

**The Administration's response to
item 9 of the "list of follow-up actions (as at 22.3.2007)" of
the LegCo Panel on Education
on retitling of the Hong Kong Institute of Education as a university**

Under the existing policy, in considering applications from any institution for retitling as a university, the Government will consider the merits of each case, the blueprint for future development and take into account various relevant factors including the objectives of establishing the university; the quality and standard of the institution's academic and research programmes; the range of programmes; the effectiveness of its teaching and learning; the institution's internal governance structure; the quality of leadership of its management; the financial position of the institution; its sustainability; and the public interest, etc. Consideration is also given to the prevailing international trend for the development of comprehensive universities which offer a range of degree programmes in various disciplines. These factors have been quoted in our replies to LegCo Question No. 8 on 7/12/2005 and to LegCo Question No. 6 on 7/2/2007, extracts of which are as follows.

**Reply to LegCo Question No. 8 by Hon Cheung Man Kwong on
7-12-2005 (Extract)**

Self-accreditation and university title are two separate issues. An institution awarded self-accrediting status is not automatically granted the title of a university. At present, the Government will consider the merits of each case and take into account other relevant factors in processing each and every application. In general, the Government will consider a number of factors including the objective of establishing the university; the quality and standard of its academic programmes; the effectiveness of teaching and learning at the institution; its academic research and development; the institution's internal governance and the leadership of its management; the financial situation of the institution; its sustainability; and the public interest, etc.

The prevailing trend internationally is for the development of comprehensive universities. There are quite a number of outstanding higher education institutions around the world which have the power to confer degrees and higher qualifications, but are not titled "university".

As explained above, the Administration will take into account a number of factors in considering whether the university title should be granted to an institution, including the institution's internal governance structure and governing ordinance; and whether the programmes being offered by the institution have the attributes of a university under Hong Kong's education system, and the public interest, etc. In the past, applications for titular change were submitted by institutions. The Education and Manpower Bureau, UGC, HKCAA¹ and the institutions maintain close contact with each other and will discuss the necessary administrative and legislative procedures involved in handling applications for titular change, if so required.

Reply to LegCo Question No. 6 by Dr the Hon Yeung Sum on 7-2-2007
(Extract)

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 including the objectives of establishing the university; the quality and standard of the institution's academic and research programmes; the effectiveness of its teaching and learning; the institution's internal governance structure; the quality of leadership of its management; the financial position of the institution; its sustainability; and the public interest, etc.

Consideration is also given to the prevailing international trend for the development of comprehensive universities which offer a range of degree programmes in various disciplines. If monotechnic institutions can acquire a university title, will the schools within other universities, such as the law schools or medical schools, be encouraged to become independent universities? Is such a development suitable for Hong Kong? You may wish to think about this, or you may wish to hear what others say.

¹ UGC and HKCAA stand for the University Grants Committee and the Hong Kong Council for Academic Accreditation respectively.

According to the Encyclopaedia Britannica, a university is an "institution of higher education, usually comprising a liberal arts and sciences college and graduate and professional schools that confer degrees in various fields", which means that universities, by nature and design, should not be monotechinic.

Education Bureau
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