

(Translation)

**Motion on
“Improving further education and employment of
sub-degree students”
moved by Hon Cyd HO
at the Council meeting of 23 November 2011**

**Motion as amended by Hon CHEUNG Man-kwong, Hon WONG Kwok-hing,
Hon Starry LEE, Dr Hon Priscilla LEUNG and Hon CHAN Hak-kan**

That, given that since the SAR Government announced in the Policy Address 2000 the policy objective of providing 60% of local young people with the opportunity of receiving tertiary education and rolled out a series of measures, the number of self-financing programmes at associate degree level or above offered by local institutions has been increasing; however, as the social recognition of sub-degree qualifications over the past 10 years is still lacking, sub-degree students have to face various problems in further education and employment and even have to bear high tuition fees and loan repayments, thus making them the new blood of the poverty population, this Council urges the authorities to:

- (a) increase the number of first-year and senior year articulation places for publicly-funded universities;
- (b) establish a mechanism for monitoring and assuring programme quality, so as to ensure adequate credibility and recognition of sub-degree qualifications;
- (c) offer subsidies in the form of education vouchers or direct subsidies to sub-degree graduates for enrolling on self-financing degree programmes;
- (d) expand the channels to study in universities for sub-degree graduates;
- (e) increase the transparency of institutions' admission systems and establish a credit accumulation and transfer system to ensure that institutions admit students under the principles of fairness and 'selectivity', so as to rationalize and link up articulation pathways for sub-degree graduates from different backgrounds;
- (f) increase the number of civil service entry ranks for sub-degree graduates; and

- (g) review student financial assistance as well as loan and repayment arrangements, including abolishing the fixed interest rate (2.5%) for means-tested low interest loans and the risk rate for non-means-tested; significantly lower the interest rates of all loan schemes for tertiary students, waive the interest accrued during students' study periods under the Non-means-tested Loan Scheme, and change the situation where interest rates of student loans are higher than those of bank mortgages; allow tax deduction on repayment amounts of university education loans; study the feasibility of allowing local students to apply for student loans for pursuing further education outside Hong Kong; and increase the grant amounts for tertiary students;
- (h) review the contents covered by sub-degree programmes, so as to enhance the applicability of such programmes;
- (i) strengthen the monitoring of sub-degree programme fees; and
- (j) enhance the employment support for sub-degree graduates;
- (k) ensure the diversity of self-financing programmes, so as to provide programme options in different academic disciplines for students;
- (l) provide matching grants for self-financing post-secondary institutions to build campuses, so as to alleviate the pressure of tuition fee increases exerted by campus construction costs;
- (m) collect data on sub-degree graduates' further education and employment, so as to accurately grasp the destinations of graduates and make good preparation for the planning of sub-degree programmes and their number of places;
- (n) conduct surveys on employers' opinions about the work performance of sub-degree graduates for assessing the value-adding effectiveness of sub-degree programmes, so as to enable post-secondary institutions to better understand employers' needs and make corresponding curriculum arrangements; and
- (o) assist Hong Kong sub-degree graduates in pursuing studies in mainland universities, including studying the establishment of a mutual recognition mechanism between Hong Kong sub-degree qualifications and Mainland tertiary diploma qualifications, and striving for sub-degree graduates' exemption from the Joint Entrance Examination for Universities in the People's Republic of China for Overseas Chinese,

Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan Students, so as to promote exchanges between Hong Kong and Mainland students;

- (p) study relaxing the academic requirements for appointment to more civil service posts, so that sub-degree graduates can have more opportunities to apply; and
- (q) add more elements of vocational training or practical skills to existing sub-degree programmes, so that students can secure employment more easily after graduation.