

LegCo Panel of Education 22/3/07

Mr Chairman and members of the LegCo Panel of Education

Thank you for your concern and interest in the retitling of HKIEd to a university and allowing me the opportunity to address you all. Some of my points may repeat what has been said by Council, staff and student representatives here today. I shall try to be succinct and brief.

My understanding of the past has been that University title has been granted on the basis of three criteria:

- ◆ Acceptance of the principles and terms of role differentiation as defined by UGC
- ◆ Acceptance and implementation of a common basis of funding as applied to other UGC-funded universities
- ◆ Attainment of self-accrediting status.

Moreover university title has been conferred quite quickly after the attainment of self-accrediting status, even in the most recent cases.

Based upon these criteria, HKIEd clearly satisfies the requirements. Let me, however, remind members of the evidence HKIEd has regarding its quality and self-accrediting status.

- 1) The UGC's Teaching, Learning Quality Process Review (TLQPR) of 2002 examined the quality of teaching and learning and associated quality assurance processes in all UGC funded institutions. The Institute received a very positive report which included comments such as "The Panel was favourably impressed..." and "HKIEd has now reached a point of maturity where internal quality assurance and improvement processes are operating at a level that provides confidence in the quality of its programmes and graduates".
- 2) The UGC conducted an Institutional Review in 2003 and conferred self-accrediting status on the Institute in 2004. It may be worth reminding honorable members that this review was multi-dimensional and included: Institutional Structure and Governance; Resource Management and Administration; Academic Planning and Development; Academic Quality Assurance; Academic Staff and Students. All of these dimensions were factored into the decision to granted self-accrediting status. The Panel Report concluded that the Institute had reached a level of maturity to be self-accrediting. It also noted that the Institute was strongly led in respect of

quality.

- 3) In 2004 the UGC conducted the Performance-related Funding Scheme to examine institutional performance against role and mission. This review, again, was multi-dimensional and included Strategic Planning, Teaching, Learning and Student Achievement, Scholarship, Partnerships, Community Involvement, Administration and Whole person Development. The UGC concluded that it “is satisfied that HKIEd has demonstrated sufficient adherence to role, and effective performance in role to be deemed to have ‘earned back’ the 10% of recurrent funding requirements...”
- 4) Since gaining self-accrediting status, the Institute has continued to pursue a quality agenda. For example, all academic units and programmes are periodically reviewed by external panels comprising internationally recognized scholars. Reviews conducted to date have reconfirmed the high quality of the Institute’s academic operations at the departmental as well as programme levels. Such processes are consistent with internationally benchmarked practice.
- 5) An integral part of the Institute’s quality assurance processes is feedback from employers. Each year graduates are tracked and principals rate the performance of the graduates. Consistently, principals rate graduates as more than meeting job requirements. The graduates are praised for their initiative, enthusiasm, willingness to learn and sense of responsibility, areas that principals also see as the most important attributes of teachers. In addition, principals rate HKIEd graduates from HKIEd as better than graduates from other teacher education providers.
- 6) An independent study conducted by City University in late 2005 of primary and early childhood principals clearly showed HKIEd graduates as ranking top or second in Hong Kong. Moreover, principals expressed a clear preference for employing HKIEd graduates over graduates from other institutions.

The major point arising from the above is that over the last four to five years, many areas of the Institute’s work (governance and administration, quality and standards of programmes, range of programmes, quality of leadership and management, financial position, sustainability etc) have been thoroughly examined by external parties, including those established by UGC. The test of quality across these dimensions clearly demonstrates that the Institute more than satisfies these requirements. The Institute has a clearly defined role and mission to which it adheres. It is funded as a

university by the UGC. It is self-accrediting. It operates as a university and its graduates are in many cases seen as better than those from other institutions. **The evidence demonstrates that it is a university without a university title.**

Let me turn to public and community benefits. What will be the benefit of HKIED's university title to Hong Kong? Let me highlight several.

- 1) Perhaps most importantly, the teaching profession will be properly recognized in the community, attracting quality and committed graduates. *All* teachers will be graduates of universities.
- 2) The government's aspiration to establishment Hong Kong as a well-recognized education hub will benefit from HKIED's retitling. With a university title, the Institute could contribute significantly to the recruitment of quality students from the Mainland and overseas. Moreover it could play a distinctive role in teacher education in the region and develop strategic alliances with other universities on the Mainland and overseas.
- 3) The Institute's capacity to attract additional funds will be enhanced. Many potential donors only "donate" to universities.
- 4) As a university, the Institute will be in a more advantageous position to attract and retain quality academic and administrative staff who can further contribute to the Hong Kong community.
- 5) As a university, the Institute's capacity to attract research funding to support applied research in Hong Kong will be enhanced. Such research can then feed back into policy development designed to enhance education in Hong Kong.

There are many other benefits to Hong Kong but time does not allow me to explore these further.

My final comment relates to the criteria for university title. I began with the criteria accepted in the past: role differentiation, common UGC funding and self-accrediting status. HKIED meets those criteria. However, the criteria established for the retitling of HKIED are substantially different from those generally applying and one has to ask the question as to why this is. On this point I draw members' attention to paragraph 6 of the tabled EMB March 2007 document *LC paper No. CB(2)1333/06-07(03)* which

includes “etc” among the criteria for considering applications.

Thank you.

Professor Phillip J. Moore

22nd March, 2007