldwide Insurance Company
- DBS Bank (Hong Kong) Limited
- ING Training Institute
- Manchester Training & Consultancy Institute
- TG Holbom (HK) Ltd
- Aon Hong Kong Ltd

Providers of Adult and Youth Education

- Baptist Oi Kwan Social Service Headquarters
- Sheng Kung Hui Diocesan Welfare Council
- Neighbourhood and Worker's Service Centre
- Sheng Kung Hui Holy Carpenter Church Community Centre
- The Church of United Brethren in Christ Social Service Division
- The Federation of Hong Kong and Kowloon Labour Unions Employees Progressive Educational Centre
- Yan Oi Tong
- Aberdeen Kai-fong Welfare Association Social Service Centre
- Yang Memorial Methodist Social Service
- Tuen Mun District Women's Association
- St. James' Settlement
- Chinese YMCA of Hong Kong
- Monita Hair & Beauty College
- Hong Kong Employment Development Service Ltd
- Hong Kong Macao Conference of Seventh-day Adventists
- Hong Kong Small and Medium Enterprises Association Computer Education Centre
- Sheng Kung Hui Lady MacLehose Centre
- Evangelical Lutheran Church Social Service - Hong Kong
- Hong Kong Confederation of Trade Unions