

**SCAD Foundation (Hong Kong) Limited  
Remarks for the Legislative Council Panel on Education  
February 2015**

In recent years, the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government has made significant efforts to develop Hong Kong as a regional education hub, with the intention of boosting Hong Kong's competitiveness and internationalizing its higher education sector. For this reason, Savannah College of Art and Design (SCAD) chose Hong Kong as an ideal satellite location—an East-meets-West opportunity for students to pursue undergraduate and graduate studies in an international setting. SCAD Hong Kong is currently the only locally-accredited, self-financing university in Hong Kong exclusively dedicated to higher education in art and design. The university is uniquely positioned not only to attract non-local students to Hong Kong, but also to expose local students to cross-cultural education and retain these talents in the creative industries of Asia Pacific.

**I. SCAD Hong Kong Supports the Implementation of a Single Quality Assurance Body, and Uniform Application of Policies and Resources for Hong Kong that Create a Level Playing Field for All Locally-accredited Post-secondary Programs**

SCAD Hong Kong endorses the implementation of a single quality assurance body, and uniform policies and access to resources that create a level playing field for all of Hong Kong's locally-accredited post-secondary programs regardless of local or non-local classifications. This quality assurance body should apply its same strict standards to local and non-local programs alike, ensuring the successful achievement of student learning outcomes and university missions.

**II. Hong Kong's Current Quality Assurance System Results in Separate and Unequal Treatment of Locally-accredited Non-local Post-secondary Programs to the Detriment of Local Students and Hong Kong's Ability to Become a Regional Education Hub**

Hong Kong's current quality assurance system continually discriminates against locally-accredited non-local post-secondary programs, resulting in separate and unequal treatment to the detriment of local students and Hong Kong's efforts to become a regional education hub. For example, the *Technical Refinements of Measures in relation to Hong Kong's Development as a Regional Hub* restricts the ability of non-local students enrolled full-time in locally-accredited non-local programs to work on campus through part-time "work study" programs.<sup>1</sup> No such on-campus employment restriction is placed on non-local students enrolled full-time in locally-accredited local programs.

SCAD Hong Kong is concerned that the exclusion of non-local students in work-study programs will adversely impact local students' access to important student services such as peer tutoring for English-language proficiency. These peer tutor positions are almost entirely filled by native English speakers, most of whom are non-local students. But since non-local students are prohibited from working part-time as peer tutors, the pool of eligible candidates for this important support service will be very limited; and local students, who encompass 51.9 percent of SCAD Hong Kong's total enrollment,<sup>2</sup> will be disproportionately affected.

In addition, the *Technical Refinements* prohibits non-local graduates from participating in the Immigration Arrangement for Non-local Graduates (IANG) that allows graduates to stay in Hong Kong without securing an offer of employment. It should be noted that non-local students include those of Mainland China as well as those of all other countries. Yet locally-accredited non-local post-secondary programs are barred from recruiting and accepting students from the Mainland. These kinds of restrictions will cause foreign students seeking undergraduate or graduate degrees to lose interest in enrolling in Hong Kong's locally-accredited non-local programs. Furthermore, those who do

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<sup>1</sup> In contrast to the on-campus employment restrictions imposed by the *Technical Refinements*, SCAD's locations in the United States and France allow non-local students with appropriate student visas, including students from Hong Kong, to take up part-time on-campus employment.

<sup>2</sup> All figures cited in this position paper are as reported to the Development Bureau in SCAD Hong Kong's Annual Report for the period 1 July 2013-30 June 2014, unless otherwise noted in a specific footnote.

matriculate will not be able to contribute to the Hong Kong economy upon graduation because of immigration constraints.

### **III. A Single Quality Assurance Body for Hong Kong Should Accord Equal Treatment to Locally-accredited Non-local Post-secondary Programs in All Material Aspects**

Any contemplated single quality assurance body for Hong Kong should ensure that its policies and regulations accord equal treatment to all locally-accredited post-secondary programs in all material aspects, and particularly concerning (1) their ability to recruit and admit qualified students regardless of the students' home country (including Mainland China), (2) the forms of government resources and financial assistance available to the programs and their students, and (3) the immigration and employment rights and privileges of the programs' students and graduates. As shown in the *Technical Refinements*, Hong Kong's current quality assurance system discriminates against locally-accredited non-local programs of higher learning on these three important issues despite evidence that locally-accredited non-local programs' commitment and contributions to the establishment of Hong Kong as a regional education hub are commensurate with those of locally-accredited local post-secondary programs.

For proof, consider the examples below of SCAD Hong Kong's compliance with local quality assurance standards, enrollment of and financial support for local students, employment of local residents, investments in revitalizing local facilities, and support for local businesses as well as its benefits for local residents.

#### ***Compliance with Local Quality Assurance Standards***

Since opening in 2010, SCAD Hong Kong has consistently met and exceeded the stringent quality assurance standards of the Hong Kong Education Bureau (EDB) and the Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications (HKCAAVQ). Each of SCAD Hong Kong's 21 courses of study are approved by the EDB, accredited by the HKCAAVQ, and recognized at Levels 5 or 6 on the Hong Kong Qualifications Framework.

#### ***Enrollment of and Financial Support for Local Students***

SCAD Hong Kong is committed to providing local students with excellent education opportunities, as demonstrated by its enrollment of 339 local undergraduate and post-graduate students, who collectively comprise 51.9 percent of SCAD Hong Kong's total enrollment. SCAD Hong Kong's commitment to local students is further demonstrated by the significant financial support that SCAD Hong Kong provides to them, with 77.3 percent of local students receiving HK\$13,771,115 in scholarships and institutional aid directly from SCAD Hong Kong.

#### ***Employment of Local Residents***

SCAD Hong Kong employs 129 local residents as academic and non-academic staff. Together, local academic and non-academic staff members comprise 99 percent of all SCAD Hong Kong employees, attesting to SCAD Hong Kong's commitment to providing local residents with high quality jobs.

#### ***Investment in Revitalizing Local Facilities***

SCAD Hong Kong has invested HK\$82 million to revitalize the former North Kowloon Magistracy Building (NKMB)<sup>3</sup> and to transform it into an inspired learning environment for local and non-local students of art and design. Furthermore, SCAD has done so without accepting any of the available government funds to assist with the costs of revitalization. The university's presence in Sham Shui Po has not only restored an important part of Hong Kong's architectural heritage, but also endowed local residents with a nexus for cultural enrichment and exchange.

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<sup>3</sup> As calculated by SCAD U.S.' office of accounting in conjunction with SCAD Hong Kong.

### **Support for Local Businesses**

For the fiscal year ending 30 June 2014, SCAD Hong Kong paid HK\$42.8 million, or 72.1 percent of all of its operating and capital expenses, to 209 local vendors, demonstrating SCAD Hong Kong's support for local businesses.<sup>4</sup>

### **Benefits for Local Residents**

SCAD Hong Kong enriches the lives of local residents through cultural programming and community service to diverse groups within Hong Kong. In just the past year, more than 10,000 participants attended nearly 50 SCAD Hong Kong events, such as public art exhibitions and lectures, academic and student life activities, off-site visits, and group tours of NKMB. This January, SCAD Hong Kong's hosted its first Fashion Showcase, which drew from the Hong Kong community more than 360 society members, fashion industry professionals, educators, and media representatives. SCAD Hong Kong students and faculty have also collaborated with Asia Society Hong Kong and Music for Community to develop the production *Finding Alice* to inspire an appreciation of classical music and the arts in local underprivileged children, which served roughly 300 Hong Kong residents.

### **CONCLUSION**

SCAD Hong Kong has consistently complied with and exceeded all applicable local quality assurance standards, enrolls and provides financial support to an ever-growing number of local students, employs a workforce that is 99 percent local, has invested HK\$82 million in revitalizing local facilities, directly contributes HK\$42.8 million to local businesses and enriches the daily lives of local residents. Yet, over and over, SCAD Hong Kong has been discriminated against and denied the rights and privileges bestowed upon locally-accredited local post-secondary programs because of its classification as a locally-accredited non-local post-secondary program and without regard to evidence that, in all material aspects, SCAD Hong Kong operates as a de facto local program, accredited by a local quality assurance body. A single quality assurance system for Hong Kong should end this inequitable treatment and accord equal rights and privileges to all locally-accredited post-secondary programs that meet its quality assurance standards, regardless of their local or non-local origins.

#### **IV. A Single Quality Assurance Body that Creates a Level Playing Field for All Locally-accredited Post-secondary programs is necessary for Hong Kong to Maintain a Competitive Edge in the Global Marketplace**

SCAD Hong Kong strongly supports Hong Kong's efforts to become a regional education hub that attracts and nurtures the talents required for Hong Kong to maintain a competitive edge in the global marketplace. Hong Kong's implementation of a single quality assurance body for all post-secondary programs is a positive step toward this goal. If Hong Kong's potential as an education hub is to be realized, however, the Legislative Council should begin by repealing and replacing any policies and regulations that unfairly favor locally-accredited local post-secondary programs over locally-accredited non-local post-secondary programs. Such inequitable treatment, as exemplified by the recent *Technical Refinements*, works only to discourage current and potential non-local programs from investing in the continued advancement and internationalization of Hong Kong's post-secondary education sector.

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<sup>4</sup> As calculated by SCAD U.S.' office of accounting in conjunction with SCAD Hong Kong.