

# 立法會 *Legislative Council*

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## **Panel on Education**

### **Background brief prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat for the meeting on 14 June 2010**

#### **Education pathways for students taking the 2010 Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination**

#### **Purpose**

This paper summarizes the concerns of the Panel on Education ("the Panel") on the education pathways for students taking the 2010 Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination ("HKCEE").

#### **Background**

2. The new senior secondary ("NSS") academic structure has been implemented from the 2009-2010 school year onwards. All students are entitled to 12 years of free education, comprising six-year primary, three-year junior secondary and three-year senior secondary education. A new Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education ("HKDSE") Examination will be implemented in 2012 to replace HKCEE and the Hong Kong Advanced Level Examination.

3. According to the Administration, Secondary 5 ("S5") repeating classes will not be offered in government, aided and Direct Subsidy Scheme schools in the 2010-2011 school year. Students may only take the 2011 HKCEE as private candidates. Subject to the demand of the market, private day schools or evening schools may offer classes to prepare S5 repeaters for re-taking the 2011 HKCEE as private candidates.

#### **Members' concerns**

4. The Panel had not discussed the education pathways for students taking the 2010 HKCEE per se. Members considered this subject in the context of examining a proposal for increased financial commitment for Project Yi Jin ("PYJ") and reviewing the Financial Assistance Scheme for Designated Evening Adult Education Courses.

A written question on the subject had also been raised at a Legislative Council meeting. The concerns of members are summarized in the ensuing paragraphs.

Expanding the scope of PYJ to provide S5 repeating classes

5. Members expressed concern about the education pathways for students taking the 2010 HKCEE when examining the Administration's proposal for increased financial commitment for PYJ at the Panel meeting on 13 May 2010. Members pointed out that private schools might not honour their promise to offer S5 repeating classes as they had fully implemented the NSS curriculum since September 2009. However, S5 repeaters might not be able to articulate to S5 classes under the NSS academic structure since their academic attainment was not high. Noting that PYJ would cease after two years, i.e. until the 2011-2012 school year, members proposed the expansion of its scope to provide S5 repeating classes for students taking the 2010 HKCEE. The first priority was to offer S5 repeating classes in the 2010-2011 school year to enable the 2010 HKCEE students to re-take HKCEE in 2011. As a second priority, classes for articulation to the NSS academic structure should be offered under PYJ to enable students to take HKDSE in 2012.

6. In members' view, the provision of such classes should be viable as PYJ had all along been providing an alternative pathway for students to attain a formal qualification which was comparable to five passes in HKCEE. As the operating principle of PYJ was to admit students without any prerequisites, the 2010 HKCEE students could repeat S5 classes under PYJ should they wish to. The manpower of teachers and curriculum resources were also available for PYJ to offer S5 repeating classes. Members considered that this flexible approach would help solve the problem of 2010 HKCEE students seeking education pathways.

7. According to the Administration, the nature of PYJ was different from the mainstream curriculum. The current design of PYJ was skill-based and was not intended to prepare students for taking HKCEE or to provide articulation to the NSS academic structure for taking HKDSE. Members' proposal would involve the revision of the approved purposes of the financial commitment for PYJ. Moreover, the availability of teachers would be a concern as the existing PYJ teachers might not have experience in teaching subjects under the mainstream curriculum.

8. The Administration pointed out the two available ways for the 2010 HKCEE students to continue education. While some students would wish to re-take HKCEE in 2011 as private candidates to complete the secondary education, others might wish to switch to the NSS academic structure to pursue senior secondary education. S5 students were strongly encouraged to study S5 under the NSS academic structure should their results in 2010 HKCEE be unsatisfactory. If students repeated S5 for re-sitting HKCEE in 2011, they would have less than one year to catch up. However, if they chose to switch to the NSS academic structure, they would have a longer period to prepare for HKDSE in 2012. In the Administration's view, students should be able to switch to the NSS curriculum provided that they worked hard. Nevertheless, the Administration acknowledged members' concern about insufficient HKCEE repeater places, and had been encouraging schools to make use of the 5%

quota for repeaters to offer such classes. The feedback received from schools so far was positive.

#### Adequacy of PYJ places

9. Members considered it necessary to provide bridging programmes for the 2010 HKCEE students. They pointed out that annually, there were some 110 000 students sitting HKCEE, with some 6 000 students attaining zero score. Since these students could not meet the minimum requirement for admission to S6, it was expected that many 2010 HKCEE students might turn to PYJ as an alternative pathway. There was a concern about the adequacy of the proposed increase in financial commitment for PYJ to meet the increased demand.

10. The Administration advised that the number of students in the 2009-2010 academic year was some 15 000, the highest since the launch of PYJ in 2000. The projected numbers of students for PYJ were 21 000 in the 2010-2011 academic year and 9 000 in the 2011-2012 academic year. The Administration had been working closely with the Federation for Continuing Education in Tertiary Institutions, and had taken into account the projected increase in proposing the increase in financial commitment for PYJ. The Administration would review the education pathways for students taking the 2010 HKCEE and revert to the Panel later.

#### Evening adult education courses

11. Members took note of the Administration's advice that taking evening secondary courses was an option for the 2010 HKCEE students. Members welcomed the Administration's decision to reimburse tuition fee for adult learners who had to repeat a year of study for the purpose of articulating to the NSS academic structure under the Financial Assistance Scheme for Designated Evening Adult Education Courses with effect from the 2009-2010 school year. Adult learners were eligible for a basic subsidy of 30% of the tuition fees, regardless of their financial position if they fulfilled the attendance requirements. They were eligible for either 50% or 100% reimbursement of the tuition fees if they fulfilled the relevant attendance requirements and passed the means test administered by the Student Financial Assistance Agency. Adult learners were currently not eligible for tuition fee reimbursement for repeat of study.

#### **Relevant papers**

12. A list of the relevant papers on the Legislative Council website is in the **Appendix**.

**Relevant papers on education pathways for students taking  
the 2010 Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination**

Meeting	Date of meeting	Paper
Legislative Council	21.10.2009	[Question 20] Asked by : Hon CHEUNG Man-kwong <a href="#">Further education opportunities for students in the transition to the New Senior Secondary Academic Structure</a> <a href="#">Reply</a>
Panel on Education	12.4.2010 (Item V)	Minutes <a href="#">Agenda</a>
Panel on Education	13.5.2010 (Item V)	Minutes <a href="#">Agenda</a>

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