

## **Legislative Council Panel on Manpower**

### **Progress Report on the Development and Implementation of the Qualifications Framework**

#### **Purpose**

This paper briefs Members on the latest progress of the development and implementation of the Hong Kong Qualifications Framework (QF).

#### **Background**

2. In 2004, the Government announced the establishment of a qualifications framework to provide a platform to promote lifelong learning, with a view to enhancing the overall competitiveness of our workforce. The QF is a seven-level hierarchy covering qualifications in the academic, vocational and continuing education sectors. All qualifications recognised under the QF are quality assured.

3. The Education Bureau has been working closely with relevant stakeholders, including employers, employees, trade associations and unions, professional bodies, and education and training providers to establish the infrastructure for the QF since 2004. The Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications Ordinance, Cap. 592, which provides a legal framework for the quality assurance mechanism underpinning the QF, commenced full operation on 5 May 2008. The QF was formally launched on that date.

#### **Latest developments**

##### **(a) Industry-led development**

4. Education and training programmes developed under the QF aim at meeting the manpower needs of the industries in Hong Kong. To ensure relevancy to industry needs, the Education Bureau has been

assisting various sectors in setting up Industry Training Advisory Committees (ITACs). The ITACs are tasked to draw up Specifications of Competency Standards (SCSs) for the relevant sectors, which set out the skills, knowledge and outcome standards required of employees in different functional areas of the respective sectors, and provide a basis for course providers to design training courses to meet the needs of the sectors.

5. We have so far set up ITACs for 13 sectors<sup>1</sup>, covering about 36% of the total labour force. The ITACs have made good progress in drawing up SCSs of their respective industries – 11 of them have completed the SCSs, one is close to completion, and the other one has just engaged a professional writer to draw up its SCS. We will continue to work closely with the 13 ITACs to complete the development of SCSs. The work progress of the 13 ITACs is summarised at Annex A.

6. As at end May 2010, the education and training providers have developed 120 courses based on the SCSs, with over 6,500 employees taken part in these SCS-based programmes. Feedback from employees is that the SCS-based programmes are generally useful and relevant to their work. Besides, employers/enterprises show increasing interest in making reference to the SCSs for in-house training and human resources development.

7. To encourage and facilitate providers to develop SCS-based courses, the Education Bureau has drawn up the Qualification Guidelines (QG), which has been promulgated to providers since June 2008 and stipulates the curriculum structure and other requirements of a SCS-based course including the award title, qualification level, and credit size of the course.

8. Whilst the content of SCS-based courses is directly relevant to industry requirements and of practical use to employees, feedbacks from various industry sectors indicate that employees should also possess knowledge and skills that are more generic and commonly shared across

---

<sup>1</sup> Printing & Publishing, Watch & Clock, Chinese Catering, Hairdressing, Property Management, Electrical & Mechanical Services, Jewellery, Information & Communications Technology, Automotive, Beauty, Logistics, Banking and Import & Export.

different industries, to help them make progression in their career and education pathways. In response, the Education Bureau introduced in February 2010 a set of generic skills, namely, English, Chinese (including Putonghua), Information Technology and Numeracy, collectively known as the Specification of Generic (Foundation) Competencies (SGC), as a complement to the industry-specific SCSs. The competencies identified in the SGC are developed in vocational context and the focus is on meeting workplace requirements rather than addressing the general education needs of employees. Subsequently, the QG was also modified to cater for the needs of the education and training providers to use the SGC concurrently with the industry-specific SCSs when developing the SCS-based programmes.

(b) Recognition of Prior Learning mechanism

9. The Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) mechanism has been developed in parallel with the implementation of the QF so as to enable employees to obtain formal recognition for the knowledge, skills and experience they acquired at the workplace, and facilitate further learning without starting from scratch. The RPL mechanism has been implemented, on a pilot basis, for three industries<sup>2</sup> for a period of two years with effect from June 2008. The Vocational Training Council has been appointed to be the assessment agency for conducting RPL assessments for these three industries following consultation with the relevant ITACs.

10. As at end May 2010, around 1,300 applications involving over 4,800 clusters of competencies at various QF levels have been processed by the assessment agency. Almost all applicants (99.5%) were successfully awarded statements of attainment in respect of the competencies assessed. Applicants who have failed in the assessment tests were offered free counseling service by the assessment agency to prepare them better for further assessment, if they so wish. More details on these applications are set out at Annex B.

---

<sup>2</sup> Printing & Publishing, Watch & Clock and Hairdressing

11. Upon completion of the RPL pilot scheme this year, we have consulted the stakeholders of the relevant industries and reviewed the RPL mechanism. The applicants, on the whole, considered that the RPL mechanism is operating effectively, the relevant assessments are generally fair and efficient, and the fee schedule and logistic arrangement are appropriate. They generally indicate interest in pursuing further studies and training.

12. The relevant stakeholders of the industries considered that the RPL mechanism helps re-affirm and recognise the knowledge, skills and experiences of the employees acquired in the workplace and, most importantly, facilitate the employees in the pursuit of further education and training from a stage that suits their needs rather than starting from scratch or learning repeatedly. The pilot scheme has also eased the initial concerns of many employees that the implementation of QF might jeopardise their employment opportunities and bargaining power with the employers.

13. The increasing number of RPL qualification holders will also stimulate growth of the vocational education and training market, in which more training programmes at higher levels, such as at levels 4 and 5, are anticipated. In the light of the successful experience of the RPL pilot scheme, a higher participation rate of the RPL mechanism towards the later stage of the 5-year transitional period<sup>3</sup> will be expected.

14. Subsequent to the pilot scheme, we are working closely with other industries with a view to extending the RPL mechanism to the sectors which have completed their respective SCSs. Stakeholders of these industries are looking forward to implementing the RPL mechanism in their sectors. We will continue to assist them in launching the RPL mechanism through briefings, consultations, and facilitating collaboration among different stakeholders.

15. Unlike the pilot scheme in which the Vocational Training Council

---

<sup>3</sup> There is a 5-year transitional period for each industry during which employees may apply for recognition of QF qualifications at levels 1 to 3 based on their past relevant working experience, without the need to take any assessments.

is the sole assessment agency of the three industries, some sectors have more than one organisations have expressed interest to participate in the RPL mechanism in their respective industries. We are facilitating the stakeholders concerned to work out a “collaborative model” to cater for the specific circumstances and needs of the industries concerned. In the “collaborative model”, the assessment agency appointed is suggested to work with the other interested parties of the industry, such as the relevant trade associations and unions, for the provision of venues with the required equipments and facilities for conducting the assessment. The assessment agency will be the authority for assessing the skills, knowledge and experience acquired by individuals.

(c) Quality Assurance mechanism

16. The Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications (HKCAAVQ) is specified as the Accreditation Authority and the Qualifications Register (QR) Authority under the Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications Ordinance, and tasked with the responsibility of assuring the quality of qualifications recognised under the QF. The “collective approach” for bulk applications has put to practice in stages to streamline the accreditation process and minimise the cost of the exercises. The HKCAAVQ is keeping constant reviews and refinement to the model in the light of operational experience and feedback from education and training providers.

(d) Qualifications Register

17. The QR, a web-based database containing information on qualifications and their respective learning programmes that have been quality assured and recognised under the QF, is available to the public free of charge. As at end May 2010, there are 6,100 academic and vocational qualifications registered in the QR. Since the official launch of the QF in 2008, the accumulative hit rate has reached up to 290,000 which indicates that the QR is increasingly known and frequently used by learners. The system is being enhanced and upgraded to enhance the user-friendliness and effectiveness of the QR. The enhanced interface of the QR website will be launched in late June 2010. We will continue our effort to promote

the use of the QR to the public. The statistical information on the qualifications registered in the QR is set out at Annex C.

(e) Qualifications Framework Support Schemes

18. To support the implementation of the QF, we have launched a number of financial assistance schemes including the accreditation grants for course providers, subsidies for registration of qualifications in the QR, accreditation and start up grants for RPL assessment agencies, and reimbursement of RPL assessment fees to employees. Up to end May 2010, a total of 190 education and training providers have applied for the accreditation grants of about 2,700 qualifications and some 4,700 qualifications have been subsidised for registration in the QR. So far, a total of \$13 millions have been disbursed under these financial assistance schemes to the education and training providers. We envisage that there will be more applications for financial subsidies when the education and training providers are better prepared for submitting their learning programmes for accreditation.

(f) Promotion and publicity

19. To enhance public awareness of the QF and the QR, we have been organising a series of promotional and publicity activities with an aim to building up a quality brand-name for the QF on lifelong learning. Our targeted stakeholder groups include employers, employees, learners, education and training providers, trade associations and unions, students, schools and members of the public.

20. Developing a quality brand-name for the QF will help gain understanding, acceptance and support of the public. We are working on a new series of announcements of public interest (APIs), which aims to reinforce the message that the QF denotes “quality” and “relevancy” in the context of skills upgrading, teaching and learning. The new APIs will be broadcasted on TV, radios, mass transit railway networks and through various media channels in the fourth quarter of 2010. We will also supplement the APIs with featured articles and advertisements.

21. We have organised a short video production competition for all full-time students of secondary schools and institutions. We have also organised a workshop to introduce the QF and to respond to enquiries from potential participants, and advertorials were published in one of the local newspapers throughout the period of competition.

22. We are in the process of re-vamping the website of QF ([www.hkqf.gov.hk](http://www.hkqf.gov.hk)), aiming to make it more informative and user-friendly. New initiatives include dedicating an exclusive page to each ITAC for posting specific news or updates in respect of the education and training and the development of QF in the industry, as well as enhancing the search engine of the site to facilitate users in locating the relevant Units of Competency for course-design and skill-analysis.

23. Since 2009, we have organised and/or participated in more than 250 seminars, exhibitions and events to widely promote the QF and its related initiatives to industry practitioners. We have also conducted about 160 company visits to encourage employers to make the best use of SCSs particularly in areas of in-house training and human resources management. We shall continue to enhance connection and networking with the industries through, for instance, company visits and briefings.

24. To facilitate education and training providers in developing relevant programmes for learners, three briefing sessions to introduce the QF-related topics, including the SGC, QF Credit, SCS-based programmes, QG, and RPL mechanism, were organised for the Federation of Continuing Education in Tertiary Institutions and its member institutions in 2009-10.

25. We also conducted three experience-sharing sessions on the development of SCS-based programmes and the applications of SCS for interested vocational training providers. In the light of the positive feedback on these briefings and experience-sharing sessions, we will continue to maintain dialogues with the education and training providers as well as quality assurance bodies on the new initiatives and latest progress of the development of QF.

26. In 2009, we organised a total of 20 outreaching activities, for

example, talks and sharing sessions on the QF and the QR involving an attendance of over 2,600 participants, including school principals, teachers, career masters, youth workers and students. So far, the general feedback on the implementation of QF is positive. Respondents affirmed that the framework could help them understand the level of qualifications, whilst the QR served as a very useful tool to search for quality assured learning programmes.

27. We will continue to organise various kinds of activities, including talks, seminars, exhibitions and promotion day etc, to individual schools and different organisations in the coming year. We will continue to make every effort to assist the industries in the implementation of QF. In addition to promoting the QF through ITACs, we are also pursuing plans to partner with various major stakeholders to organise promotional activities for different groups of audience.

### **Way Forward**

28. Meanwhile, we are reaching out to employers, employees, professional bodies and other stakeholders with a view to setting up more ITACs in other industries. In particular, we are exploring with stakeholders of different industries, especially the four economic pillars and the six priority industries identified in the Chief Executive's 2009 Policy Address, with a view to setting up new ITACs in these industries. Responses from the stakeholders are positive. We expect that a few sectors will be ready to set up their respective ITACs within this year.

29. Implementation of the QF in Hong Kong is a long term endeavour. We will continue to enhance the infrastructure of the QF in a progressive and step-by-step manner. Continued efforts will be made to enhance the public awareness of the QF, and to promote a wider application of its deliverables in the education and training sector as well as in the workplace.

Education Bureau  
June 2010

**Summery on the Work Progress of the  
Industry Training Advisory Committees**

**(1) Printing & Publishing Industry Training Advisory Committees (ITAC)**

- The Printing & Publishing ITAC, established on 1 April 2004 under the Hong Kong Qualifications Framework (QF), comprises key representatives of the employer associations, trade unions and professional bodies in the industry which has 31,000 practitioners.
- The Printing & Publishing ITAC has completed its first version of SCS which provides a basis for course providers to develop education and training programmes to meet the needs of the sector. So far, about 30 SCS-based programmes have been developed with over 1,800 learners and employees taken part in them.
- The Printing & Publishing industry is one of the pioneers in the RPL mechanism. Since June 2008, the RPL pilot scheme has attracted some 500 applicants from the industry with over 900 statements of attainment awarded. Most of them attained qualifications at QF levels 3 and 4.
- The Printing and Publishing ITAC organised a number of seminars and briefing sessions to keep their members updated on the development of the QF in the industry. It is stepping up its efforts to promote the use of SCS on various fronts, including in both the vocational education and training market as well as in the industry, and the participation of RPL mechanism. It will also continue to help map out the progression/articulation pathways in the industry.

**(2) Watch & Clock ITAC**

- The Watch & Clock ITAC, established on 1 April 2004 under the QF, comprises key representatives of the employer associations, trade unions and professional bodies in the industry which has close to 20,000 practitioners.
- The Watch & Clock ITAC has completed its first version of SCS, which provides a basis for course providers to develop education and training programmes to meet the needs of the sector. So far, about 18 SCS-based programmes have been developed with nearly 1,000 learners and employees taken part in them.
- The Watch & Clock industry is one of the three industries participating in the RPL pilot scheme. Since June 2008, there are about 150 applicants from the industry with over 200 statements of attainment awarded. Most of them attained qualifications at QF levels 3 and 4.
- The Watch & Clock ITAC organised a promotion day on QF in December 2009 with over 100 industry practitioners attended to exchange views on the QF-related issues. It is stepping up its efforts to promote the use of SCS on

various fronts, including the design and development of SCS-based programmes with greater variety and at higher levels, and the participation of RPL mechanism. It will also continue to help map out the progression/articulation pathways in the industry.

### **(3) Chinese Catering ITAC**

- The Chinese Catering ITAC, established on 15 April 2004 under the QF, comprises employer associations, trade unions and professional bodies in the industry which has 180,000 practitioners accounting for 5 per cents of the total labour force.
- The Chinese Catering ITAC has completed its first version of SCS, which provides a basis for course providers develop education and training programmes to meet the needs of the sector. It has been co-operating with some sizeable restaurant groups to use the SCS in in-house training and human resources development.
- Subsequent to the completion of the exercise to clustering the units of competencies (UoCs) in the SCS, the Chinese Catering industry is preparing to put in place the RPL mechanism for the industry practitioners. It is expected that the RPL mechanism will be launched very shortly.
- The Chinese Catering ITAC organised a promotion day on QF in May 2009 with over 150 industry practitioners participated to exchange views on the QF-related issues. It is stepping up its efforts to promote the use of SCS on various fronts, such as the development of SCS-based programmes, and the participation of RPL mechanism. It will also continue to help map out the progression/articulation pathways in the industry.

### **(4) Hairdressing ITAC**

- The Hairdressing ITAC, established on 1 May 2004 under the QF, comprises key representatives of the employer associations, trade unions and professional bodies in the industry which has 26,000 practitioners.
- The Hairdressing ITAC has completed its first version of SCS, which provides a basis for course providers to develop education and training programmes to meet the needs of the sector. So far, over 60 SCS-based programmes have been developed with more than 3,700 learners and employees taken part in them.
- The industry has also participated in the RPL pilot scheme since June 2008, which has attracted some 600 applicants from the industry with over 3,600 statements of attainment awarded. Most of them attained qualifications at QF levels 3 and 4.
- The Hairdressing ITAC is stepping up its efforts to promote the use of SCS on various fronts, including the design and development of SCS-based programmes in greater variety and at higher levels, and the participation of RPL mechanism. It will also continue to help map out the progression/articulation pathways in the industry.

## **(5) Property Management ITAC**

- The Property Management ITAC, established on 15 October 2004 under the QF, comprises key representatives of the employer associations, trade unions and professional bodies in the industry which has almost 100,000 practitioners accounting for 2.5 per cents of the total labour force.
- The Property Management ITAC has completed its first version of SCS, which provides a basis for course providers to develop education and training programmes to meet the needs of the sector. So far, six SCS-based programmes have been developed and will be launched to the market shortly. It is working with a number of property management groups, together with the relevant professional bodies and government departments on the use of SCS in the areas of in-house training and human resources development.
- Subsequent to the completion of the UoC clustering exercise, the Property Management industry will put in place the RPL mechanism for the industry practitioners. It is expected that the RPL mechanism will be launched very shortly.
- The Property Management ITAC organised a number of seminars and briefing sessions to keep their members updated on the development of the QF in the industry. It is stepping up its efforts to promote the use of SCS on various fronts, such as developing SCS-based programmes, and participation in the RPL mechanism. It will also continue to help map out the progression/articulation pathways in the industry.

## **(6) Electrical & Mechanical Services ITAC**

- The Electrical & Mechanical Services ITAC, established on 1 January 2005 under the QF, comprises key representatives of the trade associations, trade unions and professional bodies of the industry which almost 60,000 practitioners accounting for 1.6 per cents of the total labour force. The ITAC spans across 10 branches<sup>4</sup>, each of which has a sub-group to draw up the SCS for the respective branches.
- The Electrical & Mechanical Services ITAC has completed its first version of SCSs for five of the 10 branches, with the other five for the “aircraft maintenance engineering, electrical engineering”, “lift and escalator engineering”, “plant engineering (mechanical)” as well as “ship repair engineering” branches to be ready in end 2010. The SCSs provide a basis for course providers to develop education and training programmes to meet the needs of the sector. It is also working with various stakeholder associations to facilitate the use of SCSs in in-house training programmes and human resources development.

---

<sup>4</sup> The 10 branches are “fire engineering”, “gas engineering”, “heating, ventilation and air-conditioning engineering”, “plumbing engineering”, “railway electrical and mechanical engineering”, “aircraft maintenance engineering, electrical engineering”, “lift and escalator engineering”, “plant engineering (mechanical)” as well as “ship repair engineering”

- Currently, the Electrical & Mechanical Services ITAC is working on the UoC clustering exercise. After that, the Electrical & Mechanical Services industry will put in place the RPL mechanism for the industry practitioners.
- The Electrical & Mechanical Services ITAC organised a number of seminars and briefing sessions to keep their members up-to-date with the development of the QF in the industry. It is stepping up its efforts to promote the use of SCS on various fronts, including the design and development of SCS-based programmes, and the participation of RPL mechanism. It will also continue to help map out the progression/articulation pathways in the industry.

#### **(7) Jewellery ITAC**

- The Jewellery ITAC, established on 1 July 2005 under the QF, comprises key representatives of the employer associations, trade unions and professional bodies in the industry which has 13,000 practitioners.
- The Jewellery ITAC has completed its first version of SCS, which provides a basis for course providers to develop education and training programmes to meet the needs of the sector. It is also encouraging the jewellery corporate to use SCS in the areas of in-house training and human resources development.
- Once the UoC clustering exercise is completed, the Jewellery industry is looking forward to put in place the RPL mechanism for the industry practitioners. The RPL mechanism will be implemented in the industry to promote lifelong learning.
- The Jewellery ITAC organised a number of visits and briefing sessions to education and training bodies, trade associations and unions, individual employers, in order to keep various groups of stakeholders updated on the development of the QF in the industry. It is stepping up its efforts to promote the use of SCS on various fronts, such as the development of SCS-based programmes, and the participation of RPL mechanism.

#### **(8) Information & Communications Technology ITAC**

- The Information & Communications Technology ITAC, established on 15 July 2005 under the QF, comprises key representatives of the employer associations, trade unions and professional bodies in the industry which has 67,000 practitioners accounting for 1.8 per cents of the total labour force. It spans across four branches<sup>5</sup>.
- The Information & Communications Technology ITAC has completed its first version of SCS for the “software products and software services” branch, which provides a basis for course providers to develop education and training programmes to meet the needs of the sector. In the meantime, it is drafting the SCS for the “communications and information services” branch and will

---

<sup>5</sup> The four branches are “software products and software services”, “communications and information services”, “electronic and optical components”, as well as “electronics products, information processing hardware and communication equipment”

strive for the completion of SCSs for the other branches in good time. The Information & Communications Technology industry is looking forward to putting in place the RPL mechanism for the industry practitioners.

- The Information & Communications Technology ITAC is stepping up its efforts to promote the use of SCS on various fronts, including the development of SCS-based programmes and the participation of RPL mechanism. Some professional bodies are designing SCS-based training programmes and developing a professional credential scheme on information technology drawing reference to the SCS. The Information & Communications Technology ITAC will continue to help map out the progression/articulation pathways in the industry.

#### **(9) Automotive ITAC**

- The Automotive ITAC, established on 16 December 2005 under the QF, comprises key representatives of the trade associations, trade unions, employers as well as professional bodies in the industry which has 21,000 practitioners.
- The Automotive ITAC has completed its first version of the SCS for the “operations, sales, services and parts management” field. It will soon commence drafting the SCS for the “manufacturing of vehicle-parts” field. The SCS provides a basis for course providers to develop education and training programmes to meet the needs of the industry. Four SCS-based courses on the aspects of “auto servicing”, “sales” and “insurance” will be offered under the Skills Upgrading Scheme in end 2010.
- The Automotive ITAC is working closely with employers and professional bodies to make use of the SCS to develop in-house training programmes, to design Applied Learning courses on automotive and technology and to manage human resources.
- When the UoC clustering exercise is completed, the Automotive industry is looking forward to put in place the RPL mechanism for the industry practitioners. The Automotive ITAC is stepping up its efforts to promote the use of SCS on various fronts. It will also continue to help map out the progression/articulation pathways in the industry.

#### **(10) Beauty ITAC**

- The Beauty ITAC, established on 1 April 2006 under the QF, comprises key representatives of the employer associations, trade unions and professional bodies in the industry which has 26,000 practitioners.
- The Beauty ITAC will soon complete its first version of SCS, which will provide a basis for course providers to develop education and training programmes to meet the needs of the sector. It is also working with the industry to use the SCS in in-house training and human resources development. Upon completion of the UoC clustering exercise, the Beauty ITAC will start putting in place the RPL mechanism for the industry

practitioners.

- The Beauty ITAC organised a number of seminars and briefing sessions to keep their members updated on the development of the QF in the industry. It is stepping up its efforts to promote the use of SCS on various fronts, including the development of SCS-based programmes, and the participation of RPL mechanism. It will also continue to help map out the progression/articulation pathways in the industry.

#### **(11) Logistics ITAC**

- The Logistics ITAC, established on 2 May 2006 under the QF, comprises key representatives of the trade associations, trade unions and professional bodies in the industry which has 220,000 practitioners accounting for 6 per cents of the total labour force.
- The Logistics ITAC has completed the first version of SCSs for the “airfreight and express” and “shipping” branches. Some trade associations and large-scaled enterprises of the industry have already drawn reference to the SCSs in their recruitment exercises and in-house training programmes.
- The SCS provides a basis for course providers to develop education and training programmes to meet the needs of the sector. The Logistics ITAC is working closely with the stakeholders to make use of the SCS on various fronts, including the development of SCS-based courses.
- The Logistics ITAC has also kick-started the UoC clustering exercise. Upon completion of the exercise, it will put in place the RPL mechanism for the industry practitioners.
- The Logistics ITAC organised a number of briefing sessions and seminars to keep their members updated on the development of the QF in the industry. It is stepping up its efforts to promote the use of SCS on various fronts and will help map out the progression/articulation pathways in the industry.

#### **(12) Banking ITAC**

- The Banking ITAC, established on 1 August 2006 under the QF, comprises key representatives of the trade associations, trade unions, professional bodies and regulatory body in the industry which has 67,000 practitioners accounting for 1.8 per cents of the total labour force.
- The Banking ITAC has completed its first version of SCS for the retail banking sector. It is recruiting a professional writer to draw up the SCS for the corporate and commercial banking sector. A number of banks have shown interest in using the SCS in in-house training and human resources managements. Specifically, a bank group has recently developed their in-house training programmes, on the basis of SCS, for the employees of an operational unit. A number of education and training providers are also planning to draw reference from the SCS in the course of designing learning and training programmes for the industry practitioners and other learners who are interested in pursuing a career in the banking industry.

- The Banking ITAC organised a number of seminars and briefing sessions to keep their members updated on the development of the QF in the industry. It is stepping up its efforts to promote the use of SCS on various fronts, including the development of SCS-based programmes, and RPL mechanism in the industry. It will also continue to help map out the progression/articulation pathways in the industry.

**(13) Import & Export ITAC**

- The Import & Export ITAC, established on 1 October 2009 under the QF, comprises key representatives of the trade associations, trade unions and relevant stakeholders in the industry which has 510,000 practitioners accounting for 14 per cents of the total labour force.
- It will soon set up the “SCS Drafting” sub-committee to commence drafting its first version of SCS, which will provide a basis for course providers to develop education and training programmes to meet the needs of the sector. A professional writer has just been appointed and the draft SCS is expected to put forth for industry consultation by 2012.
- Although the Import & Export ITAC is the youngest amongst the 13 ITACs, it has all along been helpful to promote the QF in the industry. It also serves as an effective platform for the trade associations and trade unions of the industry to work together, promote lifelong learning and facilitate the implementation of QF for the long term benefit of the industry.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

**Pilot scheme of the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) mechanism  
(as at end of May 2010)**

**(a) Number of applications by industry**

<b>Industry</b>	<b>Printing &amp; Publishing</b>	<b>Hairdressing</b>	<b>Watch &amp; Clock</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>No. of applications</b>	518	616	158	<b>1,292</b>

**(b) Number of RPL clusters of competencies by level**

<b>Level</b>	<b>Printing &amp; Publishing</b>	<b>Hairdressing</b>	<b>Watch &amp; Clock</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>1</b>	12	23	4	39
<b>2</b>	58	56	6	120
<b>3</b>	573	3,131	104	3,808
<b>4</b>	319	480	108	907
<b>Overall</b>	962	3,690	222	<b>4,874</b>

*Levels 1 to 3: By verification*

*Level 4: By assessment*

**(c) Number of RPL clusters of competencies by successful rate**

<b>Level</b>	<b>Printing &amp; Publishing</b>	<b>Hairdressing</b>	<b>Watch &amp; Clock</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>1</b>	100%	100%	100%	100%
<b>2</b>	100%	100%	100%	100%
<b>3</b>	100%	100%	100%	100%
<b>4</b>	92.8 % *	100%	100%	97.5 % *
<b>Overall</b>	97.6 % *	100%	100%	<b>99.5 % *</b>

*\* with 23 applications failed in the assessment*

**Qualifications registered in the Qualifications Register  
(as at end May 2010)**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Nos. of qualifications</b>
(1) Qualifications offered by universities and other self-accrediting institutions	2,587
(2) Qualifications offered by non-self-accrediting institutions	3,441
(3) Qualifications offered under the Recognition of Prior Learning mechanism	125
<b>Total:</b>	<b>6,153</b>