

VOCATIONAL TRAINING COUNCIL

AN ACADEMIC SYSTEM FOR THE EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT OF YOUNG PEOPLE

Preamble

In Hong Kong young people receive education as a matter of course up to and including secondary 3. Low achievers generally leave school after secondary 3. Those successful at the secondary 3 stage continue their education until at least secondary 5, at which stage those with above average passes in the HKCEE can continue to secondary 6 and 7, and beyond.

2. This paper mainly addresses the opportunities available for secondary 3 and 5 school-leavers who leave the school system. It also comments on education and training opportunities for the unemployed.

Courses for employment and further education

3. Secondary 3 school-leavers who do not obtain employment should have the opportunity to study on vocational courses. At present, one of the major providers is the VTC which provides craft courses which have been designed to develop basic skills suitable for employment and, in addition, develop the students academic ability to be comparable with a modest achievement at secondary 5. Hence, success on these courses provides them with the entry requirements to pursue further studies, such as the VTC's foundation courses. The latter further enhance their employable skills and academic ability, and can enable them to follow further studies.

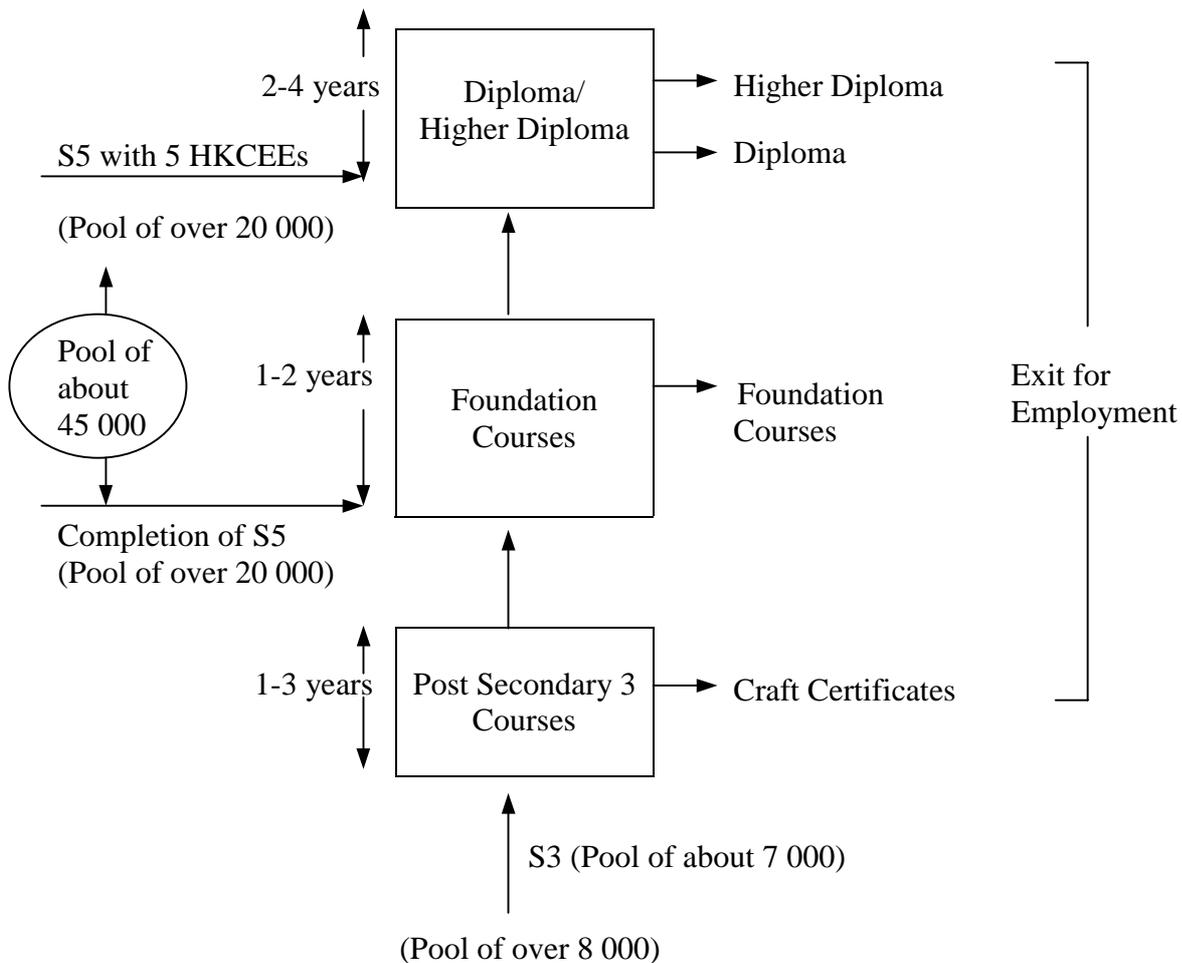
Course features and a progression route

4. The key features of the VTC system are that they provide a means and a route whereby young people can be made employable and so that they can have an opportunity to achieve further qualifications to meet their aspirations and potential.

5. The nature of the product is such that the curriculum of courses must be both relevant to employment and the academic system. Consequently, the employer's dual requirements of trade specific and generic vocational skills (such as language, IT and mathematics) are built into the course, together with the development of basic academic skills.

6. Another key feature, necessarily, has to be social and employer recognition of the products and awards. Crucial to this, for the post-secondary 3 and 5 courses is Government support and recognition for employment.

7. The diagram below shows a simplified progression route through a vocational education programme from secondary 3 to sub-degree level. The Appendix shows the current system operated by the VTC.



Courses for the unemployed and the potential for expansion

8. The Employees Retraining Board (ERB) provides courses for the unemployed of all ages to improve their employable skills. In addition to catering for secondary 3 and 5 school-leavers, the VTC accepts mature students, whether employed, or unemployed on any of its courses according to their experiential and educational attainment.

9. The numbers on mainstream VTC craft and foundation courses this year and proposed for next year are shown below

	Student Numbers	
	1999/2000	2000/2001
Craft courses	2 556	4 000
Foundation Diploma	2 180	3 000

While the VTC is planning to increase numbers on these courses the places offered represent around 50% and 15% of the pool available. The VTC and other providers given the necessary resources could expand the provision significantly.

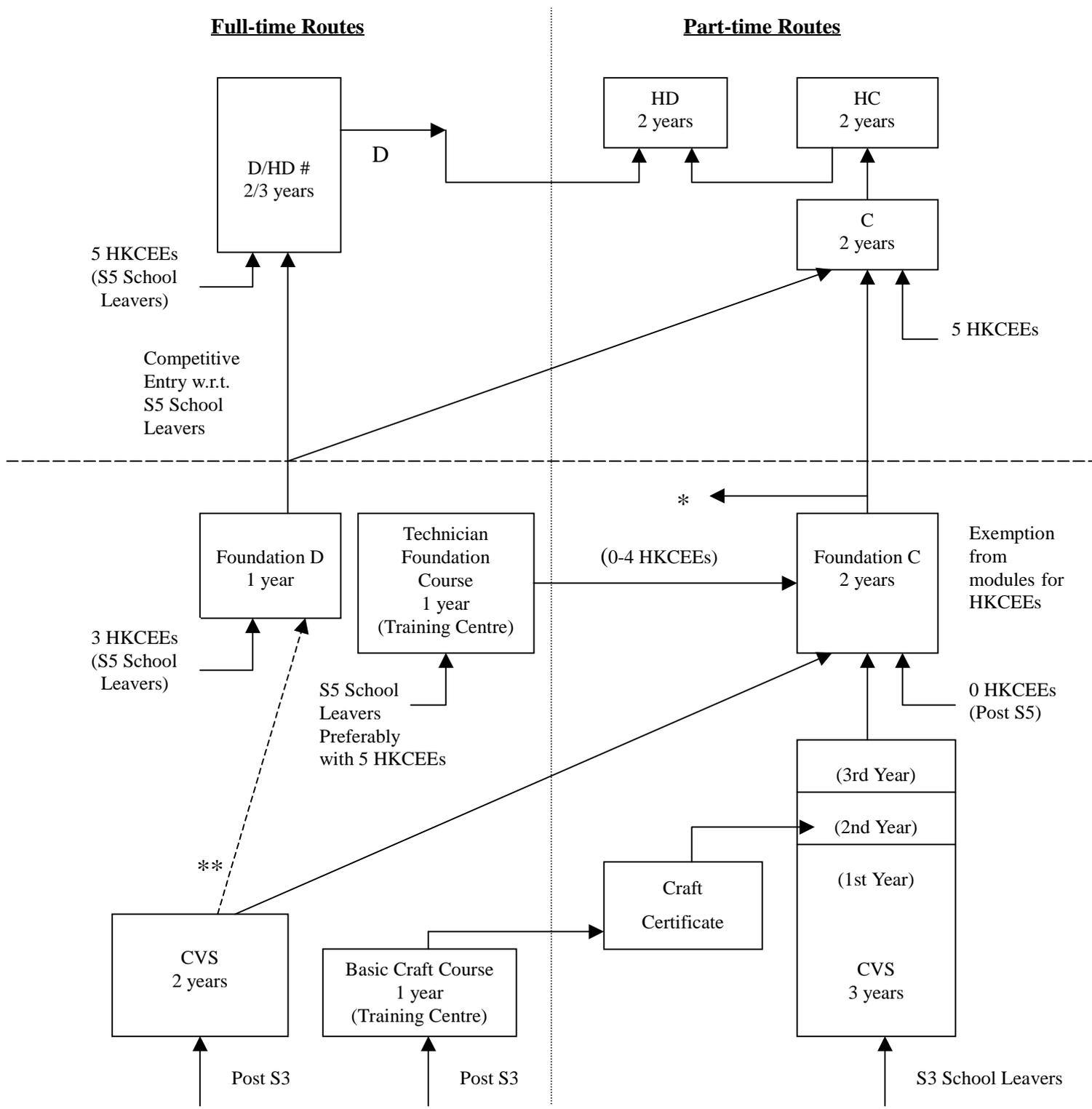
Those with primary 6 education

10. There is still a pool of adults over 40 years of age who have only attained primary 6 education. Many of them are vulnerable in the employment sector, and once becoming unemployed it is important for them to enhance their employability. It is suggested that providing more resources to retrain this group would be both a social and economic investment for Hong Kong.

IVE COURSES

Full-time Routes

Part-time Routes



* Exceptional students may be able to compete for places on the D/HD.

** Exceptional students may be able to gain entry to the Foundation D.

There are also some stand-alone Diplomas and Higher Diplomas.

HD=Higher Diploma

HC=Higher Certificate

D=Diploma

C=Certificate

CVS=Certificate in Vocational Studies