

(Translation)

Council meeting of 24 March 2021

**Hon Elizabeth QUAT's motion on
"Thoroughly reforming the subject of Liberal Studies"**

Motion as amended by Dr Hon Priscilla LEUNG and Hon KWOK Wai-keung

That the subject of Liberal Studies ('LS') is one of the four core subjects under the New Senior Secondary curriculum implemented since 2009 and also a compulsory study and examination subject required of senior secondary students; yet, after years of implementing the LS subject in Hong Kong, morbid changes have taken place in areas such as its curriculum contents, assessment criteria and methods, teaching materials, teachers' qualifications and teaching viewpoints, which not only have deviated from the original intent of introducing the LS subject, but have even produced some opposite effects; at present, many senior secondary students have been deeply influenced by the morbid changes in the LS subject, and the subject curriculum has occupied so much of students' study time that their learning progress in other subjects have been affected, resulting in the complete loss of trust in the LS subject among quite a number of parents; despite the strong community demand for a thorough reform of the LS subject, the report recently presented by the Task Force on Review of School Curriculum has failed to respond to community concerns, and the overly conservative recommendations put forth by the Task Force have also fallen short of the community expectations; in this connection, with a view to enabling the new generation to cultivate proper values and the ability of critical thinking and to become youngsters with a sense of social responsibility, this Council urges the Government to thoroughly reform the LS subject; the relevant proposals include:

- (1) removing the LS subject as a core subject and abolishing it as a compulsory study and must-pass examination subject required of senior secondary students, and ceasing to use attainment of level 2 or above in the LS subject in the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education Examination as the minimum entrance requirement for subsidized undergraduate programmes;
- (2) substantially amending its curriculum arrangements by reducing its coverage and lesson time, and placing more emphasis on teaching mature topics with a factual basis, so as to eliminate the recurrence of LS subject teachers promoting biased and radical political advocacy by discussing social incidents which are still developing; and strengthening

the part on National Education, so as to strengthen students' sense of national identity; also, to facilitate the teaching of the LS subject, the authorities should provide schools with additional support for implementing more diversified teaching methods and activities, including increasing the opportunities for students to go to the Mainland and overseas for exchanges and learning;

- (3) compiling a recommended textbook list for the LS subject, including the textbooks in the existing textbook review mechanism, studying the feasibility of having the Government publish textbooks on the LS subject, and setting up a database on the LS subject with the requirement that schools must upload their school-based materials and lessons plans (including worksheets and examination questions) onto the database for monitoring by the Education Bureau and the public;
- (4) reviewing the training programmes for prospective LS subject teachers and the Professional Development Programmes for serving LS subject teachers, including increasing the number of training sessions for the learning of professional conduct; and the Education Bureau organizing regular Mainland visits and exchange activities for teachers to enable them to understand the developments of the country, so as to ensure that the subject knowledge and the teaching standards of both prospective and serving teachers of the LS subject are in line with the original intent of introducing the subject;
- (5) enhancing the self-evaluation, internal quality assurance and accountability mechanism for school managements and improving the existing system of teacher registration and mechanism for complaints against teachers, so as to guarantee the school-based quality of the LS subject and the effective handling of complaints involving LS subject teachers;
- (6) establishing with the Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority a system for closer cooperation and supervision to ensure fairness and impartiality in various aspects such as examination paper setting, moderation and assessment, so as to bring the assessment of the LS subject in line with the original intent of introducing the subject; and
- (7) helping the LS subject teachers affected by the removal of the LS subject as a core subject switch to teach other subjects.