

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL BRIEF

**CHANGE OF TITLE OF
HONG KONG SHUE YAN COLLEGE**

INTRODUCTION

At the meeting of the Executive Council on 19 December 2006, the Council ADVISED and the Chief Executive ORDERED that Hong Kong Shue Yan College (HKSYC)'s application to change its English and Chinese titles to "Hong Kong Shue Yan University" and "香港樹仁大學" be approved.

JUSTIFICATION

Policy on private university

2. In the report entitled Education Blueprint for the 21st Century published in September 2000, the Education Commission recommended, among other things, that the Government should encourage existing private post-secondary colleges to upgrade to universities upon appropriate accreditation. The development of private universities would provide a channel for all sectors of the society to contribute resources and efforts to higher education for the benefit of students.

3. The Administration has endorsed this recommendation. Under the existing policy, the Government will, in processing an application for university title, consider the merits of each case and take into account various relevant factors. The following three criteria are particularly relevant in considering whether private post-secondary colleges may be upgraded to private universities-

- (a) it has been authorized to award a range of degrees in different disciplines;
- (b) it has acquired self-accrediting status; and

- (c) it has set up sound internal governance and quality assurance (QA) structures.

HKSYC's Fulfillment of the Three Criteria

(a) Degree-awarding Power

4. Since the 2001/02 academic year, HKSYC has been offering a total of ten four-year honours degree programmes, all of which have been approved by the Chief Executive in Council as required under Post Secondary Colleges Ordinance (Cap. 320) (PSCO). Details of the programmes are set out at Annex. These programmes have all been accredited by the Hong Kong Council for Academic Accreditation (HKCAA).

(b) Self-accrediting Status

5. HKSYC has invited HKCAA to conduct three Discipline Reviews (DRs) of its Arts, Social Sciences, and Commerce programmes to determine whether it is ready for Programme Area Accreditation (PAA) Status in specific areas and at specific levels. A PAA status is equivalent to self-accrediting status, but is limited in scope, duration and subject to periodic review. All degree programmes currently offered by HKSYC fall within the three disciplines concerned.

6. Having regard to HKSYC's capability in self-monitoring the planning, delivery and review of courses to meet the stipulated outcome quality, HKCAA concluded that HKSYC has sufficient experience and expertise in offering programmes in the three disciplines concerned and approved it for PAA status in these disciplines. The PAA status will be subject to external review at five-yearly intervals.

(c) Internal Governance and Quality Assurance Structure

7. HKCAA has undertaken an Institutional Review to assess whether HKSYC has the appropriate academic and institutional structures in place befitting the status of a university. The Panel of HKCAA was generally satisfied that HKSYC has the fundamental ability

to meet the standards expected of a university, both in terms of internal governance and QA structure. Specifically, as stipulated under the PSCO, the management powers of the College/University will be vested in three bodies, namely the Board of Governors, the Council, and the Academic Board.

(i) Board of Governors

The Board of Governors is the supreme governing body of HKSYC. It consists of 20 members nominated by the Board and registered with the Permanent Secretary for Education and Manpower (PSEM) under PSCO. The focus of the Board is one of oversight, trusteeship and overall direction. The Board will remain the supreme governing body of the University upon upgrading.

(ii) Council

The Council will be the executive body of the University and serve as the point of focus for strategic planning and reviewing progress of the University. The University Council will comprise 13-15 members nominated by the Board and registered with PSEM.

(iii) Academic Board

The Academic Board is the supreme academic body of the College, which regulates the academic affairs and advises on academic development of the College. It is also responsible for QA matters including programme validations and reviews.

8. Taking into account the unique nature of a small private university, the Administration considers the internal governance and QA structures as set out above acceptable and is satisfied that HKSYC has fulfilled the criteria for upgrading into a private university.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE PROPOSAL

9. The proposal is in conformity with the Basic Law, including provisions concerning human rights. It has no civil service, economic, productivity, environmental or sustainability implications.

10. Except for refund of rates and government rents, HKSYC currently does not receive recurrent subvention from the Government. This will remain the case after the proposed change in title.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

11. To assess the readiness of HKSYC to upgrade to a university status, HKCAA has undertaken an Institutional Review of HKSYC. HKCAA advised that the College has established an overall appropriate academic environment which merits the granting of university status.

PUBLICITY

12. A press release will be issued and a spokesman will be available to answer media enquiries. HKSYC will also arrange its own publicity.

ENQUIRIES

13. Enquiries on this subject can be directed to Miss Charmaine Lee, Principal Assistant Secretary for Education and Manpower at telephone number 3540 7468.

Education and Manpower Bureau

19 December 2006

Degree Programmes offered by HKSYC

HKSYC has been offering the following ten honours degree programmes (the year in which the award of degree was approved by Chief Executive in Council)-

- Bachelor of Commerce (Hons) in Accounting (2001)
- Bachelor of Arts (Hons) in Chinese Language & Literature (2001)
- Bachelor of Arts (Hons) in Journalism and Mass Communication (2001)
- Bachelor of Social Work (Hons) (2002)
- Bachelor of Business Administration (Hons) (2003)
- Bachelor of Social Science (Hons) in Counselling and Psychology (2004)
- Bachelor of Arts (Hons) in Economics (2004)
- Bachelor of Social science (Hons) in Sociology (2005)
- Bachelor of Arts (Hons) in English (2005)
- Bachelor of Arts (Hons) in History (2005)