

Panel on Education

List of outstanding items for discussion (position as at 10 October 2005)

Proposed timing for discussion

1. Remuneration systems in University Grants Committee (UGC)-funded institutions after deregulation of university salaries

The Panel received the views and concerns of the deputations on the matter at the meeting on 5 July 2004. Members in general expressed concerns about the disputes between staff and management, and the role of the governing bodies of UGC-funded institutions in the development and implementation of their new remuneration systems. They considered that UGC-funded institutions should establish fair, open and transparent appeal mechanisms to facilitate the establishment and implementation of the new remuneration systems. Members agreed that the Panel should revisit the issue at a future meeting.

To be confirmed

2. The new Student Travel Subsidy Scheme

In discussing the proposed merger of Student Travel Subsidy Scheme and Cross-net Subsidy Scheme at the meeting on 8 November 2004, some members considered it necessary to review the eligibility criteria for a full rate and a half rate grant under the merged scheme (the new Student Travel Subsidy Scheme) for applicants from families with different incomes and number of members. The Administration undertook to revert to the Panel at a future meeting.

To be confirmed

3. School Development and Accountability

The Panel discussed the progress of implementation of the school development and accountability framework at its meeting on 13 December 2004, with emphasis on the implementation of school self-evaluation and the external school review processes. Members agreed to revisit the issue and meet deputations at a future meeting. The Administration will provide a proposed school list in due course.

To be confirmed

4. Use of Language Fund – proposals to strengthen support in language education at pre-primary and primary levels

At the meeting on 9 May 2005, members requested the Administration to review the allocation for the professional development of pre-primary teachers and keep members informed of the Standing Committee on Language Education and Research's (SCOLAR's) final decision on the issue. Members also requested the Administration to arrange the Chairman of the SCOLAR to brief the Panel on the progress of its implementation at a future meeting. The Administration agreed to revert to the Panel later in the year.

To be confirmed

5. Review on governance structure of UGC-funded institutions and their grievances and complaints mechanisms

At the meeting on 9 May 2005, Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong suggested that the Panel should follow up discussion on the governance structure of UGC-funded institutions and their internal grievances and complaint mechanisms. He also suggested that deputations should be invited to present views at the meeting.

To be confirmed

6. Review of the School Building Programme (SBP)

At the meeting on 30 May 2005, members expressed concerns about the impact of the proposed adjustments to SBP on the affected school sponsoring bodies and schools. At members' request, the Administration undertook to report its latest adjustments to SBP to the Panel.

October 2005

7. Native-speaking English Teacher (NET) Scheme

At the meeting on 11 July 2005, members discussed with the Native English-speaking Teachers' Association and the Administration on the implementation of the NET Scheme. Members in general expressed concerns about the high turnover rate of NETs. The Administration would consult the Panel on measures that may help retain experienced NET to continue to serve in local schools, and plans to step up support for the NET Scheme.

October 2005

8. Review of student financial assistance schemes

At the meeting on 11 July 2005, the Panel requested the Administration to review the provision of financial assistances to needy students under various student financial assistance schemes, having regard to the impact of the increases in tuition fees under the new academic structure for senior secondary education and higher education. The Administration agreed to revert to the Panel with the review results and recommendations in the new session.

To be confirmed

9. Grant to support the Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority (HKEAA) in the development and updating of its information technology infrastructure, establishment of scanning facilities and online marking centres, and the automation of examination operations

Item proposed by the Administration. According to the Administration, the proposed funding is required for HKEAA in developing and updating its information technology (IT) infrastructure, establishing the scanning facilities and on-line marking centres, as well as automating the public examination operations. The Administration has explained that the objective is to achieve an enhanced examination infrastructure, which could keep up with the pace of the increasing demand of assessments and supporting logistics like making use of barcode technology to check examination attendance and count examination scripts. The outcome will be higher marking reliability for more open-ended forms of assessment, reduced manual processes, and solutions to address current operations problems like missing scripts.

November 2005