

For information

## **Legislative Council Panel on Manpower**

### **Continuing Education Fund**

#### **Purpose**

At the meeting of the Legislative Council Panel on Manpower held on 12 July 2010, Members requested the Administration to provide further information regarding the findings of a survey on Continuing Education Fund (CEF) applicants and claimants conducted in 2009, as well as the vetting criteria for the responsible persons and course directors of CEF course providers. This paper provides the requested information for Members' reference.

#### **Findings of CEF Survey Conducted in 2009**

2. To ascertain the effectiveness of CEF, the Administration engaged an independent consultant, Policy 21 Limited of the University of Hong Kong, to conduct a survey of a random sample of 3 340 CEF learners in 2009. The sample covered applicants for opening CEF accounts and claimants who sought CEF subsidy after completing their courses. The key findings are as follows –

- (a) The majority of the responded claimants considered that CEF courses were very helpful or helpful in improving their vocational skills (91%), self-confidence (79%) and adaptability at work (79%);
- (b) 74% of the responded claimants who were in employment indicated that they could apply what they had learned from CEF courses; and for those who were unemployed, 66% believed that CEF courses would or probably would help them find a job;
- (c) 76% of the responded claimants considered that CEF courses were very helpful or helpful in arousing their interest in continuing education;

- (d) 71% of the responded applicants and 65% of the responded claimants considered the level of subsidy (80% of the course fee) reasonable; whereas 44% of the responded applicants and 33% of the responded claimants considered the maximum subsidy (\$10,000) reasonable;
- (e) 37% of the responded applicants and 34% of the responded claimants indicated that they would not pursue further education/training courses without CEF subsidy; 26% of the responded applicants and 21% of the responded claimants said that they could not afford the tuition fees without CEF subsidy; and
- (f) 74% of the responded applicants and 80% of the responded claimants agreed that extending the requirement of collecting course fees by equal monthly instalments to all registered CEF courses would be very useful or useful in protecting the interest of CEF learners.

### **Vetting Criteria for Responsible Persons and Course Directors of CEF Course Providers**

3. Before a course may be considered for registration under CEF, it has to go through accreditation by the Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications (HKCAAVQ) or the self-accrediting pathway as applicable, and be registered under the Qualifications Register (QR).

4. In considering an application for course registration under CEF, as stated in the Guide to Assessment of Courses, HKCAAVQ and the Labour and Welfare Bureau will examine, *inter alia*, the fitness and propriety of the responsible person and course director of the course provider. A host of factors, including relevant past experience of the individuals concerned and whether the individuals were involved in previous de-registration cases, are taken into account. An application for course registration will not be considered if an individual nominated to serve as the responsible person or course director has acted as the responsible person or course director of other courses which were de-registered within one year prior to the application or which are currently suspended from registration. Even if the application is lodged more than one year after the relevant course de-registration, the individual's connection to the related defaulting course provider and the gravity of the breaches which led to de-registration will still be taken into account.

## **Advice Sought**

5. Members are invited to note the content of this paper.

Labour and Welfare Bureau  
September 2010