

立法會
Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(4)793/13-14
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by the Administration)

Ref : CB4/PS/1/12

Panel on Education

Subcommittee on Integrated Education

**Minutes of the thirteenth meeting
held on Tuesday, 18 March 2014, at 10:00 am
in Conference Room 3 of the Legislative Council Complex**

Members present : Dr Hon Fernando CHEUNG Chiu-hung (Chairman)
Hon IP Kin-yuen (Deputy Chairman)
Hon TAM Yiu-chung, GBS, JP
Hon Abraham SHEK Lai-him, GBS, JP
Dr Hon Elizabeth QUAT, JP

Member absent : Hon LEUNG Yiu-chung
Hon Cyd HO Sau-lan
Hon CHEUNG Kwok-che
Dr Hon Kenneth CHAN Ka-lok

Public Officers attending : Item I

Education Bureau

Mr Kevin YEUNG, JP
Under Secretary for Education

Mr Wallace LAU
Principal Assistant Secretary (Higher Education)

Mr Stephen YIP
Principal Assistant Secretary (Curriculum
Development)

Ms Sophia WONG
Principal Education Officer (Special Education &
Kindergarten Education)

University Grants Committee Secretariat

Dr Richard ARMOUR
Secretary-General

**Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment
Authority**

Dr TONG Chong-sze
Secretary-General

Ms Margaret HUI
General Manager - School Examinations and
Assessment

Attendance by : Miss FONG Ching-man
Invitation

Hong Kong Professional Teachers' Union

Dr FUNG Wai-wah
President

Miss Mandy TANG

Miss Kate CHEUNG

Mr CHONG Chan-yau

Hong Kong Blind Union

Mr SZE Yan-kit
Spokesperson

Mr WONG Ka-ho

Clerk in attendance : Miss Polly YEUNG
Chief Council Secretary (4) 4

Staff in attendance : Mr KWONG Kam-fai
Senior Council Secretary (4) 4

Mr Ian CHOW
Council Secretary (4) 4

Ms Sandy HAU
Legislative Assistant (4) 3

Action

I. University/higher education for students with special educational needs

Papers provided by the Administration

(LC Paper No. CB(4)471/13-14(01) -- Paper provided by the Administration

LC Paper No. CB(4)952/12-13(01) -- Administration's written response to the consolidated summary of views/concerns raised at the meetings on 30 April and 27 May 2013

LC Paper No. CB(4)1007/12-13(01) -- Administration's written response to the consolidated summary of views/concerns raised at the meetings on 18 June and 8 July 2013

LC Paper No. CB(4)146/13-14(01) -- Administration's written response to the summary of views/concerns raised at the meeting on 3 October 2013)

Action

Papers prepared by the Legislative Council Secretariat

- (LC Paper No. CB(4)471/13-14(02) -- Composite table listing the views/concerns of deputations and members, as well as the responses provided by the Administration in respect of previous meetings (April to October 2013)
- LC Paper No. CB(4)824/12-13(01) -- A consolidated summary of views/concerns raised at the meetings on 30 April and 27 May 2013
- LC Paper No. CB(4)945/12-13(01) -- A consolidated summary of views/concerns raised at the meetings on 18 June and 8 July 2013
- LC Paper No. CB(4)111/13-14(01) -- A summary of views/concerns raised at the meeting on 3 October 2013)

Other papers

Written submissions from deputations / individuals not attending the meeting

- (LC Paper No. CB(4)471/13-14(03) -- Submission from Mr WONG Man-kit (*Chinese version only*)
- LC Paper No. CB(4)471/13-14(04) -- Submission from 輕度智障權益關注組 (*Chinese version only*)
- LC Paper No. CB(4)471/13-14(05) -- Submission from Fortress Hill Methodist Secondary

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School (*Chinese version only*)

LC Paper No. CB(4)471/13-14(06) -- Submission from Fortress Hill Methodist Secondary School Parents Teachers Association (*Chinese version only*)

LC Paper No. CB(4)471/13-14(07) -- Submission from Mr F C TANG (*Chinese version only*)

LC Paper No. CB(4)480/13-14(02) -- Submission from Suen Mei Speech & Hearing Centre (*Chinese version only*))

Meeting with deputations / individuals and the Administration for agenda items I

2. The Subcommittee deliberated (index of proceedings attached at **Annex**).

3. The University Grants Committee ("UGC")/Education Bureau was requested to explain the following in writing –

- (a) as far as the allocation of funding to UGC-funded institutions was concerned, how it could ensure that the need to provide support to students with special educational needs ("SEN students") had been factored in;
- (b) whether and how individual institutions would report to UGC on the support measures, if any, implemented by them for SEN students; and
- (c) the feasibility of providing project-based funding support to the institutions for supporting SEN students.

Action

II. Any other business

4. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 12:02 pm.

Council Business Division 4
Legislative Council Secretariat
9 June 2014

**Proceedings of the meeting of the
Subcommittee on Integrated Education
on Tuesday, 18 March 2014, at 10:00 am
in Conference Room 3 of the Legislative Council Complex**

| Time marker | Speaker(s) | Subject(s) | Action required |
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| <i>Agenda Item I – University/higher education for students with special educational needs</i> | | | |
| 000330 - 001141 | Chairman | <p>Opening remarks</p> <p>The Chairman expressed the following concerns –</p> <p>(a) the percentage of SEN students enrolled in publicly-funded post-secondary programmes only accounted for about 1% of the total number of students on these programmes. This percentage was considerably lower than those prevailing in other countries; and</p> <p>(b) the Vocational Training Council ("VTC"), which admitted the highest number of SEN students among publicly-funded institutions and was in receipt of an additional recurrent funding of \$12 million each year, should attend this meeting upon the Subcommittee's invitation.</p> | |
| 001142 - 001647 | Miss FONG Ching-man Chairman | Presentation of views [LC Paper No. CB(4)480/13-14(01)] | |
| 001648 - 002143 | Hong Kong Professional Teachers' Union Chairman | Presentation of views | |
| 002144 - 002628 | Miss Mandy TANG Chairman | Presentation of views | |
| 002629 - 003049 | Miss Kate CHEUNG Chairman | Presentation of views | |
| 003050 - 003633 | Mr CHONG Chan-yau Chairman | Presentation of views | |
| 003634 - 004229 | Hong Kong Blind Union Chairman | Presentation of views | |
| 004230 - 004851 | Mr WONG Ka-ho Chairman | Presentation of views | |
| 004852 - 011024 | Chairman Education Bureau ("EDB") University Grants Committee Secretariat ("UGCS") Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment | EDB advised that pursuant to the existing policy on integrated education ("IE"), post-secondary education institutions should also provide SEN students with appropriate support and a barrier-free learning environment. EDB had organized a sharing session with post-secondary education institutions in July 2013 to take stock of the existing support measures provided to SEN students. Each institution was also | |

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| | Authority ("HKEAA") | <p>invited to complete a questionnaire to provide information on the current situation of their SEN students, existing and planned support measures and suggestions on how support measures to SEN students could be enhanced. EDB would encourage more sharing of experience and good practices among the institutions with a view to enhancing support to SEN students.</p> <p>EDB further advised that –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) institutions were at different stages of development in supporting SEN students. The types of support provided by institutions varied in addressing the divergent needs of SEN students; (b) SEN students were encouraged to inform their respective post-secondary institutions of their needs early so that these institutions could have sufficient time to prepare for the required support or services; (c) under the auspices of institutional autonomy in academic and administrative affairs, EDB would not direct how individual institutions should deploy their use of government funding. However, the institutions were required to provide appropriate support to SEN students and must not adopt practices which would give rise to discrimination; (d) since the 2013-2014 financial year, an additional recurrent funding of \$12 million had been allocated to VTC each year for procuring equipment and learning aids for SEN students and enhancing teaching and learning support for them; (e) EDB would further discuss with the institutions on how best to encourage the use of e-books to facilitate reference by students with visual impairment ("VI") and the sharing of e-books among the libraries of post-secondary institutions; and (f) the setting up of government-funded scholarship schemes was to give recognition to meritorious post-secondary SEN students, and would by no means substitute the provision of necessary support and resources to SEN students. <p>UGCS said that –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) it would take the opportunity of the meetings with the Presidents of University Grants | |

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| | | <p>Committee ("UGC")-funded institutions held at regular intervals each year to draw their attention to the need to provide whole-campus support to their SEN students; and</p> <p>(b) the higher education sector might need to develop a general culture of supporting SEN students in learning and teaching, such as the provision of sign language interpretation for hard of hearing students.</p> <p>The Chairman commented that UGC played a pivotal role in facilitating and overseeing the institutions under its purview in their provision of support to SEN students.</p> <p>HKEAA said that it had engaged relevant concern groups and organizations in devising suitable adaptations for different types of SEN students in public examinations. The examination arrangements were also subject to fine-tuning where necessary.</p> <p>The Chairman commented that whilst institutional autonomy should be respected, there was currently no policy on implementing IE in the higher education sector. In the absence of any basic requirements prescribed by the Government, there were wide variations among UGC-funded institutions in their provision of support to SEN students. He sought EDB's advice/information on –</p> <p>(a) whether an IE policy would be formulated for implementation in the post-secondary education sector;</p> <p>(b) in what ways the Administration could be satisfied that individual UGC-funded institutions had made proper use of the resources allocated to them in each triennial cycle to provide necessary support measures for their SEN students; and</p> <p>(c) the participants in the experience sharing platform on providing support for post-secondary SEN students.</p> <p>In response, EDB advised that –</p> <p>(a) currently, the study programmes at UGC-funded institutions were open to both SEN students and regular students;</p> <p>(b) owing to the requirements of different study programmes, it had been the practice for individual institutions to provide support to SEN students according to the specific needs in each case;</p> | |

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| | | <p>(c) even if EDB were to issue guidelines, such guidelines could only set out the broad principles but not the detailed arrangements in various cases; and</p> <p>(d) EDB had been encouraging experience-sharing among post-secondary institutions and to promote the adoption of good practices in supporting various types of SEN students.</p> | |
| 011025 - 013312 | Deputy Chairman EDB UGCS Chairman | <p>The Deputy Chairman said that suitable adjustment should be made to the lighting system in Conference Room 3 so that the screen displaying the simultaneous sign language interpretation could be more visible. He asked the Secretariat to bring his comments to the attention of the responsible staff.</p> <p>The Deputy Chairman opined that post-secondary institutions should have no serious difficulty in deploying their resources to cater for the needs of SEN students in view of the relatively small number of SEN students pursuing post-secondary studies.</p> <p>Regarding the initiatives and support measures implemented by post-secondary institutions for SEN students, the Deputy Chairman asked –</p> <p>(a) whether individual institutions had set up dedicated posts to oversee and coordinate the provision of support for SEN students, as well as promulgated a policy statement on implementing IE in the campus; and</p> <p>(b) upon provision of a block grant to each UGC-funded institution, how UGC/EDB could ascertain that adequate resources had in fact been earmarked for provision of necessary support measures for SEN students, and whether individual institutions' work in this respect was subject to any "auditing" by UGC.</p> <p>EDB referred to the sharing session with the post-secondary education sector in July 2013 and the questionnaires completed by the institutions on their existing support measures for SEN students. Based on the results, EDB found that –</p> <p>(a) the number of SEN students varied among different types of SEN and institutions;</p> <p>(b) the institutions had difficulties in identifying "hidden" SEN students, as some might choose not to declare their SENs; and</p> <p>(c) some special measures and support services had been adopted by institutions for their SEN</p> | |

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| | | <p>students including extended examination time, provision of examination papers with larger fonts, etc.</p> <p>EDB drew members' attention to a set of guidelines on "Support Services with Students with Specific Learning Disabilities in Tertiary Institutions in Hong Kong", which was jointly compiled by the Hong Kong Society of Child Neurology & Developmental Paediatrics, the Hong Kong Association for Specific Learning Disabilities and 10 higher education institutions, and circulated to other local post-secondary institutions in Hong Kong.</p> <p>EDB recapitulated the sharing sessions participated by over 30 institutions last year and highlighted the following points –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) both thematic and general sharing sessions and workshops would be organized where experts and practitioners could share their experience and good practices on specific topics; (b) there was concern about the difficulty in identifying SEN students pursuing post-secondary education; (c) institutions with more experience in supporting SEN students would be encouraged to share their experience and provide assistance to other institutions; (d) a workshop on the Government's support for senior secondary SEN students would be planned so that the post-secondary education sector would be appraised of the prevailing SEN support policy in secondary schools; and (e) EDB would conduct a study into the practices adopted by higher education institutions in overseas jurisdictions, such as Australia and Canada, in the formulation of strategies and measures on supporting SEN students. <p>Both the Chairman and the Deputy Chairman were concerned whether consideration would be given to requiring UGC-funded institutions to earmark funding specifically for supporting SEN students.</p> <p>UGCS responded that UGC would not specify how UGC-funded institutions should deploy their allocated funding for different purposes. Where appropriate, UGC could consider providing special funding on a project basis for application by the institutions for supporting SEN students.</p> | |

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| | | <p>On whether individual institutions were required to report to UGC the current situation of their SEN students, as well as the existing and planned support measures, UGCS indicated that the institutions might be asked to provide such information in the context of their regular reporting process to UGC with a view to fostering a culture of supporting SEN students.</p> <p>The Chairman requested UGC/EDB to explain the following in writing –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) as far as the allocation of funding to UGC-funded institutions was concerned, how it could ensure that the need to provide support to SEN students had been factored in; (b) whether and how individual institutions would report to UGC on the support measures, if any, implemented by them for SEN students; and (c) the feasibility of providing project-based funding support to the institutions for supporting SEN students. <p>To enhance transparency, the Chairman considered that UGC-funded institutions should be required to publish on their websites their existing policy, services and support for SEN students. This would also encourage more students to declare their SENs to the institutions. EDB/UGCS took note of the Chairman's suggestion.</p> | <p>UGC/EDB was requested to provide the information as stated in paragraphs 3(a) - (c) of the minutes.</p> |
| 013313 - 020203 | <p>Dr Hon Elizabeth QUAT EDB Mr CHONG Chan-yau Mr WONG Ka-ho Chairman</p> | <p>Dr QUAT expressed doubt about the effectiveness of EDB's sharing session with post-secondary institutions on the support for SEN students. Instead of organizing ad-hoc activities, she suggested that EDB should –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) coordinate the participation of all post-secondary institutions to form a joint-institutional working group as a standing forum to devise long-term plans, review practices and set targets for providing support to post-secondary SEN students; and (b) encourage the institutions to make use of the Internet platform to share their relevant experience. <p>EDB took note of the suggestion for consideration.</p> <p>In response to Dr QUAT's enquiry on the use of e-books for students with VI in post-secondary institutions, Mr CHONG Chan-yau said that as far as he was aware, the University of Hong Kong had been providing very good support in the provision of</p> | |

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| | | <p>e-books to facilitate learning by students with VI –</p> <p>(a) an allowance was paid to regular students for assisting in converting printed textbooks/reference books into e-books; and</p> <p>(b) it appeared that the library of the University of Hong Kong was the only library in the post-secondary education sector that, upon the request of students with VI, would make a request to publishers to provide the electronic version of their printed textbooks/reference books; and as far as he was aware, publishers had acceded to the library's requests.</p> <p>Mr CHONG supplemented that –</p> <p>(a) post-secondary SEN students had many hurdles to overcome on a day-to-day basis. Very often support was not available and there were cases in which some SEN students had been advised to withdraw from their study;</p> <p>(b) it was doubtful whether the top management of post-secondary institutions or UGC were aware of the daily hardship faced by SEN students, as these facts might not have been reported by the middle management of the institutions; and</p> <p>(c) the support provided by non-UGC-funded institutions to their SEN students was far from adequate. EDB should provide these institutions with more resources for this purpose.</p> <p>EDB advised that –</p> <p>(a) SEN students should not be asked to quit school or withdraw from studies on the grounds of their special needs or disabilities. EDB would see to it that such incidents would not arise; and</p> <p>(b) the idea of providing government funding to self-financing post-secondary institutions to support their SEN students had profound implications and would require very careful consideration.</p> <p>The Chairman confirmed that for the time being, the Subcommittee's focus was on the UGC-funded sector, as the Subcommittee considered that it should first look into the situation of the publicly-funded sector. Sharing the views of Dr QUAT and Mr CHONG, the Chairman said that –</p> <p>(a) EDB/UGC should put in place a standing forum by engaging all UGC-funded institutions to formulate proper policies and systematic</p> | |

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| | | <p>strategies to provide support to SEN students, instead of relying only on ad-hoc sharing sessions; and</p> <p>(b) EDB/UGC should urge all UGC-funded institutions to enhance transparency regarding their measures in supporting SEN students by publishing relevant information on their official websites.</p> <p>The Chairman also referred to the predicament of a student at the Chinese University of Hong Kong who had provided a written submission to the Subcommittee [LC Paper No. CB(4)471/13-14(03)], and remarked that the relevant government departments should be more flexible and considerate when handling applications by severely disabled students for support and services.</p> <p>EDB undertook to consider, in conjunction with the UGC-funded institutions, members' suggestion to set up a standing forum.</p> <p>EDB explained that it would organize sharing sessions and workshops for relevant personnel such as the staff of Student Affairs Offices or staff handling SEN-related matters so that they could share their experience and good practices on specific topics. It would also follow up on the Chairman's suggestion on enhancing publicly-funded institutions' transparency by publishing their supportive measures for SEN students on their websites.</p> <p>Mr WONG Ka-ho said that –</p> <p>(a) the Chinese University of Hong Kong had also appointed regular students to assist in converting printed textbooks/reference books into e-books for the use of students with VI. However, the quality of these e-books was not very good; and</p> <p>(b) due to the lack of support provided by post-secondary institutions, quite a number of SEN students had no choice but to drop out of their studies.</p> <p>The Chairman requested EDB to closely monitor the drop-out of SEN students from post-secondary institutions, in particular UGC-funded institutions.</p> <p>Given the current advancement in technology, Dr QUAT suggested that EDB should take steps to encourage post-secondary institutions to make the best use of cloud computing technology for sharing their e-book collections.</p> | |

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| | | EDB took note of Dr QUAT's suggestion and said that it would explore with the UGC-funded institutions the room for collaboration in the provision of electronic reference materials. | |
| <i>Agenda Item II – Any other business</i> | | | |
| 020204-020252 | Chairman | The Chairman informed members the House Committee had agreed to extend the period of work of this subcommittee by three months up to 8 April 2014. If no new subcommittee was set up during this period, the Subcommittee could continue its work after 8 April 2014 with a view to completing its study by 30 September 2014. | |

Council Business Division 4
Legislative Council Secretariat
9 June 2014