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Chairman, Panel on Education  
Legislative Council

**Report of the University Grants Committee:  
Aspirations for the Higher Education System in Hong Kong**



Thank you for inviting VTC to submit our views on the University Grants Committee (UGC) Report entitled “Aspirations for the Higher Education System in Hong Kong” (the Report).

VTC takes a keen interest in the subject as we attach great importance to the overall development of the education system in Hong Kong. I myself and the Executive Director of VTC had met Sir Colin Lucas, Chairman of the UGC Working Group in April 2009 to introduce to him the work of the Council, following which the Council had also made a formal submission to UGC in June 2009 providing our views on the Higher Education Review.

The Council’s views remain as represented in our earlier representation to the UGC, and in gist, we support a diversified higher education system, the adoption of a liberal integrated approach in its development, a robust quality assurance system and the development of Hong Kong as an education hub which should feature also vocational education.

Our Council has studied with interest the Report and the recommendations contained therein, and our responses are as follows –

- (a) Regarding the recommendations on the post-secondary education system (Chapter 3), we support the view that it should be developed and planned holistically. We are pleased that the Report has echoed VTC’s appeal for diversity in the sector. We note the idea of having a single oversight body for the self-financed part of the system, and hope that its future mandate would help drive a quality culture in the sector, through some forms of funding support both to students and institutions. We also urge that in addition to making clear the articulation pathways within the system, it is equally important to have a fair system of student admission, especially for the articulation of the sub-degree graduates to the senior years of the publicly-funded degree programmes.
- (b) Regarding internationalisation (Chapter 4), the Report has focused mainly on the UGC institutions and recommended a series of strategies.

We are of the view that the reputable vocational education system in Hong Kong, administered mainly through the VTC, similarly enjoys good potential for internationalisation and relevant strategies recommended in the Report could similarly apply to the vocational education sector.

- (c) Regarding the Mainland dimension (Chapter 5), the vocational education sector should also be duly supported so that its collaborations with Mainland institutions and enterprises may be better reinforced.
- (d) Regarding teaching and learning, and research (Chapter 6), again these are not issues peculiar only to the UGC institutions. Relevant strategies and resources support should also apply to the sub-degree sector where teaching and learning are equally important, and researches of various forms, including applied researches and action researches, could equally create knowledge to inform practice, application and relevant teaching.
- (e) Regarding quality assurance (Chapter 8), VTC supports the recommendation that there should be one single quality assurance agency for the sector in the long term. The fundamental guiding principles must be--
  - Unified QA standards should be adopted for parity and fairness.
  - A “fit for purpose” approach should be deployed, one that is efficient and effective that fits the state of development of individual institutions, e.g. there should be no need for the more well established institutions to undergo detailed validation and revalidation processed course by course, so as to avoid draining valuable time and resources.
  - Costs must be reasonable and affordable to the educational institutions so that they may direct valuable resources to focus on student learning.

We hope that the Legislative Council would take into account VTC's views in its deliberation of the subject, and the VTC looks forward to working closely with all major stakeholders in forging ahead the development of a quality post-secondary education in Hong Kong for our younger generation.

Yours sincerely,



Andrew Leung  
Chairman

Vocational Training Council