

立法會
Legislative Council

LC Paper No. CB(2)1455/08-09
(The minutes have been seen by
the Administration)

Ref : CB2/PL/ED

Panel on Education

Minutes of meeting
held on Thursday, 16 April 2009, at 4:30 pm
in Conference Room A of the Legislative Council Building

- Members present** : Hon Cyd HO Sau-lan (Chairman)
Dr Hon Priscilla LEUNG Mei-fun (Deputy Chairman)
Hon LEE Cheuk-yan
Hon CHEUNG Man-kwong
Hon TAM Yiu-chung, GBS, JP
Hon Abraham SHEK Lai-him, SBS, JP
Hon Audrey EU Yuet-mee, SC, JP
Hon Andrew LEUNG Kwan-yuen, SBS, JP
Prof Hon Patrick LAU Sau-shing, SBS, JP
Hon Starry LEE Wai-king
Hon Tanya CHAN
Hon WONG Sing-chi
Hon WONG Yuk-man
Hon Mrs Regina IP LAU Suk-yee, GBS, JP
Dr Hon Samson TAM Wai-ho, JP
- Members absent** : Hon LEUNG Yiu-chung
Hon Tommy CHEUNG Yu-yan, SBS, JP
- Public Officers attending** : Agenda item IV
Mr Kenneth CHEN, JP
Under Secretary for Education

Ms Amy WONG
Principal Assistant Secretary (Higher Education)

Mrs Dorothy MA CHOW Pui-fun
Deputy Secretary-General (1), University Grants
Committee

Agenda item V

Mr Kenneth CHEN, JP
Under Secretary for Education

Ms Mable CHAN
Deputy Secretary for Education (2)

Mr Raymond SY
Principal Assistant Secretary (Infrastructure &
Research Support)

Agenda item VI

Mr Kenneth CHEN, JP
Under Secretary for Education

Mr Michael WONG Wai-lun, JP
Deputy Secretary for Education (1)

Mrs Betty IP
Deputy Secretary for Education (3)

Ms Amy WONG
Principal Assistant Secretary (Higher Education)

**Attendance by
invitation** : Agenda item IV

City University of Hong Kong

Professor Paul LAM Kwan-sing
Vice-President (Student Affairs)

Dr Ellen KO LAW Yin-lan
Vice-President (Finance and Administration)

Mr WONG Ka-yu
Director of Facilities Management

Mr CHAN Tsz-kin
Associate Director of Facilities Management

Agenda item VI

University Grants Committee

Mr Michael V Stone
Secretary-General

The Hong Kong Institute of Education

Mr PANG Yiu-kai
Council Chairman – Designate

Professor Anthony CHEUNG Bing-leung
President

Professor LEE Wing-on
Vice-President (Academic) and Deputy to the President

The Hong Kong Institute of Education Students' Union

Miss Yen LEUNG Wing-yan
President

Mr Cornelius HUI Sai-chiu
External Vice President

Academic Staff Association, The Hong Kong Institute of Education

Dr LEUNG Yan-wing
President

Dr WONG Ping-ho
Vice-President

Clerk in attendance : Miss Odelia LEUNG
Chief Council Secretary (2)6

Staff in attendance : Mr Stanley MA
Senior Council Secretary (2)8

Ms Judy TING
Council Secretary (2)3

Miss Jenny LEE
Legislative Assistant (2)6 (Acting)

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I. Confirmation of minutes

[LC Paper No. CB(2)1278/08-09]

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 March 2009 were confirmed.

II. Information paper(s) issued since the last meeting

2. Members noted the submission from the Concern Group for Hong Kong Science Education on the subject of Biology under the new senior secondary curriculum [LC Paper No. CB(2)1299/08-09(01)].

3. Mrs Regina IP shared the views of the Concern Group and considered it necessary for the Administration to provide a written response to the submission. Members agreed.

III. Items for discussion at the next meeting

[Appendices I and II to LC Paper No. CB(2)1277/08-09]

4. Members noted the Administration's proposal to discuss the following items at the next regular meeting scheduled for 11 May 2009 at 4:30 pm -

- (a) capital works projects of the University Grants Committee (UGC)-funded institutions;
- (b) start-up loan for post-secondary education providers, including the University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong College of Technology and Chu Hai College of Higher Education; and
- (c) progress of the Working Group on Development of Textbooks and E-learning Resources.

5. The Chairman was concerned about the recent media reports on price increases of school textbooks for the new senior secondary curriculum. She suggested that this issue be discussed under the agenda item of paragraph 4(c). Members agreed, and raised no objection to the other discussion items proposed by the Administration.

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IV. Capital works project of the University Grants Committee-funded institutions – The student hostel (phase 4) of City University of Hong Kong

[LC Paper Nos. CB(2)1277/08-09(01), CB(2)1336/08-09(01) and CB(2)1005/08-09(06)]

6. Members noted the updated background brief entitled "Provision of hostels for tertiary students" prepared by the Legislative Council (LegCo) Secretariat.

Powerpoint presentation by the City University of Hong Kong (CityU)

7. Professor Paul LAM Kwan-sing, Vice-President (Student Affairs) of CityU, made a powerpoint presentation to explain the capital works project for CityU to construct its phase 4 student hostels (comprising Hall 10 and Hall 11) within its campus in Kowloon Tong (the Project). Members noted the powerpoint presentation materials which had been provided by CityU to the Panel before the meeting.

Design of the Project

8. Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong noted that CityU had a shortfall of about 1 928 hostel places and the completion of the Project would reduce the shortfall to about 1 228 places. He asked how the Administration would resolve the problem.

9. Under Secretary for Education (USED) responded that given the increase in the quota for non-local students and the implementation of four-year undergraduate programmes, all UGC-funded institutions had a shortfall of hostel places and had been adopting different measures to mitigate the problem. In collaboration with the UGC and the institutions concerned, the Administration was planning the construction of two joint hostels in Tseung Kwan O and Ma On Shan respectively to address the shortfall, and would continue to identify suitable sites for the construction of additional hostels for the UGC sector. USED added that the shortfall of hostels for individual institutions varied over time.

10. Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong said that the proposed two joint hostels in Tseung Kwan O and Ma On Shan were far away from the CityU campus and were not convenient for its students. He asked whether the Administration would explore the feasibility of converting vacant Government premises in the vicinity of CityU such as the vacated Police quarters in Cheung Sha Wan into student hostels.

11. USED replied that the Education Bureau (EDB) did not have information on the intended use of the vacated Police quarters in Cheung Sha Wan. He

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assured members that the Administration would continue to discuss with CityU to identify suitable sites for the construction of new hostels to reduce the shortfall.

12. Professor Paul LAM Kwan-sing supplemented that it would be ideal if student hostels were near the campus. However, CityU was aware of the lack of suitable sites in Kowloon Tong for the construction of student hostels, and was ready to consider sites which might not be in the vicinity of the campus. CityU would continue to discuss with EDB to identify suitable sites for the purpose.

13. The Chairman pointed out that some vacant government quarters in different districts might be suitable for conversion into student hostels for use by the UGC-funded institutions. She suggested that EDB should explore with the Government Property Agency such feasibility. USED noted her suggestion.

14. Ms Audrey EU considered it impractical for Hong Kong to aspire into a regional education hub with a significant shortfall of hostel places for the UGC-funded institutions. She invited CityU to elaborate on the green features, energy saving design and management of waste for the Project for sustainability development.

15. Professor Paul LAM Kwan-sing explained that CityU all along adopted green design in the construction of its hostel blocks. The two connected hostel blocks would have green rooftops; an opening to facilitate ventilation and natural lighting; and energy saving systems to reduce electricity consumption by about 5.6% as compared with the average consumption level of student hostels. Professor LAM added that CityU had adopted waste segregation and recycling arrangements within its campus, and these arrangements would also be applied to the two new hostel blocks.

16. Mr WONG Ka-yu, Director of Facilities Management of CityU, supplemented that the major building services systems including lifts, water pumps, lighting facilities, etc., were designed in compliance with the codes of practice for energy efficiency for residential buildings set by the Electrical and Mechanical Services Department.

17. Ms Audrey EU requested CityU to provide to the Panel written information on the green features, energy saving measures and waste management for the Project before the Public Works Subcommittee (PWSC) meeting. She hoped that the UGC-funded institutions would set good examples of adopting green designs for buildings and facilities in their campuses.

18. The Chairman requested CityU to provide to the Panel the floor plan of the two hostel blocks including their orientation and ventilation before submission of the Project proposal to PWSC for consideration.

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19. Mr TAM Yiu-chung pointed out that there had been concern about the impact of new student hostels of the UGC-funded institutions on residents in the vicinity. He noted from the site plan that the two hostel blocks were within the CityU campus, and such a concern might not arise for the Project. He asked whether no more sites within the campus would be available after the construction of the Project, and whether the site for the two hostel blocks had been fully utilized.
20. Professor Paul LAM Kwan-sing replied in the affirmative. He said that the two proposed hostel blocks had been designed with a maximum plot ratio of 3.19 to provide 700 places.
21. Dr Priscilla LEUNG declared interest as a teaching staff member of CityU. She pointed out that the former Chairman of the Council of CityU, Sir Gordon WU, had repeatedly appealed to staff of CityU to support his idea of using a site near Nam Shan Estate for the development of CityU that would help revitalize the Shek Kip Mei district. She asked whether the Administration and CityU would explore the feasibility of such an idea.
22. Professor Paul LAM Kwan-sing responded that CityU was designing a campus master plan, and Dr Priscilla LEUNG's view would be considered in that context. He added that the site referred to by Dr LEUNG was not located within the CityU campus. USED added that the Administration would explore the permitted use of the land site and would take into account the development need of CityU and the interest of the community.

Conclusion

23. In response to the Chairman's enquiry, members indicated support for the submission of the Project to PWSC for consideration on 6 May 2009.

V. Provision of international school places and boarding facilities for non-local students in international schools and local schools
[LC Paper Nos. CB(2)1277/08-09(02) and (03)]

24. Members noted the background brief entitled "Admission of non-local students below post-secondary level" prepared by the LegCo Secretariat.

Briefing by the Administration

25. USED briefed members on the main points of the Administration's paper entitled "Provision of international school places and boarding facilities for non-local students in international schools and local schools". He supplemented that according to the findings of the annual surveys on international schools conducted by EDB, the average enrolment reached 90%. After taking the

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three-pronged approach in providing assistance to individual international schools to facilitate their development as set out in paragraph 4 of its paper, the Administration believed that the supply of international school places could cope with the demand in the next three to four years.

Supply and demand of international school places

26. Miss Tanya CHAN noted some 3 700 unfilled places in the existing 51 international schools as at September 2008 and the supply of 6 040 additional places after the taking of the three-pronged approach in facilitating the development of international schools in the next three to four years. She pointed out that according to the result of a survey conducted by the Bauhinia Foundation Research Centre, many families in neighboring countries and cities in the Mainland were willing to send their children to attend international schools in Hong Kong. As the Administration expected an increasing demand for international school places with the policy commitment to develop Hong Kong into a regional education hub, she asked whether the Administration would conduct a study to gauge the demand for such places in the years ahead with a view to planning for the supply accordingly.

27. USED responded that as non-local children of families coming to Hong Kong for work or investment and non-local students holding student visas for entry into Hong Kong for studies (collectively referred as "non-local students") came and went for various reasons, there were bound to be some unfilled places in international schools in the course of a school year but at the same time there were waiting lists for admission to such schools. Overall, the supply of international school places was insufficient to meet the increasing demand despite the economic downturn. The Administration had earmarked four greenfield sites for the development of international schools to meet the demand in the medium and long term. USED clarified that under the existing immigration policy, students below post-secondary levels in the Mainland, Taiwan and Macau were not allowed to study in Hong Kong.

28. Miss Tanya CHAN enquired whether the unfilled places in international schools had increased in the past few months and whether the Administration had examined the causes for the turnover.

29. Deputy Secretary for Education (2) (DS(Ed)2) explained that according to the feedback from the international school sector in the annual survey, the overall turnover rate of students in international schools was about 10% in the past few years. International schools which offered different non-local curricula for students from specific countries such as German, French, Singapore or Canada always had a waiting list. She added that international schools offered places at different study levels progressively to meet the articulation issue. The supply of 6 040 additional international school places would be sufficient to accommodate the anticipated demand in the next three to four years.

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30. Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong considered it confusing that while there were some 3 700 unfilled places as at September 2008 and 6 040 additional places in the next three to four years, the Administration had all along said that the supply of international school places was insufficient. With the supply of 10 000 more places, he was concerned whether there was such a large number of non-local students applying for enrolment in international schools in the next few years.

31. USED explained that there was always a time gap between the conduct of the annual survey and the actual enrolment in international schools. Although according to the findings of the annual survey in September 2008, about 3 700 unfilled places existed in international schools, some international schools still had waiting lists for admission. The provision of 6 040 additional places would meet with the increasing demand for international school places in the next few years.

32. Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong pointed out that 50% of the students in international schools could be local students. He considered such a percentage too high as local students would take up the places for non-local students in international schools. He stressed that non-local students should be given the priority in admission to international schools, and the maximum percentage of local students should be adjusted in the light of the demand from non-local students.

33. The Chairman echoed Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong's view, and said that the maximum percentage of local students in international schools should be adjusted in the light of the demand from non-local students.

34. USED clarified that according to the annual surveys, only about 14% of the students in international schools were local students. He added that admission decisions rested with the international schools and they could exercise flexibility in the admission of local students to facilitate cultural exchanges.

35. DS(Ed)2 supplemented that the Administration shared the view of Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong that international schools should target at non-local students in enrolment. In fact, the four vacant or to-be-vacated school premises had been allocated to international schools which targeted at non-local students of specific countries. The 50% was the cap and it did not mean that international schools had to or would allocate half of their places to local students.

36. Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong requested the Administration to provide information on the number and percentage of local and non-local students in each of the 51 international schools. The Administration agreed.

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37. Mr TAM Yiu-chung said that the fact that there were 10% of unfilled places and local students made up 14% of the student body in international

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schools was inconsistent with the general impression that competition for enrolment in international schools was fierce, and successful enrolment often necessitated the purchase of debentures of a substantial amount. He asked whether there were variations among individual international schools on the number of unfilled places. He also sought information on the requirements and regulations relevant to the boarding facilities in international schools, if any.

38. USED explained that the turnover rate in international schools at around 10% was fairly consistent across different districts. The specifications of boarding facilities in international schools such as space requirement, height of ceiling, number of toilets, etc were subject to the relevant provisions of the Education Regulations. The Chairman requested the Administration to provide the relevant information for members' reference.

39. Mrs Regina IP shared the view that international schools should target at non-local students in order to attract expatriates to come to Hong Kong for work or investment. However, international schools in Hong Kong had admitted a large number of local children of wealthy families, the middle class, civil servants and professionals. She pointed out that local students in Singapore could not study in international schools without prior permission from the government. Local Singaporean students could only be admitted to international schools on justifiable grounds, for example returnees from overseas who could not cope with the local curriculum. Such a policy was a driving force to improve the local education system. While not suggesting that the Administration should follow the Singaporean model and acknowledging the need for diversity in education, Mrs IP considered that the Administration should review the existing policy on admission of local students to international schools.

40. In reply, USED pointed out the need for diversity in education. He considered that the choice of local families for international schools for their children should be respected. In the Administration's view, their choice for international schools should not be taken as a reflection of the quality of the local schools or the local education system. The Administration recognized the scarcity of land resources and had therefore endeavoured to balance the need of local schools and the need to attract overseas investors to come to Hong Kong. At the present stage, the Administration had no intention of reviewing the existing admission policy of international schools which were operating on a self-financing basis.

41. Mrs Regina IP remarked that many middle-class families including civil servants and professionals were attracted by the rich English-learning environment in international schools and Direct Subsidy Scheme schools. Their preference for these schools had to a certain extent reflected that the quality of public sector schools did not meet with their expectations. She considered it necessary for the Administration to provide information on the enrolment of local and non-local students in each international school for members' reference.

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42. Dr Priscilla LEUNG expressed objection to using public resources including the provision of land at nominal premium and low-interest loans for international schools which indirectly subsidized local students. In her view, international schools should target at non-local students. Should local students wish to enrol in international schools, they should pay for higher school fees. She asked how the Administration regulated the use of public money by international schools. She pointed out that in general, local students attending local schools had a stronger sense of belonging towards Hong Kong.

43. USED explained that the main purpose of granting land at nominal premium to support the development of a vibrant international school sector was to attract overseas families to come to work or invest in Hong Kong. As Hong Kong was an international city, both local and non-local students should be provided with the opportunities to attend international schools. He clarified that except for the English Schools Foundation schools, the Government did not provide recurrent subvention to international schools. As regards the allocation of the four greenfield sites at nominal premium for the development of international schools, the Administration would provide interest-free loans for the school building projects excluding the boarding portion.

44. Dr Priscilla LEUNG remained of the view that while the choice of local families for international schools should be respected, the provision of such choices should not be at public expenses. The mere grant of land at nominal premium incurred public resources. The Administration should reduce the maximum percentage of local students who could be admitted to international schools.

45. DS(Ed)2 responded that the successful bidders for the allocation of the four greenfield sites would be required to enter into a service agreement with the Administration. The agreement would specify the admission policy of the international schools concerned which should be targeted primarily at non-local students. To facilitate the sustainability of international schools, the agreement would also provide flexibility for the admission of local students when the non-local intake was unsatisfactory. Responding to the Chairman, DS(Ed)2 added that the service agreement would initially be valid for a period of 10 years, and henceforth renewable on a five-year basis subject to satisfactory performance in school operation.

46. Professor Patrick LAU declared interest that he had involved in the design of a number of international schools. He enquired whether local school operators and organizations could apply for the four greenfield sites for the development of international schools. The Chairman added that a subsidiary organization of an overseas government had also submitted an application.

47. DS(Ed)2 explained that the Administration aimed to attract both local or

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overseas operators and organizations which were experienced in the operation of local schools or international schools. In considering the applications, EDB would give weight to the applicants' experience in the operation of international schools. On student enrolment, all successful bidders had to comply with the requirement that the international schools concerned should give priority to non-local students in student intake.

48. Professor Patrick LAU expressed concern about the large amount of debentures purchased by parents whose children attended international schools. He asked whether the Administration would consider extending the repayment period of the interest-free loans to successful bidders of the four greenfield sites so that they might reduce the value of the debentures for enrolment to the international schools concerned.

49. DS(Ed)2 replied that the successful bidders would be required to repay their loans in 10 years. USED supplemented that the repayment period was not necessarily related to the amount of debentures set by the international schools concerned.

50. Mr WONG Yuk-man opined that the fact that a large number of local families of means preferred international schools reflected the failure of the local education system. He considered it high time for the Administration to review the matter. He shared the view of Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong and Mrs Regina IP that the Administration should provide the enrolment statistics in each international school. He requested the Administration to also provide information on the number of civil servants who had been granted local education allowance in support of their children to attend international schools. Mr WONG further said that he did not concur with Dr Priscilla LEUNG's view about the allocation of land resources and the provision of interest-free loans to support the development of the international school sector because the resources involved were not substantial.

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51. USED replied that he did not have the statistics on civil servants who had been receiving local education allowance in support of their children attending international schools. He reiterated that overall about 14% of the students in international schools were local students.

52. Ms Audrey EU said that the percentages of unfilled places might vary among international schools. For instance, international schools targeted at Japanese or Korean children had unfilled places whereas international schools targeted at English or Canadian children were oversubscribed. This explained why members had received complaints from many expatriates in Hong Kong about their children not being able to secure a place in international schools. In her view, local families should have the right to choose international schools for their children. She did not agree with the view that local children attending international schools had lesser sense of belonging to Hong Kong. Nevertheless,

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she considered it necessary for the Administration to review the maximum percentage of enrolment of local students in international schools in the light of the demand from non-local students.

53. USED responded that the international school with boarding facilities to be constructed in Tuen Mun should aim at having at least 50% of the target non-local students. He added that the Administration encouraged the prospective operators of international schools to set a higher percentage of target non-local students and would take this factor into account in assessing their applications.

54. Ms Audrey EU was of the view that the Administration should estimate the demand for international school places and set the minimum percentage of target non-local students for the new international schools to be constructed in the four greenfield sites. The decision should rest with the Administration and not the bidders. Where non-local students did not fully take up the places in individual international schools, she did not object to admitting local students.

55. In response, USED said that based on the annual survey conducted in September 2008, the Administration had projected the demand for international school places in the next three to four years, which could be met by the supply of places to be provided by the new international schools to be built on the four greenfield sites. The Administration had difficulty in projecting the demand for additional places in the long term. DS(Ed)2 supplemented that EDB noted members' views and would consider including additional conditions such as the percentage of enrolment of non-local students in assessing the applications for the four greenfield sites for the development of international schools.

56. The Chairman sought information on the policies implemented by the Administration in attracting overseas families to come to Hong Kong for work and investment and non-local students for study so that the target 50% of non-local students in the new international schools could be met. She also sought information on the major sources of non-local students holding student visas for studies in international schools.

57. USED responded that based on the information provided by the existing international schools and the Invest Hong Kong, the Administration had identified four greenfield sites for the development of international schools to meet with the demand in the next three to four years. Under the prevailing policy, international schools had to enrol at least 50% of non-local students.

58. DS(Ed)2 supplemented that there were some 300 and 700 non-local students holding student visas and studying in international schools in the 2007-2008 and the 2008-2009 school years respectively. They mainly came from the United States, the European countries and some South-East Asian countries. Under the existing policy, persons in the Mainland, Taiwan and

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Macau were not allowed to attend primary and secondary schools in Hong Kong.

Follow-up

59. Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong considered that the Administration should support the development of international schools to meet with the demand in the community. To ensure the provision of places to non-local children of families coming to Hong Kong for work or investment, the Administration should review and reduce the ceiling of 50% of local students in international schools and require international schools to reserve sufficient places for priority allocation to non-local students. He considered the overall figure of 14% of local students in the 51 existing international schools misleading as the percentage of local students in international schools adopting English as the medium of instruction was considerably higher than those adopting other languages as the medium of instruction.

60. Dr Priscilla LEUNG considered it unacceptable that international schools were only required to enrol at least 50% of non-local students, although the overall enrolment of local students in the 51 existing international schools was about 14%. She pointed out that some public sector schools was facing the problem of under-enrolment and their teachers might become surplus and lose their jobs, but the existing admission policy of international schools did not help mitigate the problem. She considered that the Administration should review the policy on the provision of international school places for local and non-local students, having regard to the development of Hong Kong as a regional education hub.

Admin 61. Concluding the discussion, the Chairman requested the Administration to provide a written response to members' views and requests as soon as practicable.

VI Future development of the Hong Kong Institute of Education
[LC Paper Nos. CB(2)1277/08-09(04) and (05)]

62. Members noted the background brief entitled "Retitling of the Hong Kong Institute of Education as a university" prepared by the LegCo Secretariat.

Oral presentation by deputations

63. The Chairman invited the attending deputations to present their views.

The University Grants Committee
[LC Paper No. CB(2)1323/08-09(01)]

64. Mr Michael Stone, Secretary-General of the UGC, presented the views of the University Grants Committee (UGC) as detailed in its submission. He

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highlighted the substantial progress and standing achieved by the Hong Kong Institute of Education (HKIEd) in the higher education sector, in particular in shaping the quality of future teachers as over 80% of new primary teachers and 25% of secondary teachers were HKIEd's graduates. Having researched into the international trends of effective teacher education provision, the UGC concluded that a multi-disciplinary environment was beneficial to all types of students. The UGC's expert view was that multi-disciplinary and strong research capacity were the two of the keys to more enhanced teacher education. The UGC had suggested two pathways for HKIEd to acquire these attributes, i.e. either turning itself into a multi-disciplinary institution or integrating with another institution which already had such attributes. Mr Stone stressed that it was up to HKIEd to decide which option it would like to take. It was also for the Administration to decide whether, and if so how, it wished to take forward the recommendations contained in the Report of the Review Group on Hong Kong Institute of Education's Development Blueprint (the Report).

The Hong Kong Institute of Education
[LC Paper No. CB(2)1323/08-09(02)]

65. Mr PANG Yiu-kai, Council Chairman-Designate of HKIEd, said that the Council of HKIEd fully supported HKIEd's plan to develop into a university of education, and believed that HKIEd was well-equipped to become the first university of education in Hong Kong. He was confident that HKIEd could acquire the attributes of universities as stated in the Report within a short time.

66. Professor Anthony CHEUNG Bing-leung, President of HKIEd, then presented the views of HKIEd as detailed in its submission. He said that HKIEd's staff, students and alumni felt disappointed with the UGC's conclusion not to support HKIEd for attaining the university title at the present point of time. Nevertheless, HKIEd saw the Report in positive light because of its stated recommendations for HKIEd to develop into an education-focused and multi-disciplinary institution with research capability. Professor CHEUNG stressed that without awarding a university title to HKIEd, it was unfair to HKIEd's students as they were pursuing degree programmes. It was also not beneficial to the development of HKIEd as the community had a misconception about the status of HKIEd. According to the findings of a recent survey conducted by the Lingnan University, only some 10% of the respondents considered HKIEd being a university. He pointed out that HKIEd was already a well-established university-level institution. About 77% of its student number as approved by the UGC were at degree level and above; it had some 270 academic staff and 140 teaching staff; over 90% of its academic staff had doctoral qualifications; and the number of Chair Professor/Professor appointments had increased to 31. Professor CHEUNG added that HKIEd would stay positive and adopt a three-pronged strategic approach to develop into a university of education which would be education-focused and multidisciplinary with research capability and research training.

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*The Hong Kong Institute of Education Students' Union
[LC Paper No. CB(2)1348/08-09(01)]*

67. Miss Yen LEUNG Wing-yan presented the views of the Hong Kong Institute of Education Students' Union as detailed in its submission. She stated that the Union welcomed the affirmation by the Government of the important role of HKIED in shaping the quality of future teachers. However, the Union was disappointed with the Report. The Union agreed with the UGC's view that HKIED should be multi-disciplinary. Indeed, HKIED had been offering disciplines other than education, such as Languages and Psychology. However, owing to the fact that HKIED had not been given a self-accreditation status in respect of non-education programmes, HKIED could not offer non-education degree courses. HKIED was then regarded as monotechnic and was not given a university title. She requested the Administration to grant the self-accrediting status to HKIED for education-related programmes. Miss LEUNG pointed out that the absence of a university title would limit HKIED's capacity to attract high quality students, and the development of private universities would exacerbate the situation. In order to assist HKIED to become a multi-disciplinary institution with research capability, Miss LEUNG considered it important for the Government to set a timetable for its retitling as a university.

*Academic Staff Association, the Hong Kong Institute of Education
[LC Paper No. CB(2)1336/08-09(02)]*

68. Dr LEUNG Yan-wing presented the views of Academic Staff Association of the Hong Kong Institute of Education as detailed in its submission. He said that the Association was disappointed with the Report. He highlighted the negative effect of not granting HKIED a university title on the development of the teacher profession and of Hong Kong into a regional education hub. Dr LEUNG pointed out that HKIED was already functioning as a university as it offered degree studies up to doctoral level and its students were recognized by many employers as university graduates. He stressed that the absence of a university title had adversely affected HKIED in enrolling quality secondary school graduates and had hindered its scholarly exchanges with other institutions, especially those on the Mainland where the title 'institute' referred to provincial institutions offering sub-degree programmes. Dr LEUNG was confident that HKIED could develop into a university with a focus on education, supported by a variety of disciplines. HKIED had research capability as 90% of its academic staff had doctoral qualification and it would have a team of 41 professors/visiting professors. The Association called on the Administration to participate actively in resolving the retitling issue by increasing the first-year-first-degree (FYFD) places and allocating research postgraduate places to HKIED and making the necessary legislative amendments. In the Association's view, the retitling of HKIED should be effected in two to three years' time.

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The Administration's response

69. USED said that the Review Group set up by the UGC had recommended in the Report how HKIED should strategically enhance teacher education and enrich students' learning experience. The Administration considered the recommendations insightful and constructive to the development of HKIED and the higher education sector in the long term. The Administration noted that HKIED had seen the Report in positive light although staff and students of HKIED were disappointed that the UGC did not support the retitling of HKIED as a university at the present point in time. The Administration trusted that HKIED would continue to enhance teacher education in Hong Kong. USED added that in considering the granting of a university title to any post-secondary institution, the Government would consider the merits in each case, taking into account all relevant factors including quality and standard of the academic programmes, level and mix of the programmes offered, research capacity of the institute, the public interests, etc. The Administration was carefully studying the policy and financial implications of the recommendations in the Report and would report to the Executive Council and revert to the Panel in due course.

Discussion

70. The Chairman asked whether the Administration had set a timetable to complete its study on the recommendations in the Report. USED replied that the Administration aimed to complete the study as soon as practicable.

71. Mr LEE Cheuk-yan said that it had been the public perception that a degree-awarding institution was a university. The public felt confused that HKIED was offering degree programmes but was not given the title of a university. The absence of a university title had adversely affected HKIED in student enrolment and the quality of teacher education in Hong Kong. He considered that the UGC was passing the buck in saying that it was up to the management of HKIED to decide which pathway to take to acquire the attributes of a university as the UGC was the authority for allocating resources. He asked whether the UGC would provide the full funding support for whichever option to be taken by HKIED.

72. In response, Mr Stone said that the UGC had provided the flexibility to HKIED in acquiring the attributes of a university by taking either the standalone option or the integration option. The financial implications of the two options had been stated in Chapter 5 of the Report. The UGC had recommended that the Administration should provide the necessary funding for either option without affecting the funding for other parts of the UGC sector. The UGC would support either option taken by HKIED which was supported by the Administration.

73. USED said that the Administration was carefully studying the UGC's

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recommendations and would consider the best way forward for developing high quality teacher education in the context of the overall education environment in Hong Kong. Given the preference of HKIED for the standalone option, the Administration would focus on examining its implications.

74. Mr CHEUNG Man-kwong said that the only available option to HKIED to acquire a university title was by developing into a multi-disciplinary institution. This would require funding of about \$100 million per annum for providing 120 additional FYFD and 30 research postgraduate places. Setting off by the \$60 million of monotechnic premium currently given to HKIED per annum, HKIED would need additional funding of \$40 million per annum. He enquired whether and when the Administration would provide the funding to HKIED and increase the number of the FYFD places for the UGC sector. In his view, the grant of self-accrediting status in respect of non-education programmes and the necessary legislative amendments to the governing ordinance could be done at a later stage.

75. Professor LEE Wing-on, Vice-President (Academic) and Deputy to the President of HKIED, said that the retitling of HKIED as a university was the common goal of the community and not HKIED alone. Since the establishment of HKIED in 1994, the improvement in the quality of teacher education in Hong Kong was apparent and recognized by the community. He appealed to the Administration to support the retitling of HKIED as a university in the same manner as it had supported the establishment of HKIED in 1994.

76. USED clarified that the additional recurrent funding for HKIED to provide 120 additional FYFD and 30 research postgraduate places was about \$27 million per annum. Although the recurrent funding for the UGC-funded institutions for the 2009-2010 to 2011-2012 triennium had been approved by the Finance Committee, the Administration could propose additional allocation to HKIED should this be considered necessary.

77. Deputy Secretary for Education (1) (DS(Ed)1) supplemented that the Administration would carefully examine the policy and financial implications of the recommendations in the Report to support the development of HKIED into a multi-disciplinary institution, having regard to the views of members and HKIED. He assured members that the Administration would report the outcome of its study to the Panel as soon as practicable.

78. The Chairman said that since the Report was released in February 2009, the Panel had waited for two months before discussing the matter. The Panel would revisit the matter when the Administration was ready to revert to the Panel.

79. Mr WONG Yuk-man said that the Administration and the UGC had united to reject the retitling of HKIED as a university by the excuse of its

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monotechnic nature. He expressed appreciation of the efforts made by the Hong Kong Shu Yan University in its strive for development as a private university. He did not agree with the soft approach taken by HKIED in striving for a titular change. He appealed to HKIED to adopt an aggressive approach in negotiating with the Administration for its retitling as a university. He pointed out that there were universities of education in the Mainland and Taiwan, and there was no reason to reject HKIED's application for retitling as the University of Education in Hong Kong which was essential to enhance the quality of teacher education.

80. USED responded that as explained in the Report, having considered the prevailing international trend, the UGC held the view that a university of education, particularly one of a monotechnic character, should not be established in the UGC sector.

81. Mrs Regina IP expressed reservations about the justifications put forward by HKIED for retitling as a university. Referring to the many renowned institutes and colleges in the United States such as the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, the California Institute of Technology, the Wellesley College, etc, she was of the view that the absence of a university title had no bearing on the status and standard of an institute. She stressed that what mattered was the standard of its programmes as evaluated by external reviewers. She considered that universities should place emphasis on general education and should preferably be multi-disciplinary in nature. Training in specific disciplines and professions should be pitched at graduate level. She did not agree with the view that the future of teacher education in Hong Kong would be adversely affected if HKIED was not granted a university title. She pointed out that the problem of teacher education in Hong Kong rested with the overall policies and not the title of HKIED. She noted that the Chief Executive had never made any public speech on education mission or ideal, and the realm of education was wholly delegated to the EDB. All along, the discussions on education issues by the Panel had been about the allocation of resources.

82. Professor Anthony CHEUNG Bing-leung agreed with the view that the standard of programmes of an institute as evaluated by external reviewers was most important. He believed that HKIED would undergo an external accreditation process before it should be retitled as a university. He pointed out that unlike the situation in the United States, it had been the general perception in Asian countries that only universities would award degrees. In addition, universities focused on specific disciplines were not uncommon in European and Asian countries. For instance, the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology had not been called the Institute of Science and Technology of Hong Kong because a university title was considered important in Hong Kong.

83. Ms Starry LEE said that as a parent, she hoped that more talents would join the teaching profession. She agreed with the view that the retitling of HKIED as a university was important for student enrolment and universities

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should offer multi-disciplinary programmes. Given the policy commitment to develop Hong Kong into a regional education hub and private universities, the award of a university title to HKIEd was all the more important to improve the quality of education as well as to promote student enrolment. She shared the view of the Chairman that the Administration should report the outcome of its study on the Report to the Panel. She also requested the Administration to review the number of FYFD places to enhance the development of Hong Kong into a regional education hub and the internationalization of the student body in local universities.

84. USED replied that the roadmap for HKIEd to develop into a university that should be education-focused and multidisciplinary with research capability was clear. The Administration would speed up the study and report to the Panel as soon as practicable. USED added that as recommended in the Report, the funding for the provision of the 120 additional FYFD places, if agreed, would be over and above the existing levels provided to the UGC.

85. Ms Audrey EU expressed support for the retitling of HKIEd as a university. She said that education was pivotal to the development of Hong Kong. She noted the academic restructuring in HKIEd and supported the promotion of language education, cultural and creative arts, humanities and social science, etc. She considered that education was becoming more important and the role of teachers more challenging in the face of the increasing complexity of the social environment. She asked whether HKIEd had conducted any studies on moral education and how teachers could play their roles in shaping the development of positive attitudes and values in students.

86. Professor Anthony CHEUNG Bing-leung replied that from the HKIEd's perspective, education was not mono-disciplinary but a field of study informed by and integrated with a multiple of academic disciplines. Apart from enhancing the quality of teacher education, HKIEd had all along placed emphasis on the all-round development of students including their core values and moral standard and their understanding of the society, world and life. HKIEd had conducted a number of applied researches in these areas. Strategically, HKIEd aimed to develop into a multi-disciplinary institution with a focus on education and other complementary disciplines

87. Ms Audrey EU remarked that she hoped that academics and institutions in the UGC sector would have the courage to express their views on different subjects in an impartial manner. She echoed the view of Mr WONG Yuk-man that HKIEd should be more vocal in speaking up for itself on the issue of retitling.

88. Professor Patrick LAU said that as a former member of the HKIEd Council, he was disappointed that HKIEd had not been awarded a university title 15 years after its establishment in 1994. He considered that unlike the education

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system in the United States, the education system in Hong Kong followed that of Britain and the award of a university title to HKIEd was crucial to enhance the quality of teacher education in Hong Kong. In his view, the non-inclusion of early childhood education as the basic education and the learning of too many subjects in primary and secondary schools were the fundamental problems of the existing education system. Given that the resources involved for the provision of 120 additional FYFD places in HKIEd was only \$27 million per annum, he urged the Administration to take immediate actions to seek the support of the Executive Council for retitling HKIEd as a university.

89. Dr Priscilla LEUNG said that the issue involved was more than the retitling of HKIEd but the development of education in Hong Kong. She pointed out that most of the graduates of HKIEd became pre-primary, primary and secondary school teachers. Pre-primary, primary and secondary education was most important to the all-round development of young children including the development of their creativity. In her view, Hong Kong should have a university of education, and teacher education was not montechnic in nature and comprised a range of academic disciplines. She considered the allocation of \$27 million insufficient to support the development of HKIEd as a multi-disciplinary institute. She was concerned that teachers in kindergartens and primary and junior secondary schools had not been given the due recognition, dampening their motivation and morale.

90. USED responded that the Administration acknowledged the contribution made by HKIEd in the training of quality teachers, and hoped that HKIEd would endeavour to develop its multi-disciplinary and research capacity as proposed in the Report in the coming years. The Administration would revert to the Panel on the matter after completion of the study on the Report.

91. Professor Anthony CHEUNG Bing-leung responded that he hoped that the retitling of HKIEd as a university would promote the recognition of the importance of education and the quality of teacher education in Hong Kong. He shared the view that early childhood education was important, and HKIEd had been the pioneer in providing early childhood education courses. He pointed out that raising the quality of teacher education was not for the sole purpose of facilitating Hong Kong to develop into a regional education hub. HKIEd had accorded importance to the development of positive attitudes and values towards life and the community in its students who in turn would help young children to develop such attitudes and values. He considered that the Administration should not adopt a detached attitude and should be more proactive and supportive in the formulation of policies and the provision of resources to support the development of HKIEd into a multi-disciplinary university in the next few years. Professor CHEUNG stressed that HKIEd would do its part in preparation for the retitling.

92. Professor LEE Wing-on highlighted that HKIEd had fostered the

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development of many excellent teachers, as attested by the high proportion (more than 70%) of its graduates receiving the Chief Executive's Award for Teaching Excellence. He also clarified that teacher education was not monotechnic. Teacher education was multi-disciplinary in nature and included a range of academic disciplines including language, literature, psychology and sociology.

Conclusion

93. Concluding the discussions, the Chairman said that except Mrs Regina IP who had expressed reservations, members supported the retitling of HKIEd as a university. She requested the Administration to report to the Panel the outcome of its study on the Report once ready.

VII. Any other business

94. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 7:10 pm.

Council Business Division 2
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