

立法會
Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(2)1028/04-05
(These minutes have been
seen by the Administration)

Ref : CB2/PL/ED

Panel on Education

Minutes of meeting
held on Monday, 7 February 2005 at 4:30 pm
in the Chamber of the Legislative Council Building

- Members present** : Dr Hon YEUNG Sum (Chairman)
Hon Audrey EU Yuet-mee, SC, JP (Deputy Chairman)
Hon Mrs Selina CHOW LIANG Shuk-ye, GBS, JP
Hon CHEUNG Man-kwong
Hon Jasper TSANG Yok-sing, GBS, JP
Hon Tommy CHEUNG Yu-yan, JP
Hon Andrew LEUNG Kwan-yuen, SBS, JP
Dr Hon Fernando CHEUNG Chiu-hung
Hon Patrick LAU Sau-shing, SBS, JP
- Members absent** : Hon LEUNG Yiu-chung
Hon Emily LAU Wai-hing, JP
Hon MA Lik, JP
- Public Officers attending** : Item IV
Mrs Fanny LAW, GBS, JP
Permanent Secretary for Education and Manpower

Ms Irene YOUNG
Principal Assistant Secretary for Education and
Manpower (Higher Education)

Mr Michael STONE, JP
Secretary General, University Grants Committee

Mr John WONG
Assistant Secretary-General (Finance), University
Grants Committee

Resource Persons

The Chinese University of Hong Kong

Mr Louis HEUNG Sai-kit
Acting University Bursar

Hong Kong University of Science & Technology

Mr Philip WONG
Director of Finance

Hong Kong Baptist University

Mr Alex SHUEN
Director of Finance

Hong Kong Polytechnic University

Mr Chris MONG
Associate Vice President & Director of Finance

Hong Kong Institute of Education

Professor Paul MORRIS
President

Professor Bernard LUK
Vice President (Academic)

City University of Hong Kong

Mr Gabriel CHAN
Director of Finance

Lingnan University

Mr Herdip SINGH
The Comptroller

University of Hong Kong

Mr Philip LAM
Director of Finance

Item V

Mrs Fanny LAW, GBS, JP
Permanent Secretary for Education and Manpower

Mr Chris WARDLAW
Deputy Secretary for Education and Manpower (5)

Mr Billy WOO
Assistant Secretary (Language Education), Education
and Manpower Bureau

**Attendance by
invitation** : Item IV

The Federation of the Hong Kong Higher Education
Institution Staff Associations

Professor SHUM kar-ping
Chairman

Academic Staff Association, The University of Hong Kong

Mr C W CHAN
Chairman

Hong Kong Professional Teachers' Union

Mr CHAN Kwok-kuen
Publication Department Director

Miss SY On-na
Deputy Director

The Academic Staff Association of the Hong Kong
Institute of Education

Dr LEUNG Yan-wing
President

Mr WONG Ping-ho
Vice-President

The Hong Kong Institute of Education Students' Alliance

Miss Ada WONG Yuen-mei
President of The Hong Kong Institute of Education
Students' Union

Mr MA Chi-hang
Contact Person

The Hong Kong Institute of Education Past Student's
Association of Early Childhood Teacher Education Ltd.

Mrs MAK TSE How-ling
Chairman

World Organization for Early Childhood Education –
Hong Kong

Dr Veronica WONG Wai-yum
President

Clerk in attendance : Miss Flora TAI
Chief Council Secretary (2)2

Staff in attendance : Mr Stanley MA
Senior Council Secretary (2)6

Miss Sherman WOO
Legislative Assistant (2)2

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I. Confirmation of minutes
[LC Paper No. CB(2)792/04-05]

The minutes of the meeting held on 10 January 2005 were confirmed.

II. Information papers issued since the last meeting

2. Members noted that the following papers were issued since the last meeting –

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- (a) submission from Ms FUNG Lai-fong on the proposed reform in academic structure for senior secondary education and higher education [LC Paper No. CB(2)628/04-05(01)];
- (b) submission from Ms Jennifer LEE on the proposed reform in academic structure for senior secondary education and higher education [LC Paper No. CB(2)695/04-05(01)];
- (c) submission from Association of English Medium Secondary Schools on the proposed reform in academic structure for senior secondary education and higher education [LC Paper No. CB(2)715/04-05(01)];
- (d) submission from Hong Kong Down Syndrome Association on the proposed reform in academic structure for senior secondary education and higher education [LC Paper No. CB(2)715/04-05(02)];
- (e) submission from Federation of Parent Teacher Association of Hong Kong Eastern District on the proposed reform in academic structure for senior secondary education and higher education [LC Paper No. CB(2)736/04-05(01)]; and
- (f) Administration's paper entitled "Start-up Loan for post-secondary education providers" [LC Paper No. CB(2)790/04-05(01)].

III. Items for discussion at the next meeting

[Appendices I and II to LC Paper No. CB(2)795/04-05]

- 3. Members noted the "list of outstanding items for discussion" and "the list of follow-up actions" which were tabled at the meeting.
- 4. Members agreed to discuss "Review of the medium of instruction for secondary schools and secondary school places allocation" and invite deputations to give views at the next regular meeting scheduled for Monday, 14 March 2005.

IV. Recurrent funding for University Grants Committee-funded institutions in the 2005/06 to 2007/08 triennium

[LC Paper Nos. CB(2)781/04-05(01), CB(2)795/04-05(01) and (02)]

- 5. The Chairman welcomed representatives of the deputations and the Administration to the meeting. He informed the meeting that the Administration

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intended to submit the proposal to the Finance Committee for consideration at its meeting on 25 February 2005.

Representation of deputations

6. At the invitation of the Chairman, representatives of deputations briefed members on their views and concerns which were summarised in paragraphs 7 to 17.

The Federation of the Hong Kong Higher Education Institution Staff Associations [LC Paper No. CB(2)843/04-05(01)]

7. Professor SHUM Kar-ping presented the views of the Federation of the Hong Kong Higher Education Institution Staff Associations (the Federation) as detailed in its submission. He highlighted that the Federation opposed the proposed “0-0-5” model for allocation of recurrent funding to University Grants Committee (UGC)-funded institutions for the 2005-08 triennium, and suggested to replace it with a “10-0-0” model, i.e., a 10% reduction in the 2004-05, and 0% reduction in the 2005-06 and 2006-07 academic years. The “10-0-0” model would facilitate the Administration’s review of the recurrent funding in 2006 for the 2007-08, 2008-09 and 2009-10 academic years of the next triennium. The Federation believed that such arrangement would help soothe staff resentment in UGC-funded institutions towards the proposed “0-0-5” model and facilitate the Administration’s planning work for the 2007-10 triennium.

8. Professor SHUM further said that the Federation was very concerned about the proposed 33% reduction of recurrent funding for the Hong Kong Institute of Education (HKIEd) in the 2005-08 triennium, and suggested that the Administration should re-consider the proposed funding allocation for HKIEd. The Federation also considered that the provision of non-recurrent funding to offset the reduction in recurrent funding for HKIEd was inappropriate as it would affect the quality of education and the long-term development of HKIEd in the provision of teacher education.

9. Professor SHUM added that before the reunification in 1997, the Administration used to consult the Federation on important issues in the higher education sector. After the reunification, the Administration had adopted a completely different attitude towards the Federation. He cited that the Chief Executive had received and convinced the Federation to accept the “0-0-X” model. The Federation anticipated that the Administration would continue to consult the Federation on major issues in the higher education in the future.

Academic Staff Association, The University of Hong Kong

10. Mr CHAN Chi-wai said that the Academic Staff Association of the University of Hong Kong shared the same view of the Federation that the

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Administration should adopt the “0-0-0” model in allocation of recurrent funding for the 2005-08 triennium, having regard to the prevailing economic conditions. The Association considered that UGC should specify in its paper how the reduction of funding for individual institutions were reckoned and finalised. The Association also had doubt about the peer review system for allocating the competitive earmarked research grants on the basis of the assessment by subject panels of the Research Grants Council because it comprised mainly overseas specialist academics who were not familiar with the local circumstances and could not assess the research performance of individual institutions. The Association also considered that UGC should review the role and performance of HKIEd in the higher education sector and provide it with sufficient funding support, without affecting the total recurrent funding for the UGC sector.

Hong Kong Professional Teachers’ Union

11. Mr CHAN Kwok-kuen said that the Hong Kong Professional Teachers’ Union had expressed its views and reservations on the proposed recurrent funding for UGC-funded institutions in the 2005-08 triennium at the meeting on 11 January 2005. Miss SY On-na highlighted that the Union was disappointed that the Administration insisted on the adoption of the “0-0-5” model and the 33% reduction of recurrent funding for HKIEd in the 2005-08 triennium. The Union queried the need to reduce the provision of recurrent funding on in-service training programmes to HKIEd on the one hand, and required HKIEd to bid for non-recurrent funding to run programmes for in-service kindergarten teachers on the other. The Union considered it impossible for HKIEd to continue its normal operation and development, given a 47% reduction of funding in four years. Miss SY reiterated the Union’s opposition to any funding cut for UGC-funded institutions and appealed to members to vote down the Administration’s proposal at the Finance Committee meeting on 25 February 2005.

*The Academic Staff Association of the Hong Kong Institute of Education
[LC Paper Nos. CB(2)819/04-05(01) and (02)]*

12. Dr LEUNG Yan-wing referred to the joint statement made by more than 4 000 academics, educators and professionals from a wide spectrum of the educational and professional sectors in Ming Pao Daily News on 1 February 2005 and said that it indicated a clear and strong objection of the community against the proposed funding cut for HKIEd in the 2005-08 triennium. He presented the views of the Academic Staff Association of HKIEd as detailed in its submissions. Dr LEUNG urged the Administration and UGC to defer the removal of the front-end loading for HKIEd for one more triennium, review the reduction of programme places for in-service school and kindergarten teachers, and consider the provision of second-year degree places in HKIEd for direct entry of its sub-degree programme graduates in education. In concluding, Dr LEUNG said that the Association considered that in the light of the

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favourable economic outlook in the next few years, the Administration should adopt the “0-0-0” model for provision of recurrent funding to UGC-funded institutions in the 2005-08 triennium.

The Hong Kong Institute of Education Students’ Alliance

13. Miss Ada WONG said that the Hong Kong Institute of Education Students’ Alliance was of the view that the proposed 33% funding cut for HKIEd in the 2005-08 triennium would seriously affect the operation of HKIEd and its staff morale, which would subsequently jeopardise the quality of education in HKIEd. The Alliance was confident that HKIEd would be able to obtain additional funding from the \$550 million provision for professional development of teachers for implementation of the proposed “3+3+4” academic structure and other sources, but considered it inappropriate for HKIEd to provide teacher education and survive in the long term on the basis of non-recurrent funding. In conclusion, the Alliance considered that the proposed 33% funding cut for HKIEd would jeopardise the quality of teacher education, and request the Administration to re-consider the recurrent funding in the 2005-08 triennium with a view to providing a stable learning and teaching environment for students in UGC-funded institutions.

14. Mr MA Chi-hang supplemented that the Secretary for Education and Manpower (SEM) in his meeting with representatives of the student unions of the eight UGC-funded institutions had assured students that subject to a review of the economic situation in mid-2006, there should be no reduction in recurrent funding for institutions in the 2007-08 academic year. He did not consider that the proposed “0-0-5” model had reflected the current trend of economic recovery that was likely to continue in the next few years. Mr MA also urged the Administration and UGC to withdraw the funding cut on professional development programmes for in-service teachers offered by HKIEd, as these programmes would help maintain the quality of teachers and school education in the course of the education reform. He requested the Administration to clarify the implication of the one-off allocation of \$28 million with the triennium recurrent funding. He considered that the Administration should clarify its role and improve the transparency of UGC’s mechanism in allocation of recurrent funding for UGC-funded institutions. He also appealed to members to vote down the Administration’s proposal on 25 February 2005.

The Hong Kong Institute of Education Past Student’s Association of Early Childhood Teacher Education Ltd.

15. Mrs MAK TSE How-ling said that the 360-hour qualified kindergarten teacher programme was inadequate in terms of upgrading kindergarten teachers for the provision of quality pre-school education in the long term. She considered it unreasonable to reduce HKIEd’s certificate programme places from 600 to 200, given that more than 6 000 serving kindergarten teachers had

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not completed a certificate programme in education. She queried that the Education and Manpower Bureau (EMB) had all along ignored the development needs of in-service teachers in the pre-school sector in its allocation of education resources, such as the exclusion of kindergarten teachers from the \$550 million provision for school-based professional support. Mrs MAK requested members to consider the importance of quality pre-school education to the development of young children, and to oppose the proposal to reduce programme places for in-service kindergarten teachers offered by HKIEd in the 2005-08 triennium.

*World Organization for Early Childhood Education
[LC Paper No. CB(2)843/04-05(02)]*

16. Dr Veronica WONG presented the views of the World Organization for Early Childhood Education as detailed in its submission. She highlighted the importance of early childhood education to the development of young children between the age of zero to six, and the significance of professional development and continuing education for in-service teachers in the provision of quality early childhood education. Dr WONG urged the Administration to work out policies and strategies for the provision of professional development opportunities to in-service teachers in early childhood education sector and allocate sufficient resources for the provision of quality education in the sector.

Responses of EMB and UGC

17. The Chairman summarised that deputations in general opposed the proposed “0-0-5” model and suggested its replacement by a “0-0-0” model. He also asked whether the Administration would consider deferring the removal of the front-end loading for HKIEd for another triennium, review the reduction of programme places for in-service teachers, and consider the provision of second-year degree places in HKIEd for admission of its sub-degree programme graduates.

18. At the Chairman’s invitation, Permanent Secretary for Education and Manpower (PSEM) made the following points in response to the views and suggestions of the deputations –

- (a) When discussing the recurrent funding for the 2004-05 academic year, the Administration, UGC and Heads of Universities Committee (HUCOM) reached a consensus that the eight UGC-funded institutions would try their best to work with a “0-0-X” model for the 2005-08 triennium. In his recent discussions with HUCOM, SEM had undertaken that EMB would conduct a review in mid-2006 to determine the percentage of actual reduction of recurrent funding for the 2007-08 academic year, and hoped that the circumstances then would likely allow EMB to recommend a higher level of recurrent grant for the

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2007-08 academic year, reflecting the "0-0-0" model. EMB would conduct the review in consultation with UGC and HUCOM and would revert to the Panel on the outcome. At this stage, the eight UGC-funded institutions needed early confirmation of their funding level in order to finalise their budget and academic programmes for the 2005-08 triennium.

- (b) The Federation's recommendation to adopt a "10-0-0" model for the 2004-05, 2005-06 and 2006-07 academic years would mean the start of the planning work for the 2007-10 triennium in mid-2005 while the next funding period (2005-07) had not begun. This would to some extent create inconvenience to UGC-funded institutions.
- (c) The decision to take out some 171 certificate programme places from HKIEd in the 2005-08 triennium for allocation by bidding on a competing basis was proposed in response to some institutions' request and after discussion with the early childhood education sector in early 2004. EMB shared the view of the sector that the provision of professional development programmes for serving kindergarten teachers should not be monopolised by one institution, and considered the provision of diversity in early childhood education beneficial to professional development of teachers in the sector.
- (d) The allocation of the 171 certificate programme places taken out from HKIEd would be determined through competitive bidding based on the "two-envelope system". Under the system, bids would be evaluated on the basis of quality before considering costs. Equal weighting would be given to quality and cost.
- (e) The objective to provide diversity in professional development programmes for in-service teachers in early childhood education in no way implied that the quality of HKIEd's certificate programmes was not satisfactory. EMB acknowledged that HKIEd's certificate programmes on early childhood education enjoyed a good reputation.
- (f) UGC would approve HKIEd to operate a Bachelor of Education (BEd) in Early Childhood Education in the 2005-08 triennium to provide more opportunities for upgrading skill in the sector. This was to be offered alongside the existing Mixed-mode BEd Early Childhood Education for in-service teachers.

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- (g) EMB attached great importance to teachers' professional development in early childhood education, and had increased allocations in this regard on a progressive basis. Starting from the 2005-06 academic year, the number of certificate programme places for in-service teachers in early childhood education would be increased to around 1 000, namely, 200 places offered by HKIEd, 400 places allocated by way of competitive bidding, and another 400 places offered by self-financing operators in the market. EMB envisaged that the 6 000 serving kindergarten teachers without a certificate in early childhood education could be upgraded in six to seven years.
- (h) EMB would review the policy on provision of subsidised certificate programmes for in-service kindergarten teachers in the 2005-06 academic year, when the policy targets laid down in the 2000 education reform would have been achieved.
- (i) HKIEd had a cumulative reserve of more than \$500 million, and a surplus of over \$140 million was recorded in the 2003-04 academic year. The reserve could well be used to offset the reduction in front-end loading which was currently provided to HKIEd at about \$50 million a year.
- (j) The reduction in student numbers was about 14% in aggregate across all levels at HKIEd. The provision of teacher education places for the 2005-08 triennium had taken into account the current situation of surplus teachers, projected demand for teachers (which would in turn be affected by the projected decline in school student population) and demands for teachers in specific key learning areas, and anticipated needs in upgrading existing teachers in the coming years. Based on the demands for teachers in specific key learning areas, EMB would be able to estimate more accurately the additional teachers required or surplus teachers in different key learning areas and make appropriate adjustment in the annual provision of different programme places.
- (k) In line with the forecast decline in student numbers, the total reduction of teacher education places in HKIEd was 14%, of which about 60% were related to professional development programmes for serving teachers in schools and kindergartens.
- (l) Feedback from frontline teachers showed that school-based support and experience-sharing through professional learning communities were more effective in enhancing the knowledge and skills of in-service teachers than off-site training by academics who might not have frontline working experiences. In response,

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EMB had proposed and the Finance Committee had approved in 2004 an allocation of \$550 million for provision of school-based professional support for in-service teachers, putting professional development in context. HKIED had proposed a professional development programme for school teachers and was awarded a grant of \$28 million in November 2004

- (m) For various reasons, serving teachers were not keen to attend part-time teacher training programmes. Due to low enrolment, HKIED had reduced the number of places for the part-time programme on Diploma in Education in its Academic Development Programme for the 2005-08 triennium.
- (n) EMB would allocate more resources for professional development of serving teachers to build the capacity of teachers to implement the education reform. EMB would propose to increase the total non-UGC recurrent funding for teacher training and professional development from the current \$130 million to \$150 million in the next financial year.
- (o) UGC-funded institutions would be informed of the use of the \$3.3 billion set aside for implementation of the proposed “3+3+4” academic structure and the amount for professional development when a decision on the implementation of the new academic structure was made in mid-2005. As HKIED had demonstrated with enthusiasm its readiness to take up new challenges, EMB had confidence that HKIED would continue to play a pivotal role in teacher education, and be able to secure additional funding by submitting quality and cost-effective development programmes for in-service teachers to facilitate implementation of the new academic structure.
- (p) HKIED had recently submitted a number of proposals on school-based professional support. Following discussions with EMB, HKIED would revise two of the proposals which together would cost \$60-70 million. EMB would submit the proposals to the Advisory Committee on the Education Development Fund for consideration of funding.

19. Secretary General, UGC (SG(UGC)) said that UGC acknowledged that a 33% reduction in recurrent funding over a triennium was substantial. He stressed that UGC had applied the same principle in the provision of front-end loading to HKIED and other institutions. UGC had also proposed to provide HKIED with a monotechnic premium of about 6% to its total grant for the 2005-08 triennium. UGC was confident that HKIED would be able to cope with the change in the light of its financial projection. Furthermore, if HKIED truly

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experienced financial difficulties in the final year of the triennium, UGC would be prepared to provide assistance. SG(UGC) added that both UGC and the institutions found the existing triennium funding mechanism invaluable, and that it should continue to be adopted so as not to affect the stability and continuity of institutional operations.

Views and concerns of members

Recurrent funding for UGC-funded institutions in the 2005-08 triennium

20. Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong said that he had all along opposed both the “0-0-5” and the “0-0-X” models for provision of recurrent funding to UGC-funded institutions in the 2005-08 triennium. Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong and Dr Fernando CHEUNG expressed disappointment that despite the objection expressed by members and deputations, the Administration had maintained its position and refused to make any change to the “0-0-5” model.

21. PSEM responded that SEM had taken heed of the views expressed by members and deputations, and had subsequently discussed with HUCOM. She pointed out that the eight UGC-funded institutions needed early confirmation of their funding level in order to finalise their budgets and academic programmes for the 2005-08 triennium. In its press statements on 17 and 18 January 2005, HUCOM welcomed the Administration’s promise of a review in mid-2006, and hoped that funding arrangements as proposed by the Government would soon be finalised.

22. Dr Fernando CHEUNG expressed concern about the increasingly important role of UGC in allocation of funds for higher education. He pointed out that while recurrent funding for UGC-funded institutions was reduced in the 2005-08 triennium, the funding for Central Allocation Vote had increased by ten-fold from \$10 million to \$100 million and the funding for restructuring and collaboration activities had increased from \$123.6 million to \$182.5 million between the 2005-06 and 2006-07 academic years.

23. SG(UGC) explained that the Central Allocation Vote was mainly used to assist institutions to meet unforeseen funding requirements during a triennium. The normal allocation for the Vote was \$100 million. In the 05-06 academic year, some \$90 million would be taken out from the Vote for allocation to three institutions which had demonstrated a good performance in fulfilment of their roles in the higher education sector.

24. SG(UGC) further explained that the Restructuring and Collaboration Fund (RCF) was set up in 2004 to provide one-off assistance to institutions to support their initiatives aimed at achieving greater value for money and greater quality for money in the use of UGC funds/resources through restructuring and deep collaboration activities. The source of funding for RCF came from savings,

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which the Administration had allowed UGC to retain, arising from the phasing out of publicly-funded taught postgraduate places in general. SG(UGC) added that the saving retained by UGC would also be allocated to the Research Development Fund which was mainly used for supporting research development activities, such as the provision of 450 additional research postgraduate marginally funded places in the 2005-08 triennium and significant research projects including Areas of Excellence projects.

25. Dr Fernando CHEUNG asked whether UGC-funded institutions found the UGC paper on its funding mechanism [LC Paper No.CB(2)781/04-05(01)] helpful in clearing their doubts about the process for calculation and allocation of recurrent funding to institutions.

26. Mr Alex SHIEN of the Hong Kong Baptist University, Mr Philip LAM of the University of Hong Kong, Mr Chris MONG of the Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Mr Louis HEUNG of the Chinese University of Hong Kong, Mr Philip WONG of the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, and Mr Professor Bernard LUK of the Hong Kong Institute of Education in general agreed that the UGC paper had provided useful and additional information on allocation of recurrent funding for UGC-funded institutions. They considered that there were technical issues in the paper that needed further studies and clarifications with UGC. Mr Chris MONG and Mr Philip WONG added that they would discuss with UGC the changes in the percentage of the teaching and research elements under the block grant.

27. Mr Jasper TSANG pointed out that the proposed “0-0-X” model was agreed after thorough discussions with members in early 2004. He considered that as the prevailing economic outlook was favourable, it was very likely that the “0-0-0” model would be adopted, unless there was a serious disaster in Hong Kong such as the recurrence of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome. Mr TSANG pointed out that the “0-0-5” model, if approved by the Finance Committee, had immediate effects on institutional planning and development work. He therefore asked whether EMB could propose a lower reduction percentage for the third year of the triennium and conduct a review earlier with a view to promulgate the adoption of “0-0-0” as soon as practicable. Mrs Selina CHOW said that the Liberal Party did not oppose the “0-0-5” model. She also saw no problem with the existing mechanism of allocating triennial recurrent grants.

28. PSEM reiterated that HUCOM had discussed with SEM and agreed to the “0-0-X” model. She considered it more appropriate to approve the recurrent funding for the 2005-08 triennium on 25 February 2005 and re-consider the timing for conducting the review at a later stage.

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29. The Chairman asked whether UGC-funded institutions would prefer the “0-0-0” model or the “0-0-5” model. Mr Philip LAM responded that all institutions would prefer the “0-0-0” model. Mr LEUNG Kwan-yuen said that disapproval of the “0-0-5” model, however, would defer allocation of recurrent funding to UGC-funded institutions. Mr Chris MONG responded that HUCOM welcomed the Administration’s promise of conducting a genuine review in mid-2006, and hoped that funding arrangements as proposed by the Government would soon be finalised.

Reduction of recurrent funding for HKIED

30. Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong expressed objection to the 33% reduction in recurrent funding for HKIED in the 2005-08 triennium. He considered it unfair to take out the professional development places from HKIED for in-service teachers for reallocation on a competing basis. He pointed out that unlike HKIED which suffered from a 33% reduction in recurrent funding in the 2005-08 triennium, other UGC-funded institutions were provided with sufficient recurrent funding and their operations and development would not be affected if they were not able to secure additional funding through competing bids. Mr CHEUNG also doubted whether EMB would reduce teacher education places for pre-service school teachers in HKIED in the future. He considered that the provision of non-recurrent funding through competing bids to replace the recurrent funding for HKIED would seriously affect its student enrolment, normal operation and development in the long run.

31. PSEM said that the Administration acknowledged that, as a monotechnic institution focusing on the delivery of teacher education programmes, HKIED had little flexibility in operating other programmes in order to compensate the reduced demand in teacher education places. Hence, UGC had proposed to provide HKIED with a monotechnic premium of 6% for the 2005-08 triennium to alleviate the cumulative impact of the concurrent changes in the provision of recurrent funding.

32. PSEM explained that removal of front-end loading in nine years was an established practice and the residual effect of the 3% civil service pay adjustment effective on 1 January 2005 was common to all UGC-funded institutions. To offset the reduction of funding as a result of the 14% decline in student population, HKIED was encouraged to operate self-financing degree programmes and to collaborate with other institutions to bid for additional funding. She pointed out that HKIED had a good track record in primary teacher education and should be able to compete for additional funding to upgrade the professionalism of in-service teachers in the light of changing demands. She added that the provision of teacher education places in the UGC sector was subject to the overall manpower requirements. The Administration had no intention to reduce the number of BEd (Primary) places in HKIED.

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33. Referring to a press report that EMB was considering HKIEd's two project initiatives that aimed at supporting schools and teachers' professional development, Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong asked whether EMB was prepared to provide some \$60 to 70 million for implementation of the two HKIE'd proposals with original budgets of around \$139 million in total. He expressed concern about the large difference between the proposed allocations and HKIEd's budgets for implementing the two projects and considered that the large difference might affect the quality of the programmes.

34. PSEM responded that HKIEd had submitted several proposals costing \$246 million in total. The two proposals in question were intended to provide school-based support to some 400 schools each. She explained that three university-school partnership projects had already been approved. EMB would have to coordinate the provision of school-based support programmes so as not to overload schools. EMB would continue to discuss with HKIEd with a view to scaling down the scope of the projects.

35. Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong considered that sufficient recurrent funding should be provided to HKIEd for provision of appropriate development programmes for in-service teachers in the light of changing educational needs.. He suggested that EMB should consider changing the provision of those non-recurrent funding allocated to HKIEd by way of competing bids to recurrent funding on a progressive basis so that HKIEd could continue to operate and develop in the long run. PSEM pointed out that there was really not much difference between recurrent and non-recurrent funding in this case because these two project initiatives would last for a period of three years.

36. Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong urged the Administration to consider deferring the removal of the front-end loading for HKIEd for one more triennium, adjusting the reduction of programme places for in-service teachers, and providing second-year degree places in HKIEd for direct entry of its sub-degree programme graduates in education. He pointed out that the Hong Kong Polytechnic University and the City University of Hong Kong were provided with recurrent funding for the provision of direct entry to their second-year degree programmes for their sub-degree graduates in relevant disciplines.

37. PSEM responded that HKIEd was well aware of the need to remove its front-end loading as one of the consequences of becoming a self-accrediting institution. She pointed out that HKIEd had a large operating reserve. In the 2003-04 academic year, HKIEd had a surplus of \$143 million, which was already sufficient to offset the budgeted deficits of \$8, \$29 and \$94 million in the 2005-06, 06-07 and 07-08 academic years respectively.

38. Dr Fernando CHEUNG pointed out that according to the role statements in the UGC's document entitled "To make a Difference, To Move with the Times (the Document)", HKIEd should provide programmes leading to the

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award of certificates, first degrees and postgraduate diplomas in the pre-school, school and vocational training sectors, and also programmes which provided professional education and development for serving teachers in these sectors. He queried whether the proposal to reduce places in certificate programme for in-service kindergarten teachers was in line with the policy on role differentiation among institutions in higher education.

39. PSEM responded that arising from the role statements published in the Document, institutions currently providing in-service training for kindergarten teachers would stop the programmes in the 2005-08 triennium. The teachers affected had approached EMB for assistance, pointing out the need to provide diversity in teacher education programmes. The Administration agreed that the existing programmes each had a different focus and merits. It was also necessary to provide for diversity in pre-school teacher education to suit the needs and aptitude of different early childhood education workers. Rather than reduce the number of training places, EMB would increase the provision to 1 000 places per annum in the 2005-08 triennium.

40. SG(UGC) supplemented that while role differentiation among UGC-funded institutions was advocated in the Document, UGC would strive to maintain a good balance between programme diversity and role differentiation to meet the different needs of students and institutions in the higher education sector. He cited the future provision of law degree programmes in another institution, in addition to the existing two institutions as an example to illustrate that having multiple providers on certain disciplines of studies was appropriate in some circumstances.

41. The Chairman invited Professor Paul MORRIS, the President of HKIED to comment on the follow-ups and decisions taken by EMB and UGC in response to the request of HKIED and Staff Association of HKIED raised at the meeting on 11 January 2005.

42. In response, Professor Paul MORRIS expressed appreciation of the Panel's concern about the provision of teacher education and the operation and development of HKIED in the future. He pointed out that following the meeting on 11 January 2005, EMB and UGC had discussed with HKIED with a view to mapping the way forward. As a result of these discussions, UGC had now promised to allow HKIED to increase the intake of the BEd in Early Childhood Education by 30 students per annum in the 2005-08 triennium. He said that such a move to a certain extent demonstrated the commitment of UGC to continue the upgrading of early childhood education, an area in which HKIED had been playing a leading role.

43. Professor MORRIS further said that HKIED had submitted a number of project initiatives to EMB that aimed at supporting schools and teachers' professional development. HKIED was glad that EMB had indicated that it was

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reviewing the project initiatives to ensure the high standards required and would very likely approve two of the proposed projects that were extensions of what HKIEd had been doing. Although the funding source was not from UGC recurrent funding, the project grants would provide a steady stream of resources which would run through the 2005-08 triennium.

44. Professor MORRIS agreed that the measures that the Government had put in place, including the additional student numbers in early childhood education and the approved \$550 million for provision of school-based support, would help reduce the scale of the funding cut to HKIEd. He added that if a “0-0-0” model was finally adopted, HKIEd estimated that the reduction in recurrent funding for HKIEd would be about 24-25%.

45. Professor MORRIS reiterated his statement made at the meeting on 11 January 2005 that HKIEd was not in a position to argue the accuracy of UGC’s calculation of the formula and not aware of the full extent of the funding cut prior to its public announcement. He stressed that HKIEd would continue to do its utmost to upgrade the quality of teachers in Hong Kong. He hoped that recurrent funding for HKIEd in the future would be determined through more transparent consultation and decision making processes. He added that the Administration and UGC should recognise the impact of a significant funding cut on teacher education which would go beyond technical and financial considerations. As UGC had given HKIEd a role in the provision of teacher education to the pre-school sector, the policy on the provision of teacher education for the sector on the basis of competing bids should be decided after extensive consultation in the community.

46. Dr Fernando CHEUNG considered that a 24-25% reduction in recurrent funding would still seriously affect the normal operation and development of HKIEd. He pointed out that with the implementation of a policy on provision of in-service teacher education on the basis of competing bids for the pre-school sector, the role of HKIEd as a major programme provider would be jeopardised. Dr CHEUNG asked whether the policy intent was to terminate the operation of HKIEd or force it to merge with other UGC-funded institutions.

47. PSEM reiterated that the reduction of recurrent funding for HKIEd was determined in accordance with the established practices in the UGC sector. She explained that the reduction in teacher education places was decided after thorough discussion with institutions and the sectors concerned on the supply and demand of teachers in the context of a declining student population. This had nothing to do with the future development of the HKIEd. SG(UGC) supplemented that UGC fully endorsed HKIEd’s role as a major provider in teacher education in the UGC sector and, on the advice of the UGC, the Administration had approved HKIEd’s self-accreditation status in 2004.

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48. Ms Audrey EU considered it difficult to convince the community that while attaching great importance to teacher education and approving HKIEd's self-accreditation status in recognition of its role performance, UGC had proposed and EMB had endorsed a 33% reduction in recurrent funding for HKIEd. Given that some 6 000 in-service kindergarten teachers did not possess a certificate in teacher education, she queried why EMB did not increase the number of programme places for professional development of serving kindergarten teachers but take out the 171 places from HKIEd for allocation on a competing basis. Ms EU pointed out that these 6 000 in-service kindergarten teachers would be able to acquire the qualification in less than six years' time if the number of programme places was increased.

49. PSEM explained that it was the set policy target determined in 2000 that by the 2004-05 school year, all serving teachers in the pre-school sector should be qualified kindergarten teachers and all principals of kindergartens and child care centres should hold a certificate in teacher education. EMB had all along adhered to the policy targets and the timeframe of implementation. The Administration would not change course midway but would review the policy in 2005 to decide on future policy targets. Meanwhile, EMB had allocated additional resources for the provision of 150 additional places for in-service kindergarten teachers in the next few years.

50. Ms Audrey EU sought clarifications about the decline in student enrolment in HKIEd and asked whether the decline was mainly because of its remote location.

51. PSEM responded that it was a common phenomenon across institutions that student enrolment in part-time post-graduate diploma programme in education had decreased in recent years, and had nothing to do with the location of HKIEd. PSEM explained that apart from full-time learning courses, professional development of serving teachers could take the form of professional learning community in schools. She considered that with appropriate professional support, teachers of the same school could develop teaching skills more effectively in the school environment. For this reason, EMB encouraged teacher trainers to provide on-site professional development support to serving teachers.

52. Referring to the Administration's goal of enhancing diversity in the provision of early childhood education, Mr Jasper TSANG asked whether EMB would award all the tenders on the provision of professional development programmes for serving kindergarten teachers to HKIEd if their bids were assessed to be most competitive. He also asked how EMB would award the tender if the quality of HKIEd's bids and other bids were more or less at the same level. PSEM responded that providers had different strengths in certain aspects of teacher education. The Administration could award two or more contracts if the quality of the bids was good and the costs were reasonable. Value for money

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was the key.

53. Referring to the PSEM's saying that the policy on provision of diversity in education for serving kindergarten teachers was decided after consultation, Ms Audrey EU asked whether HKIEd had been consulted and agreed to the taking out of its 171 certificate programme places for in-service kindergarten teachers for allocation by bidding.

54. Professor Bernard LUK responded that when the issue was discussed at a meeting hosted by PSEM and SG(UGC) on 19 February 2004, representatives of the four UGC-funded institutions providing teacher education agreed that since the Advisory Committee on Teacher Education and Qualifications (ACTEQ) had not held any meetings on the provision of teacher education programmes for more than a year, the issue on future supply and demand of teachers could not be regarded as thoroughly discussed with the teaching profession. In addition, since the membership of ACTEQ did not include representatives from all the four UGC-funded institutions, the conclusions made by ACTEQ could not reflect the views of all teacher education providers. Although EMB had conducted a series of discussions with individual teacher groups and associations on a number of policy issues, the views collected were not comprehensive.

55. Professor Bernard LUK further said that apart from the recurrent funding cut in the 2005-08 triennium, HKIEd was also concerned about the development of teacher education in the long term. Given the community consensus on the importance of teachers' quality in education, EMB and UGC should collaborate with UGC-funded institutions in the design and development of appropriate teacher education programmes to upgrade the overall quality of the workforce to facilitate implementation of education reform.

56. PSEM acknowledged that HKIEd was not represented in ACTEQ after the latter's re-structuring. She pointed out that ACTEQ had discussed the supply and demand of teachers in the light of a decline in student population. She also pointed out that while HKIEd opposed the reduction of 171 certificate programme places, some institutions and representatives from the pre-school sector had indicated support for the provision of diversity in teacher education programmes such as the certificate programmes for in-service kindergarten teachers. Understandably no agreement could be reached with HKIEd, the affected party.

57. Professor Bernard LUK said that the allocation of recurrent funding on a triennium basis was an effective mechanism to ensure institutional autonomy and academic freedom, and the mechanism was an efficient tool to maintain an appropriate balance between Government policies and community expectations. HKIEd agreed that EMB and UGC should improve the transparency of the funding mechanisms. HKIEd considered it necessary to maintain the role of UGC in allocation of recurrent funding and did not object to the allocation of

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teacher education places on the basis of competing bids. However, HKIEd considered that the Administration should launch a public consultation on the appropriate distribution of teacher education programmes to HKIEd and other operators through bidding.

58. Ms MAK TSE How-ling confirmed that HKIEd Past Student's Association of Early Childhood Teacher Education and a number of teacher groups and associations including the Hong Kong Professional Teachers' Union had discussed with EMB and UGC the provision of professional development programmes for in-service kindergarten teachers in early 2004. She considered that EMB should not take out the 171 certificate programme places from HKIEd for allocation by bidding, given the strong objection of the Association and other representatives in the pre-school sector.

59. Responding to Ms Audrey EU's question on increasing resources for professional development of teachers, PSEM said that the Administration had allocated additional resources for professional development of teachers in order to facilitate implementation of reform initiatives and set aside funds for implementing the proposed "3+3+4" academic structure. She added that HKIEd could play a significant role in the provision of continuing education for in-service teachers, which had become increasingly important insofar as the long-term development of school teachers was concerned.

60. Mrs Selina CHOW said that she could see that in response to members' views and concerns, there were more discussions among EMB, UGC and HKIEd and the communication had improved. She considered that members had the responsibility to ensure cost-effective use of public resources, and it might not be appropriate to get directly involved in the resources allocation process between EMB and HKIEd on award of bids. She also pointed out that there were practical difficulties for teacher education providers to reach consensus on whether the provision of professional development programmes for the pre-school sector should be awarded by bidding.

61. Mrs Selina CHOW said that the Liberal Party had all along stressed the importance of teachers and their on-going professional development on improving quality of teaching and learning. She considered that while HKIEd might not agree, the provision of diversity in teachers' professional development programmes on the basis of competing bids could ensure cost-effectiveness of the quality of education programmes was the primary factor of assessment. Mrs CHOW said that she was given the impression that EMB had failed to convince members and the community that EMB and UGC had attached great importance to teachers' professional development and given sufficient respect and recognition on HKIEd's contributions in teacher education. She suggested that EMB should give more assurance to the sector and take positive measures to demonstrate its appreciation of the HKIEd's performance in provision of teacher education over the years.

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62. PSEM responded that the Administration had all along attached great importance to teachers' professional development and appreciated HKIED's contributions in this regard. She considered that while the quality of its programmes for primary school teachers was commonly recognised, HKIED should aim at collaborating with other institutions in the provision of programmes for pre-service and in-service teachers above the primary level.

63. The Chairman asked how UGC would assist HKIED in the provision of professional development for serving kindergarten teachers. SG(UGC) responded that if HKIED encountered funding problem in the final year of the 2005-08 triennium, UGC would provide appropriate assistance.

64. Mr LEUNG Kwan-yuen requested the Administration to reassure members that EMB would continue to support the role of HKIED as a major provider in the provision of quality teacher education.

65. PSEM responded that EMB would certainly welcome HKIED to continue to play its role in the provision of quality teacher education. She added that the provision of professional development programmes for in-service teachers in the next few years would increase tremendously. EMB would encourage HKIED to collaborate with other institutions to provide professional development programmes for serving secondary school teachers.

66. Mr LEUNG Kwan-yuen asked whether the adjustments made to the recurrent funding for HKIED was now an acceptable option to HKIED. Professor Morris responded that although the option was not ideal, HKIED found it acceptable.

67. In concluding, the Chairman invited members to indicate whether they supported the submission of the financial proposal on recurrent funding for the 2005-08 triennium to the Finance Committee on 25 February 2005 or not. After voting, the Panel decided not to support submission of the financial proposal to the Finance Committee. The outcome of the vote was that two members voted in favour, and three members voted against.

V. Injection into the Language Fund
[LC Paper No. CB(2)795/04-05(04)]

68. Members noted that the Administration intended to submit the proposal to the Finance Committee on 25 February 2005.

69. Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong expressed concern about whether the Language Fund was used to support Chinese and English language teachers in pursuit of professional development on an equal basis. He expressed support for

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the Native-speaking English Teachers Scheme and agreed that costs of immersion programmes for English Language teachers would normally be higher than that for Chinese Language teachers. Since the Administration paper did not provide statistics on the use of the Fund for different professional development programmes for the language teachers, Mr CHEUNG requested the Administration to provide further details on the use of the Fund for members' reference.

70. PSEM responded that the Administration would use the Language Fund to assist in-service language teachers to upgrade their knowledge and skills in teaching. She pointed out that there were now a team of English Language teachers and a team of Chinese Language teachers to assist language teachers in schools in upgrading quality of work. Due to recruitment difficulty, there were now more staff in the Chinese language team than the English language team. Nevertheless, PSEM undertook to provide further details on the use of the Fund after the meeting.

[Post-meeting note : An information paper entitled "Disbursements of the Language Fund" was circulated to members vide LC Paper No. CB(2)884/04-05(01) on 18 February 2005.]

71. Mr CHEUNG said that he did not object to the proposed injection of \$500 million into the Fund. He, however, urged that the Administration must ensure that the funding would be distributed fairly for the use of both Chinese and English language teachers.

VI. Any other business

72. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 7:15 pm.

Council Business Division 2
Legislative Council Secretariat
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