

**For discussion  
on 6 November 2020**

## **Legislative Council Panel on Education**

### **The Government's Follow-up Actions on the Recommendations of the Task Force on Promotion of Vocational and Professional Education and Training**

#### **Purpose**

This paper briefs Members on the Government's follow-up actions on the recommendations of the Task Force on Promotion of Vocational and Professional Education and Training (VPET) (the Task Force) in its review report.

#### **Background**

2. The Task Force submitted its review report<sup>1</sup> to the Government on 23 January 2020. The executive summary of the report is enclosed at **Annex 1**. In its paper submitted to this Panel for the meeting on 3 July 2020 (LC Paper No. CB(4)764/19-20(01)), the Education Bureau (EDB) reported on the recommendations put forward by the Task Force.

#### **Key Observations and Recommendations of the Task Force**

3. The Task Force reaffirms VPET's integral role in Hong Kong's education system to equip students with work skills for the future. Nevertheless, it acknowledges that the major challenge for promoting VPET in Hong Kong is to change the public's perception of VPET as an inferior choice relative to academic articulation pathways, as many do not appreciate the diverse career opportunities available through VPET. As such, the Task Force

---

<sup>1</sup> The full report is available at [https://www.edb.gov.hk/attachment/en/edu-system/other-education-training/vocational-other-edu-program/VPET\\_TF\\_Report\\_2019\\_e.pdf](https://www.edb.gov.hk/attachment/en/edu-system/other-education-training/vocational-other-edu-program/VPET_TF_Report_2019_e.pdf).

considers that the VPET pathways should be expanded and enriched to offer more programmes with greater flexibility as well as an emphasis on application and industry input, while underpinned by a robust qualifications system, with a view to attracting more young people to pursue VPET as a preferred choice. Details of the Task Force's key recommendations are set out in the following paragraphs.

***(a) Promotion of VPET in Secondary Education***

4. The Task Force sees secondary education as a crucial starting point to nurture young people's interest in VPET, and considers that the promotion of VPET in secondary education can be enhanced through the existing platforms, namely the Business-School Partnership Programme (BSPP) and Applied Learning (ApL). The Task Force recommends that the Government foster wider industry collaboration to improve the overall quality of VPET-related activities provided to secondary students under the BSPP through strengthening coordination and formulating an incentive mechanism for industry partners. Moreover, more of these programmes should be provided to junior secondary students, parents, and teachers to broaden their exposure to VPET.

5. Acknowledging the significant role played by teachers and parents in informing students' choices of further education pathways, the Task Force recommends that external advisory service be provided for teachers and career masters under a pilot scheme. Through the scheme, one-stop professional services on a wide array of issues pertaining to VPET can be offered, including on-demand consultation service, an online teachers' kit, professional development workshops, on-site VPET activities for students, and consolidation of related online resources, etc. Parent-teacher associations (PTAs) and federations of PTAs (FPTAs) should also be encouraged to organise more VPET promotion activities.

6. As part of the senior secondary curriculum, the Task Force recommends that the Government continue promoting VPET through ApL by strengthening the engagement of industry partners, enhancing workplace experience through extension programmes, and piloting the development of

VPET learning pathways starting with ApL courses and providing clear articulation pathways with reference to the “CLAP-TECH” model<sup>2</sup>.

7. Separately, the Task Force considers that the school-based approach in developing vocational training courses could better cater for the unique situation and needs of each school and its students. The Task Force recommends that the Government strengthen support to facilitate more secondary schools in developing vocational training courses recognised under the Qualifications Framework (QF).

***(b) Promotion of VPET in Higher Education***

8. At the post-secondary level, the Task Force considers that the value and positioning of VPET should be reiterated, providing a clearly defined and differentiated VPET pathway from the academic route, while upholding their parity in terms of both quality and recognition. In view of the support for further developing applied degrees in Hong Kong, the Task Force makes reference to a study on the international experience of implementing vocational degrees/applied degrees conducted by the Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications (HKCAAVQ). Noting the implementation of applied degrees in other jurisdictions and the key features of applied degrees, the Task Force observes that the structure, mode of teaching and learning, and admission criteria of the vocationally-oriented degree programmes in Hong Kong are basically the same as those of other academically-focused programmes. It recommends that the Government explore ways to facilitate the development of applied degrees at the Bachelor’s degree level, by ensuring that the qualification systems and other infrastructure can accommodate the future development of applied degrees with the following distinctive features: a qualifications level at QF Level 5; flexible admission requirements; an applied focus and substantial work-based learning element in the curriculum; and strong industry involvement and recognition.

9. Furthermore, the Task Force recognises that the Higher Diploma

---

<sup>2</sup> The “CLAP-TECH” initiative is funded by the Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust and operated in partnership with five secondary schools, the School of Continuing Education of the Hong Kong Baptist University and leading corporates, with a view to developing a five-year VPET learning pathway beginning with an ApL course followed by an industry-recognised Higher Diploma programme.

(HD) serves as a key VPET pathway at the sub-degree level. To reinforce its role, the Task Force supports the Government's plan to conduct a holistic review of sub-degree education to better differentiate the HD from the Associate Degree qualification. It recommends that the review on the HD qualification should cover its positioning in the higher education system; possible enhancements to the programme structure and curriculum; modes of teaching and learning; admission requirements; a mechanism for industry involvement; articulation to the proposed applied degrees; and recognition as an exit qualification.

10. The Task Force notes that apprenticeship training can offer authentic training of work-ready skills in a real-life setting and the Training and Support Scheme (TSS) implemented by the Vocational Training Council (VTC) provides a solid foundation for furthering efforts in this aspect. Hence, the Task Force recommends that the Government conduct a comprehensive review on the TSS to explore different options of enhancing the scheme, including increasing incentive to employers, strengthening its dual-track learning mode, and enhancing its workplace learning and assessment (WLA). At the same time, the Task Force recommends that other post-secondary institutions, particularly the self-financing sector, be better encouraged and supported to incorporate WLA into their VPET programmes through close partnership with industries.

### ***(c) Development of Vocational Progression Pathways***

11. Outside the formal education system, the Task Force sees merit in establishing flexible vocational progression pathways for in-service practitioners in close partnership with industries. For career advancement, they can acquire skill-based vocational qualifications duly recognised under the QF through an appropriate combination of vocational training at schools, workplace assessment, or in-service training. The Task Force also reaffirms the QF's role in supporting VPET development and recommends that the Government encourage more stakeholders to adopt the QF.

12. To encourage working adults to pursue higher VPET qualifications, the Task Force understands the importance of offering greater flexibility for

VPET learners in terms of the learning mode. Therefore, the Task Force recommends that the Government consider expanding the Pilot Subsidy Scheme for Students of Professional Part-time Programmes to include students pursuing a wider range of programmes.

***(d) Future Promotion of VPET***

13. Lastly, the Task Force considers that the aforementioned enhancements measures for VPET should be well complemented by strengthened publicity efforts to raise public awareness and understanding of the value of VPET. The Task Force recommends that the Government formulate a coherent message in the publicity of VPET that highlights its association with work skills for the future, diversity and prospect, with a view to appealing to the younger generation. The Task Force also recommends that the Government adopt a more innovative, targeted and coordinated approach to promote VPET, including establishing a steering committee to oversee the overall VPET promotion strategy. The support for VPET bodies organising and participating in large-scale VPET events should also be continued.

**The Government's Follow-up Actions**

14. The Government welcomes the in-depth review conducted by the Task Force and has generally accepted the recommendations. The Government's follow-up actions are as follows –

***Promotion of VPET in Secondary Education***

- (a) We agree that secondary school teachers should be better supported when providing career guidance to students on VPET pathways so as to enable the latter to make informed choices in accordance with their orientations, abilities, and interests, as many have not had personal experience of the VPET pathways. Thus, we will launch a pilot scheme to engage an external consultant for offering one-stop professional services on VPET for teachers of a selected number of secondary schools in the 2020/21 academic year (AY), with a view

to testing out its operational mode and effectiveness.

- (b) We agree that ApL is one of the key channels to provide students with an early exposure to VPET and more vocationally-related elements could be integrated into VPET-related ApL courses. We will liaise with course providers to make the engagement of industry partners a necessary condition in the development of VPET-related ApL courses as far as possible. Also, starting from the 2020/21AY, the ApL extension programmes currently targeted at Secondary 6 students will be opened up to Secondary 5 students as well to provide more opportunities and flexibility for interested students to participate. Separately, the Task Force on Review of School Curriculum submitted its review report to the Government on 22 September 2020<sup>3</sup>, and the Government is studying the report carefully and considering the views from different walks of life so as to undertake follow-up work prudently.
- (c) We agree that parents also play an important role in promoting VPET to young people. Starting from 2020/21AY, we have enhanced parent education on VPET. The organisation of VPET promotion activities has been highlighted as an example of activities to be covered under the Home-School Co-operation Grants for the 2020/21AY. We will also continue to encourage PTAs and FPTAs to organise more VPET promotion activities at the school and/or district level.

### ***Promotion of VPET in Higher Education***

- (d) We agree that the value and positioning of VPET in higher education should be reiterated to promote the parallel development of the

---

<sup>3</sup> The [recommendations](#) on ApL courses formulated by the Task Force on Review of School Curriculum include offering ApL as early as at Secondary 4; relaxing the funding eligibility for students who want to take ApL as the 4<sup>th</sup> elective subject; encouraging more post-secondary institutions to offer short-term taster programmes at the junior secondary level; providing a wider range of ApL courses to suit students of different abilities, interests and career aspirations; and encouraging tertiary institutions to give due recognition to students' achievements in ApL when considering them for admission to relevant programmes of study.

VPET and academic route. As the development of applied degrees is a complicated issue and should be handled in a cautious and gradual manner, we will launch a pilot project in close liaison with relevant stakeholders to explore the practical details involved in the development of these programmes with distinctive features in selected VPET disciplines. We plan to commence the pilot project in late 2020. At the same time, we will, together with the HKCAAVQ, jointly consider how the current higher education system can be modified to facilitate the development of these programmes in the future.

- (e) We agree that collaboration with industries should be deepened to enhance the quality and diversity of VPET programmes. In this connection, we will commence later this year a comprehensive review on the HD qualification to reinforce its role as a key VPET pathway at the sub-degree level. We have also invited the VTC to conduct a review on the TSS with a view to strengthening apprenticeship training and implementation of WLA.

### ***Future Promotion of VPET***

- (f) We agree that improving overall coordination of the VPET promotion strategy would be conducive to effectively raising public awareness on the subject. Hence, the Steering Committee on Promotion of VPET and QF was set up on 1 September 2020 to oversee the overall VPET promotion strategy, strengthen coordination, and foster closer industry partnership. The Steering Committee has also taken over the role of the former Steering Committee on QF Fund to give a steer on the means to better utilise the QF as a tool to promote VPET. We will also strengthen promotion of VPET through a more innovative approach to appeal to students and young adults.

15. A summary of the EDB's response to the Task Force's recommendations is at **Annex 2**.

## **Advice Sought**

16. Members are invited to note the contents of this paper.

**Education Bureau  
October 2020**

**Review Report of the Task Force on Promotion of  
Vocational and Professional Education and Training**

**Executive Summary and List of Recommendations**

The Task Force on Promotion of Vocational and Professional Education and Training (VPET) (the Task Force) was established in April 2018 to review and consider enhancements to the promotion of VPET in Hong Kong with a more targeted approach.

2. The Task Force has taken into account the views of the relevant stakeholders from the industries, professional bodies, industry academies, post-secondary institutions, secondary schools, teachers, parents, and students through focus groups, consultation sessions, and written submissions. It has also made reference to the experiences of other economies and the international experiences of implementing applied degrees.

3. The Task Force recognises that the major challenge for promoting VPET in Hong Kong is to change the public's perception of VPET as an inferior choice relative to academic articulation pathways as the public fails to appreciate the diverse career opportunities available through VPET. The Task Force notes that overseas economies generally adopt a three-pronged strategy to promote VPET, namely strengthening the relevance of programmes, establishing quality articulation pathways, and raising the public awareness.

4. The Task Force reaffirms VPET's integral role in Hong Kong's education system, especially amid the rapidly evolving macro-environment in which innovation and technology changes the manpower requirements. The Task Force believes that VPET is well-poised to equip students with the work skills for the future workplace that will be increasingly technology-augmented. Therefore, the Government should work closely with VPET institutions and the industries to strengthen and diversify VPET articulation pathways that could cater for the sustainable development of the economy and attract young people to pursue VPET as

a preferred choice.

5. The Task Force sees secondary education as a crucial stage where young people are taught to value skills and VPET. The Task Force observes that VPET is embedded within the secondary education curriculum in various forms, including Life Planning Education, Applied Learning (ApL), and Other Learning Experiences. The Task Force sees merit in stepping up collaboration with industry partners and support for teachers and parents on the basis of these existing platforms so that students are given early exposure to and guidance on the multiple career opportunities available through VPET. In particular, ApL courses and school-based vocational training courses should be enhanced to provide a quality option for students to begin pursuing VPET.

6. The Task Force considers that at the post-secondary level, it is of utmost importance to establish meaningful VPET articulation pathways up to the degree level, with a view to fulfilling students' aspirations and ensuring parity between VPET and academic routes. The Task Force has given much thought to the idea of introducing applied degrees with a primary orientation towards practical skills, and considers that the higher education system should be suitably adapted to facilitate the development of these programmes with reference to international practices. Moreover, the Task Force acknowledges that the Higher Diploma (HD) plays a key role in the VPET pathway as either a standalone qualification or a stepping stone for further articulation. It warrants a timely review so that it can better serve such a purpose. Apprenticeship training is another aspect of VPET that has been widely promoted worldwide as it offers authentic training of work-ready skills in a real-life setting. The Task Force considers it necessary to step up the work-based learning elements of VPET programmes and integrate them into the core curriculum.

7. The Task Force considers that apart from the formal education system, there is a need to build flexible vocational progression pathways for in-service practitioners. For career advancement, they can attain skill-based qualifications based on their industry experience and part-time training that are underpinned by a robust qualifications framework. Hence, the Task Force recommends reinforcing the role of the Qualifications Framework (QF) in promoting VPET.

8. Lastly, to project a clear message to the public about these recommended measures, the Task Force considers it necessary to better coordinate the VPET publicity efforts under a unified theme that brings out the distinctive benefits of VPET. Apart from association with work skills for the future, VPET should be publicised with an emphasis on its diverse opportunities to appeal to the interests of young people nowadays. More innovative and interactive methods should be adopted, and more large-scale VPET events organised.

9. The Task Force's recommendations (a total of 18) focus on four areas, namely enhancing promotion in secondary education, enhancing promotion in higher education, developing vocational progression pathways, and strengthening future promotion. The Task Force firmly believes that the recommendations, if implemented, will go a long way towards strengthening the VPET ecosystem in Hong Kong and contributing to our sustainable development.

### **List of Recommendations**

1. Facing the challenges in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the education system needs to nurture **applied skills** to integrate different knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes. **The VPET pathways should be expanded and enriched** to offer more programmes with greater flexibility as well as an emphasis on application and industry input, while underpinned by a robust qualifications system, with a view to enabling young people to acquire professional work skills, applied knowledge in innovation and technology, as well as critical soft skills for career progression in the new digital age.

#### *Promotion of VPET in Secondary Education*

2. To **improve the overall quality of VPET programmes and activities** in secondary schools through the existing platforms, including the Business-School-Partnership Programme, by strengthening coordination, fostering wider industry collaboration, and formulating an incentive mechanism for industry partners.

3. To **encourage more industry partners to provide VPET-related activities for junior secondary students and involve more teachers and parents** in these activities through the existing platforms.
4. To **provide external advisory service on VPET for teachers and career masters** of secondary schools under a pilot scheme to offer one-stop professional service for teachers on a wide array of issues pertaining to VPET, including on-demand consultation service, an online teachers' kit, professional development workshops, on-site VPET activities for students, and consolidation of related online resources.
5. To **encourage parent-teacher associations (PTAs) and federations of PTAs (FPTAs) to organise more VPET promotion activities** at the school and/or district level, making good use of the increased funding for parent education programmes or activities which is available to PTAs and FPTAs, starting from the 2019/20 school year.
6. To continue the Government's efforts to **promote VPET through ApL, by strengthening the engagement of industrial partners, enhancing workplace experience, and piloting the development of VPET learning pathways** starting with ApL courses and providing articulation opportunities to HD and top-up degree programmes.
7. To **strengthen support for secondary schools to develop school-based vocational training courses** recognised under the QF by offering sharing sessions, advice, and facilitation in the accreditation process.

*Promotion of VPET in Higher Education*

8. To **reiterate the value and positioning of VPET in higher education**, and provide a clearly defined and differentiated VPET pathway from the academic route while upholding their parity in terms of both quality and recognition.
9. To explore ways to facilitate the development of applied degrees at the Bachelor's degree level, by ensuring that the **qualifications**

**systems and other infrastructure can accommodate** the future development of applied degrees which are characterised by the following features: a qualifications level at QF Level 5; flexible admission requirements; an applied focus and substantial work-based learning element in the curriculum; and strong industry involvement and recognition. A pilot project could be implemented for selected VPET programme areas to test the modifications required to better support the development of applied degrees.

10. As part of the sub-degree review, to **conduct a comprehensive review on the HD qualification**, with a view to reinforcing its role as a key VPET pathway at the post-secondary level. The review should cover the positioning of HD in the higher education system; possible enhancements to the programme structure and curriculum; modes of teaching and learning; admission requirements; a mechanism for industry involvement; articulation to the proposed applied degrees; and recognition as an exit qualification.
11. To **conduct a comprehensive review on the Training and Support Scheme** implemented by the Vocational Training Council (VTC) (also known as the VTC Earn and Learn Scheme) **to enhance apprenticeship training**, including increasing incentives for employers, strengthening its dual-track learning mode, and enhancing its workplace learning and assessment.
12. To **formulate more robust policies to encourage, coordinate, support, and facilitate the post-secondary education sector**, including the self-financing post-secondary institutions, **to incorporate work-based learning and assessment in their VPET programmes** at both the sub-degree and degree levels through close partnership with industries, including considering **extending the Pilot Incentive Scheme to Employers to include institutions** other than the VTC.

#### *Development of Vocational Progression Pathways*

13. To **explore the development of a vocational route whereby professional skill-based vocational qualifications can be acquired**

**flexibly** through an appropriate combination of vocational training at schools, workplace assessment, or in-service training, and duly recognised under the QF in close partnership with the industries. As a start, the Government should explore with relevant industries, regulatory and professional bodies, and training institutions how to develop professional pathways in selected industries.

14. To **reaffirm the QF's role in supporting VPET development by encouraging more stakeholders, including Government departments and industry partners, to adopt the QF.**
15. To **consider expanding the Pilot Subsidy Scheme for Students of Professional Part-time Programmes** to include students pursuing a wider range of dedicated part-time programmes, with a view to encouraging working adults to pursue higher VPET qualifications.

#### *Future Promotion of VPET*

16. To **formulate a coherent message in the publicity of VPET in order to highlight VPET's association with work skills for the future.** The message should be able to convey the diversity and prospects of VPET as well as its appeal to the younger generation.
17. To **adopt a more innovative, targeted, and coordinated approach in the publicity on VPET** with a view to raising the public awareness, including **establishing a standing steering committee to oversee the overall VPET promotion strategy**, promoting success stories of past VPET students, enhancing the transparency of VPET-related statistics and articulation opportunities, and continuing to conduct tracking surveys on key stakeholders' attitudes towards VPET in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the Government's initiatives in promoting VPET.
18. To continue supporting the VTC and other VPET bodies **organising and participating in large-scale VPET events on a regular basis**, including the VPET International Conference and WorldSkills Hong Kong Competition and Carnival in 2020, to raise the public awareness and understanding of the significance of professional skills.

**The Government’s Follow-up Actions on the Recommendations of the Task Force on Promotion of Vocational and Professional Education and Training**

**The Education Bureau’s Response to Recommendations**

Recommendation	Way Forward
<p>1. Facing the challenges in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the education system needs to nurture <b>applied skills</b> to integrate different knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes. <b>The Vocational and Professional Education and Training (VPET) pathways should be expanded and enriched</b> to offer more programmes with greater flexibility as well as an emphasis on application and industry input, while underpinned by a robust qualifications system, with a view to enabling young people to acquire professional work skills, applied knowledge in innovation and technology, as well as critical soft skills for career progression in the new digital age.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Education Bureau (EDB) agrees with the need to reaffirm VPET’s integral role in Hong Kong’s education system to equip students with work skills for the future. This will be the backbone of the future direction of VPET.</li> </ul>
<p><i>(a) Promotion of VPET in Secondary Education</i></p>	
<p>2. To <b>improve the overall quality of VPET programmes and activities</b> in secondary schools through the existing platforms, including the Business-School-Partnership Programme, by strengthening coordination, fostering wider industry collaboration, and formulating an incentive mechanism for industry partners.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>EDB set up the Steering Committee on Promotion of VPET and Qualifications Framework (QF) (Steering Committee) on 1 September 2020 to oversee the overall VPET promotion strategy, strengthen coordination, and foster closer industry partnership. The Steering Committee has also taken over the role of the former Steering Committee on QF Fund to give a steer on the means to better utilise the QF as a tool to promote VPET.</li> </ul>
<p>3. To <b>encourage more industry partners to provide VPET-</b></p>	

Recommendation	Way Forward
<p><b>related activities for junior secondary students and involve more teachers and parents</b> in these activities through the existing platforms.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In consultation with the Steering Committee, EDB will continue to explore ways to enhance VPET programmes and activities in secondary schools, including engaging wider industry collaboration, expanding the opportunities for junior secondary students, parents, and teachers to participate in these activities, etc.</li> </ul>
<p>4. To <b>provide external advisory service on VPET for teachers and career masters</b> of secondary schools under a pilot scheme to offer one-stop professional service for teachers on a wide array of issues pertaining to VPET, including on-demand consultation service, an online teachers' kit, professional development workshops, on-site VPET activities for students, and consolidation of related online resources.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>EDB agrees that secondary school teachers and career masters, who might not have personal experience of VPET pathways, should be better supported when providing career guidance to students on VPET pathways so as to enable the latter to make informed choices in accordance with their orientations, abilities, and interests. EDB will launch a pilot scheme to engage an external consultant for offering one-stop professional services on VPET for teachers of a selected number of secondary schools in the 2020/21 academic year (AY), with a view to testing out its operational mode and effectiveness.</li> </ul>
<p>5. To <b>encourage parent-teacher associations (PTAs) and federations of PTAs (FPTAs) to organise more VPET promotion activities</b> at the school and/or district level, making good use of the increased funding for parent education programmes or activities which is available to PTAs and FPTAs, starting from the 2019/20 school year.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Starting from the 2020/21AY, EDB has enhanced parent education on VPET. The organisation of VPET promotion activities has been highlighted as an example of activities to be covered under the Home-School Co-operation Grants for the 2020/21AY.</li> <li>EDB will also continue to encourage PTAs and FPTAs to organise more VPET promotion activities at the school and/or district level.</li> </ul>

Recommendation	Way Forward
<p>6. To continue the Government's efforts to <b>promote VPET through Applied Learning (ApL)</b>, by <b>strengthening the engagement of industrial partners, enhancing workplace experience, and piloting the development of VPET learning pathways</b> starting with ApL courses and providing articulation opportunities to Higher Diploma (HD) and top-up degree programmes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EDB agrees that ApL is one of the key channels to provide students with an early exposure to VPET and more vocationally-related elements could be integrated in to VPET-related ApL courses.</li> <li>• EDB will liaise with course providers to make the engagement of industry partners a necessary condition in the development of VPET-related ApL courses as far as possible. Starting from the 2020/21AY, course providers will be asked to provide details regarding the engagement of industry partners in the course provision exercise.</li> <li>• Starting from the 2020/21AY, EDB will open up ApL extension programmes, currently targeted at Secondary 6 students, to Secondary 5 students as well, to provide more opportunities and flexibility for interested students to participate.</li> <li>• In the long term, EDB will explore the development of more ApL courses with clearer VPET learning pathways and articulation opportunities.</li> </ul>
<p>7. To <b>strengthen support for secondary schools to develop school-based vocational training courses</b> recognised under the QF by offering sharing sessions, advice, and facilitation in the accreditation process.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EDB, through the QF Secretariat, will step up support for schools to develop more school-based vocational training courses that better cater for the unique situation and needs of each school and its students.</li> </ul>

Recommendation	Way Forward
<i>(b) Promotion of VPET in Higher Education</i>	
<p>8. <b>To reiterate the value and positioning of VPET in higher education</b>, and provide a clearly defined and differentiated VPET pathway from the academic route while upholding their parity in terms of both quality and recognition.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EDB agrees that the value and positioning of VPET in higher education should be reiterated to support the parallel development of the VPET and academic education pathways. To this end, EDB will work closely with stakeholders to step up the promotion of VPET.</li> </ul>
<p>9. To explore ways to facilitate the development of applied degrees at the Bachelor's degree level, by ensuring that the <b>qualifications systems and other infrastructure can accommodate</b> the future development of applied degrees.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EDB agrees that the development of applied degrees should be carefully studied with a view to encouraging more young people to pursue VPET. As the concept of applied degrees is rather new to Hong Kong and this is a complicated issue that affects the higher education system as a whole, it should be handled in a cautious and gradual manner.</li> <li>• EDB will launch a pilot project in close liaison with relevant stakeholders to explore the practical details involved in the development of these programmes with distinctive features in selected VPET disciplines. The pilot project is planned to commence in late 2020. At the same time, EDB will, together with the Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications, jointly consider how the current higher education system can accommodate the development of these programmes in the future.</li> </ul>
<p>10. As part of the sub-degree review, to <b>conduct a comprehensive review on the HD qualification</b>, with a view to reinforcing its role as a key VPET pathway at the post-secondary level.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EDB agrees that the HD qualification should be enhanced and reaffirmed as a key VPET pathway at the sub-degree level, and plans to commence a review of sub-degree education in late 2020.</li> </ul>

Recommendation	Way Forward
<p>11. To <b>conduct a comprehensive review on the Training and Support Scheme (TSS)</b> implemented by the Vocational Training Council (VTC) (also known as the VTC Earn and Learn Scheme) <b>to enhance apprenticeship training</b>, including increasing incentives for employers, strengthening its dual-track learning mode, and enhancing its workplace learning and assessment (WLA).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EDB agrees that the collaboration with industries should be deepened to enhance the quality and diversity of VPET programmes at the post-secondary level.</li> <li>• EDB has invited the VTC to conduct a review on the TSS with a view to strengthening apprenticeship training and implementation of WLA.</li> </ul>
<p>12. To <b>formulate more robust policies to encourage, coordinate, support, and facilitate the post-secondary education sector</b>, including the self-financing post-secondary institutions, <b>to incorporate work-based learning and assessment in their VPET programmes</b> at both the sub-degree and degree levels through close partnership with industries, including considering <b>extending the Pilot Incentive Scheme to Employers to include institutions</b> other than the VTC.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EDB will consider measures to encourage and support the post-secondary education sector to incorporate WLA in their VPET programmes.</li> </ul>
<p><i>(c) Development of Vocational Progression Pathways</i></p>	
<p>13. To <b>explore the development of a vocational route whereby professional skill-based vocational qualifications can be acquired flexibly</b> through an appropriate combination of vocational training at schools, workplace assessment, or in-service training, and duly recognised under the QF in close partnership with the industries.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EDB agrees with the need to explore the development of more vocational routes, so as to enable a more flexible acquisition of professional skill-based vocational qualifications through workplace experience and continuing education.</li> <li>• In collaboration with relevant stakeholders, EDB will explore the development of QF-recognised professional progression pathways in selected industries.</li> </ul>
<p>14. To <b>reaffirm the QF’s role in supporting VPET development by encouraging more stakeholders, including Government departments and industry partners, to adopt the QF.</b></p>	

Recommendation	Way Forward
<p>15. To <b>consider expanding the Pilot Subsidy Scheme for Students of Professional Part-time Programmes</b> to include students pursuing a wider range of dedicated part-time programmes, with a view to encouraging working adults to pursue higher VPET qualifications.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In consultation with the Steering Committee, EDB and the QF Secretariat will step up the promotion and wider adoption of the QF.</li> <li>• EDB will review the Pilot Subsidy Scheme for Students of Professional Part-time Programmes operated by the VTC and evaluate the merits and cost-effectiveness of the scheme in considering the way forward.</li> </ul>
<p><i>(d) Future Promotion of VPET</i></p>	
<p>16. To <b>formulate a coherent message in the publicity of VPET in order to highlight VPET’s association with work skills for the future.</b> The message should be able to convey the diversity and prospects of VPET as well as its appeal to the younger generation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As mentioned in item 1, EDB set up the Steering Committee on 1 September 2020 to oversee the overall VPET promotion strategy, strengthen coordination, and foster closer industry partnership.</li> <li>• EDB will strengthen promotion of VPET through a more innovative approach to appeal to students and young adults. An online publicity campaign under the theme of “My Superpower” was launched in June 2020.</li> </ul>
<p>17. To <b>adopt a more innovative, targeted, and coordinated approach in the publicity on VPET</b> with a view to raising the public awareness, including <b>establishing a standing steering committee to oversee the overall VPET promotion strategy</b>, promoting success stories of past VPET students, enhancing the transparency of VPET-related statistics and articulation opportunities, and continuing to conduct tracking surveys on key stakeholders’ attitudes towards VPET in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the Government’s initiatives in promoting VPET.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EDB will continue to conduct regular tracking surveys on key stakeholders’ attitudes towards VPET.</li> </ul>

Recommendation	Way Forward
<p>18. To continue supporting the VTC and other VPET bodies <b>organising and participating in large-scale VPET events on a regular basis</b> to raise the public awareness and understanding of the significance of professional skills.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EDB will continue to support the VTC and other VPET bodies to organise and participate in large-scale VPET events, such as the WorldSkills Competition.</li> <li>• EDB and the VTC co-organised the first online VPET International Conference on 15 May 2020.</li> </ul>