

Legislative Council Panel on Education
Meeting on 16 April 2009 Agenda Item VI:
“Future Development of the Hong Kong Institute of Education”

SPEAKING POINTS OF MR MICHAEL V STONE,
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- The Government invited the UGC in August 2007 to provide expert views on HKIEd’s *Development Blueprint*. The Terms of Reference given to the UGC by the Government, asked us to consider, in addition to the Blueprint, what would best serve Hong Kong’s wider interest, notably the strategic development of the UGC sector, and teacher education in particular, and the promotion of excellence in the higher education sector. Whether or not HKIEd should become a university of education was thus only one of several matters the UGC was required to consider.
- Over the years, HKIEd has achieved substantial progress and standing in the local higher education sector. Since its beginning as a sub-degree institution in 1994, it is now a predominantly Degree and above awarding institution. Over 80% of new primary teachers are HKIEd graduates- as are 25% of secondary teachers. Given this unique position, HKIEd has a very important role in shaping the quality of our future teachers, and in turn affecting the quality of our younger generations.
- The UGC researched into the international trends of effective Teacher Education provision. In the past 50 years, most high-standing teacher education institutions in the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia, Mainland China *etc.* have either expanded considerably or merged with other existing institutions to provide a multi-disciplinary learning environment for their students. Such trends of transformation prevail across different continents and cultures, and are seen to be a significant step in upgrading the teaching profession itself.
- It is the UGC’s strong conclusion that a multi-disciplinary environment is beneficial to students- all types of students. Trained in such a setting, they can have a richer student experience. For teachers, upon graduation, they are

often found to be more adaptive to the changing classroom and ever more challenging world, thereby better equipped to tackle real life problems. Also at the same time, they will be given more flexible career paths. This is also the direction which we understand HKIEd is currently driving towards- with its “Education Plus” initiative.

- As regards research, HKIEd has set out many sound ideas to strengthen its research capacity- which we acknowledge in the Report. The UGC is a strong believer in research-informed teaching and learning, and the value of exposure of students to research in their undergraduate years. Evidence-based research is particularly valuable for Teacher Education. Teachers trained in such a research-informed setting are likely to be more inquisitive for knowledge, which will in turn help cultivate among our younger generation an interest in exploring new skills and knowledge, which will make them more competitive in the knowledge-based economy.
- In sum, it is from our research findings and of the UGC’s expert view that multi-disciplinarity and strong research capacity are two of the keys to more enhanced Teacher Education- and two common attributes of universities around the world.
- HKIEd is gearing up for acquiring such attributes in order to give their students even better Teacher Education. We have full confidence in their potential. The UGC has suggested two pathways for HKIEd to acquire these attributes – either turning itself into a multi-disciplinary institution or integrating with another institution which already has such attributes. Which option they would like to take – and how exactly to achieve these goals – is primarily up to the management of HKIEd.
- The UGC Review Report is a document submitted to the Administration at its request. It is now for the Administration to decide whether, and if so how, it wishes to take forward the recommendations.
