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January 19, 2015

Clerk to Panel on Education
Legislative Council
Hong Kong Special Administrative Region
People's Republic of China

Dear Sir/Madam,

**Panel on Education
Meeting on 7 February 2015**

I am writing to provide a written submission of the views of Lingnan University on the agenda item of "Issues related to the regulation, governance and quality assurance of the self-financing post-secondary sector" in the subject meeting.

We believe in the importance of governance of the self-financing post-secondary sector. In particular, governing bodies, with an appropriate mix of stakeholders, should have clear lines of responsibility, delegation of authority and terms of reference. There should be a good separation, with good co-ordination, of governance between administrative and academic affairs so that administrative considerations will not override academic quality assurance.

Both the governance structure and the quality mechanism for sub-degree programmes at Lingnan University were reviewed in 2013. Specifically, the overall structures and terms of reference and memberships of relevant committees were reviewed with the goal of enhancing consistency, transparency and accountability of management and quality of administrative and academic issues of the Community College at Lingnan University (CCLU) and the Lingnan Institution of Further Education (LIFE), the two units at Lingnan University offering sub-degree programmes. Major issues relating to the two units are also reported to the Council and / or the Senate of the University. We trust that, with the more stringent governance structure, together with the oversight of the Joint Quality Review Committee (JQRC) and the proposed external quality audits being planned by the working group involving UGC, UGC-funded

institutions, HKCAAVQ and EDB, the two units should be adequately supervised under a suitable check-and-balance mechanism.

We have always been very supportive to enhancing transparency. At present, powers and duties, membership, attendance record of meetings and summary of discussion of CCLU and LIFE Board of Governors and quality assurance mechanism including programme management structure, programme implementation, evaluation and review, enhancement of teaching quality and relevant quality assurance measures are all posted on CCLU and LIFE websites. Together with the website “Concourse”, the portal “iPass” and the application system “eapp”, we, while acknowledging there are always rooms for further improvement, believe that existing amount of transparency for self-financing sub-degree programmes offered at Lingnan University is comparable, if not greater, to other institutions of similar establishments.

Moreover, the Federation for Self-financing Tertiary Education (FSTE), with 14 sub-degree providers being full members, has been serving as a useful platform for sharing good practices and enhancing industry self-regulation. Sets of guidelines on different areas including admissions and common descriptors have been promulgated and good practices are shared at regular meetings among heads and delegates.

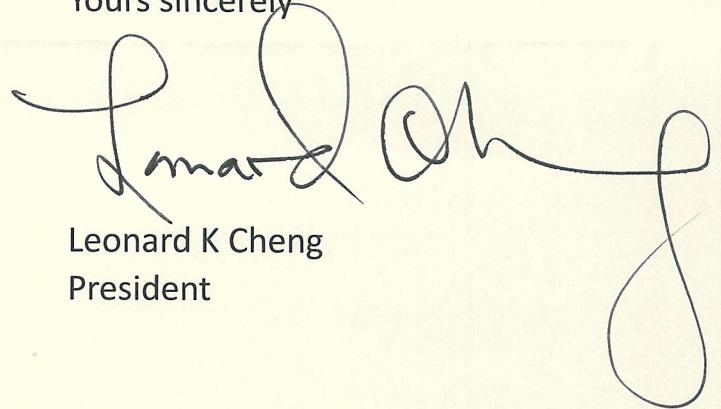
We believe that this kind of self-regulation, with adequate transparency and operating under the existing regulatory framework, not only facilitates the sector to develop in a healthy manner but also allows flexibility needed to react to changing community and demographic needs more proactively. Taking CCLU and LIFE as examples, the two units, in response to public concerns over employability of sub-degree graduates, conducted comprehensive programme reviews on all sub-degree programmes, set up a new learning experiences unit and organized their first own career exposition, all in 2014. All these were proactive initiatives which have benefited the students and the community as a whole. Over-governance would otherwise not allow these good initiatives to be kicked off in a timely manner.

It is the view of Lingnan University that to advocate better quality management of the self-financing sub-degree sector, the Education Bureau should provide a platform and resources that allow providers to deliver quality academic programmes. After all, sub-degree programmes are an alternative learning

route to young learners. Revenues generated from the operation are channeled back to enhancing education quality in both the self-financing and the UGC sectors.

I hope the above provides a good summary of views of Lingnan University on the issues. Should you have any queries, please feel free to contact me.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Leonard K Cheng', written in a cursive style. The signature is positioned to the right of the printed name and title.

Leonard K Cheng
President