

CENTENNIAL COLLEGE

Submission to Legislative Council's Panel on Education

(Meeting on 7 February, 2015)

The College has considered the Legco documents “Enhancing the Transparency and Quality of the Self-financing Post-secondary Sector” (LC Paper No. CB(4)117/14-15(03)), “Updated background brief on issues related to the governance and regulation of the self-financing post-secondary education sector” (LC Paper No. CB(4)116/14-15(04)), and “Consultancy report on Local and International Good Practices in the Governance and Quality Assurance of the Self-financing Post-secondary Education Sector” and has the following general remarks.

Transparency and Public Understanding

The call for common data collection from self-financing institutions will enhance public appreciation of the status and performance of these institutions. However, such appreciation cannot be attained unless there is corresponding public education and understanding about these indicators. For that matter, the same consideration might be given to data on UGC-funded institutions.

Quality Assurance

The College agrees that a benchmarked quality assurance mechanism should be applied consistently to educational institutions – be they are in the self-financing or UGC-funded sector – in order to provide guarantee of academic standards. However, the Government's continuous belief in segregation of QA bodies does not argue for consistency and uniformity in standard preservation. Indeed, the references in the consultancy report reveal only too clearly the importance of single “national” QA bodies. There should be a balance between consistent and uniform application of academic standards and appropriate and fit-for-purpose application of these standards to different types of institutions.

Governance and Regulation

Local universities are governed and regulated by specific and individual ordinances. The application of Education Ordinance cap. 320 as a single legal instrument to regulate institutional activities is not fit-for-purpose and, perhaps, antiquated. The more effective and focused approach is to legislate on self-financing education provision.

Consultancy Report

The report is informative and most of the contents would be familiar to academic quality assurance professionals.