

(Translation)

**Motion on
“Reviving the quality of local education and
stopping the blind industrialization of education”
Moved by Hon Mrs Regina IP
at the Council meeting of 19 December 2012**

**Motion as amended by Hon Claudia MO, Dr Hon Helena WONG,
Hon IP Kin-yuen, Hon MA Fung-kwok and Hon Paul TSE**

That, since the former Chief Executive proposed in 2009 to develop education services, profit-making has become the objective of quite a number of tertiary institutions; for example, the successive uncovering of the over-enrollment and inadequate facilities of the community colleges affiliated to the Lingnan University and to the University of Hong Kong has reflected that in recent years, local post-secondary colleges have, for the sake of chasing profits, concentrated their resources on offering a lot of self-financing degree and associate degree programmes with high tuition fees but recognition of their qualifications in doubt, thus causing local students holding such qualifications upon graduation to face the quandary of having their academic qualifications questioned by employers, and to bear huge amounts of debt due to high tuition fees; besides, since some private universities and the community colleges affiliated to various major institutions have concentrated their limited resources on programmes which aim at attracting mainland students to study in Hong Kong, many local students face the difficult problem of being unable to receive appropriate tertiary education owing to insufficient places despite their fulfillment of the entry requirements; worse still, the Government's sale of precious land resources to international school groups at nominal prices and its permission for such schools to charge overseas students high tuition fees for profiteering not only cannot help attract foreign investment but also dilute local students' share of educational resources; the aforesaid practices actually cannot help students to devote themselves to society, are not conducive to upgrading the academic standards of local tertiary institutions, and undermine Hong Kong's long-term development; in this connection, this Council urges the Government to adopt the following measures:

- (1) to reiterate to society that education is for upgrading students' quality in the five areas of personality, intellectuality, physicality, sociability and aesthetics, increasing upward mobility opportunities for the middle class and the grassroots, narrowing the rich-poor gap and fostering social progress, and is not a profit-making tool for the highest bidder;

- (2) to draw up a policy for regulating tertiary institutions on programme offers and student admission to ensure that the academic standards of the degree programmes offered are recognized by the Government's Qualifications Framework; and, all things being equal, to accord admission priority to local students who meet the entry requirements, so as to satisfy local people's keen demand for education as far as possible;
- (3) to ensure that public money is used for upgrading the qualifications of teachers, scientific research capability and campus facilities of local publicly-funded universities, assisting local poor students who meet entry requirements, and financing local outstanding students' participation in exchange programmes at overseas universities, so as to uphold the principle of public resources for public use; and, to further equip Hong Kong people to meet the ever-growing challenges in the international community, promote Hong Kong's global competitiveness and maintain Hong Kong's status as a first-class world city;
- (4) to adopt appropriate policies to encourage universities to concentrate their resources on upgrading their scientific research capability and academic standards, and to assist local universities in inviting first-class academics from outside Hong Kong to conduct exchanges and even engage in teaching in Hong Kong;
- (5) by drawing on the experience of advanced countries, to allocate more resources for facilitating research co-operation between the academia and the industries, and to assist universities in obtaining more technological research funding through high technology industrialization to form a value-added 'technological research — industry chain', so as to enable Hong Kong tertiary institutions to add value to themselves and facilitate the upgrading and transformation of Hong Kong industries; and
- (6) to enhance the English proficiency of university students, allocate more resources for training local English language teachers, and raise the admission percentage of overseas students, so as to ensure that local universities achieve genuine 'internationalization', in contrast to the current situation where over 80% of the non-local students admitted to programmes funded by the University Grants Committee come from Mainland China;
- (7) to encourage institutions to increase and develop humanities subjects and implement liberal arts education;

- (8) to review the policy direction of sub-degree programmes and conduct a study on providing more subsidies to associate degree students for offering education opportunities to all persons who have an aspiration to learn and to obtain grants and scholarships through different channels, so as to encourage them to pursue studies from which no economic burden will arise; and to design associate degree programmes conducive to career development and ensure programme quality, so as to effectively enhance graduates' competitiveness and enable associate degree graduates failing to enroll in undergraduate programmes to have clear career prospects; and
- (9) to review the number and percentage of non-local students enrolling in research postgraduate programmes offered by local funded-institutions, and to reserve a sufficient number of postgraduate programme places in graduate schools for local university undergraduates, so as to provide opportunities to students who have an aspiration to pursue further studies and nurture local academic research talents;
- (10) to implement the recommendation in the Report on the Higher Education Review 2010 on the setting up of a single oversight body for the non-publicly funded part of the post-secondary education system;
- (11) to review the current situation of Mainland Chinese students accounting for as high as 65% of the student enrollment in research postgraduate programmes heavily-subsidized by public funding amid the shortage of places in the institutions funded by the University Grants Committee; to internationalize the admission of non-local students as much as possible and at the same time, to admit more local students to publicly-funded degree programmes, so as to nurture local young talents;
- (12) to increase research funding to strengthen research on local issues, so as to make tertiary education and research more diversified; to create an environment conducive to research and teaching, so as to attract first-class local and non-local academics to conduct research or teach in Hong Kong, and at the same time, to strive to nurture local young academics at tertiary institutions; and
- (13) to enhance the democratization of university governance, and set up an independent inter-institutional appeal mechanism for handling complaints about academic research, contracts and dismissal, etc.;
- (14) to review the existing policy on industrialization of education, and further promote it only on the premise of perfecting the various ancillary measures and meeting the needs of local students;

- (15) to avoid the over-commercialization of tertiary education, and perfect the existing measures to assist students with financial difficulties in admitting to tertiary institutions;
- (16) to avoid a lopsided admission policy towards overseas students, enhance the transparency of governance of the relevant institutions and make public their accounts for public monitoring; and
- (17) to increase the number of subsidized tertiary education places, and formulate a clear and reasonable percentage for overseas students, so as to maintain the educational opportunities for local students meeting the admission requirements amid the internationalization of education; and
- (18) to review and enhance the regulation of the mode and practices of international schools' issuance and sale of debentures as well as connivance of speculation in such debentures, so as to protect parents' rights and interests.