

**立法會**  
**Legislative Council**

LC Paper No. CB(4)636/13-14  
(The minutes have been seen  
by the Administration)

Ref : CB4/PL/ED

**Panel on Education**

**Minutes of meeting**  
**held on Tuesday, 18 March 2014, at 2:30 pm**  
**in Conference Room 1 of the Legislative Council Complex**

**Members present** : Dr Hon LAM Tai-fai, SBS, JP (Chairman)  
Hon IP Kin-yuen (Deputy Chairman)  
Hon LEUNG Yiu-chung  
Hon TAM Yiu-chung, GBS, JP  
Hon Abraham SHEK Lai-him, GBS, JP  
Hon Tommy CHEUNG Yu-yan, SBS, JP  
Hon WONG Kwok-hing, BBS, MH  
Hon Cyd HO Sau-lan  
Hon Starry LEE Wai-king, JP  
Dr Hon Priscilla LEUNG Mei-fun, SBS, JP  
Hon CHEUNG Kwok-che  
Hon IP Kwok-him, GBS, JP  
Hon Mrs Regina IP LAU Suk-yee, GBS, JP  
Hon Paul TSE Wai-chun, JP  
Hon LEUNG Kwok-hung  
Hon Claudia MO  
Hon Michael TIEN Puk-sun, BBS, JP  
Hon Steven HO Chun-yin  
Hon WU Chi-wai, MH  
Hon MA Fung-kwok, SBS, JP  
Hon Charles Peter MOK  
Hon CHAN Chi-chuen  
Dr Hon Kenneth CHAN Ka-lok  
Hon Dennis KWOK  
Dr Hon Fernando CHEUNG Chiu-hung  
Dr Hon Helena WONG Pik-wan

Dr Hon Elizabeth QUAT, JP  
Hon Tony TSE Wai-chuen

**Members attending** : Hon Gary FAN Kwok-wai  
Hon SIN Chung-kai, SBS, JP

**Member absent** : Hon Christopher CHUNG Shu-kun, BBS, MH, JP

**Public Officers attending** : Agenda item IV

The Administration

Mr Eddie NG, SBS, JP  
Secretary for Education

Mrs Cherry TSE, JP  
Permanent Secretary for Education

Dr Richard ARMOUR  
Secretary-General,  
University Grants Committee

Ms Michelle LI, JP  
Deputy Secretary for Education (1)

Ms Pecvin YONG Pui-wan  
Principal Assistant Secretary (Further Education)  
Education Bureau

Agenda item V

Mr Kevin YEUNG, JP  
Under Secretary for Education

Ms Jessie WONG  
Deputy Secretary for Education (2)

Mrs Michelle WONG  
Deputy Secretary for Education (4)

Ms IP Ling-bik  
Principal Assistant Secretary  
(Education Commission and Planning)  
Education Bureau

Mr Tony TANG  
Principal Assistant Secretary (School Development)  
Education Bureau

**Attendance by : Agenda item IV**  
**invitation**

Yew Chung Community College

Dr Teddy SO  
President

Hong Kong Buddhist College

Professor Edwin WONG King-por  
President

The Hong Kong Polytechnic University

Professor Peter YUEN  
Dean (College of Professional and Continuing  
Education)

Hong Kong Institute of Technology

Dr Joy SHI  
President

The Open University of Hong Kong

Professor Danny WONG Shek-nam  
Vice President (Academic)

The Hong Kong University of Science and  
Technology

Dr David MOLE  
Associate Provost

Hong Kong College of Technology

Dr CHAN Cheuk-hay  
President and Principal

The University of Hong Kong

Professor C F LEE  
Director, HKU School of Professional and  
Continuing Education

SCAD Hong Kong

Mr Bob DICKENSHEETS  
Vice President

Kaplan Business and Accountancy School

Mr Daniel Patrick MOLLOY  
School Supervisor

City University of Hong Kong

Dr Louis MA Chee-keung  
Acting Director,  
School of Continuing and Professional Education

Hong Kong Baptist University

Dr Sam LAU  
Director, College of International Education

Tung Wah College

Dr Vivian CHENG  
Academic Secretary

Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic  
and Vocational Qualifications

Dr Catherine IP  
Head, Academic Accreditation and Audit

Hong Kong Shue Yan University

Ms Andrea HOPE  
Associate Academic Vice-President

Centennial College

Ms CHAN Mei-kwan  
Dean of Students

Joint Quality Review Committee

Ms WONG Wai-sum  
Executive Director

The Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts

Ms Helen LOCKEY  
Head of Academic Quality Assurance

The Chinese University of Hong Kong

Mr Eric S P NG  
Registrar

HKBU Self-financing Programmes Concern Group

Ms FUNG Ching-man

Students' Union of Tung Wah College

Mr LAM Ping-san  
Internal Vice President

Hong Kong Professional Teachers' Union

Dr FUNG Wai-wah  
President

Professor Thomas WONG  
Former President of Tung Wah College

**Clerk in attendance** : Miss Polly YEUNG  
Chief Council Secretary (4) 4

**Staff in attendance** : Mr KWONG Kam-fai  
Senior Council Secretary (4) 4

Mr Ian CHOW  
Council Secretary (4) 4

Ms Sandy HAU  
Legislative Assistant (4) 3

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Action

**I. Confirmation of minutes**

(LC Paper No. CB(4)467/13-14 -- Minutes of meeting on  
13 January 2014)

The minutes of the meeting held on 13 January 2014 were confirmed.

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

(LC Paper No. CB(4)386/13-14(01) -- Letter dated 24 January 2014 from Hon CHAN Chi-chuen concerning the issues related to discrimination against teachers' sexual orientation and gender identity by schools (*Chinese version only*)

LC Paper No. CB(4)386/13-14(02) -- Administration's written response dated 12 February 2014 to the letter dated 24 January 2014 from Hon CHAN Chi-chuen concerning the issues related to discrimination against teachers' sexual orientation and gender identity by schools)

2. Members noted the above paper issued since the last meeting.

### **III. Items for discussion at the next meeting**

(Appendix I to LC Paper No. CB(4)469/13-14 -- List of outstanding items for discussion

Appendix II to LC Paper No. CB(4)469/13-14 -- List of follow-up actions)

3. The Chairman informed members that the Administration had proposed to discuss the following items at the next regular meeting to be held on 14 April 2014 at 4:30 pm –

- (a) Increasing Subsidized Higher Education Opportunities;
- (b) Enhanced Chinese learning and teaching for non-Chinese speaking students;
- (c) Two special schools at site 5C-5, Kai Tak development, Kowloon; and
- (d) A school for social development for girls at Choi Hing Road, Kwun Tong, Kowloon.

4. Dr Kenneth CHAN recalled that he had sent two letters to the Chairman earlier on proposing that the Panel should discuss the setting up of a subcommittee on free kindergarten education and hold meetings to receive views from the kindergarten sector. The Chairman said that he had also received a letter from the Deputy Chairman requesting the Panel to

consider setting up a subcommittee on free kindergarten education. He informed members that he had instructed the Secretariat to include the matter on the agenda of the next regular meeting. Owing to the heavy agenda, he indicated that he would extend the duration of the next regular meeting to end at about 7:00 pm.

5. On whether the Panel should hold special meetings to receive public views on free kindergarten education, the Chairman reminded members that the Panel had held two special meetings in March 2013 and received views from over 130 deputations/individuals. Nevertheless, he would discuss the matter with the Deputy Chairman after the meeting. Members noted and raised no objection to the aforesaid arrangements.

6. Before proceeding to the discussion items, the Chairman drew members' attention to Rule 83A of the Rules of Procedure which provided that a Member shall not move any motion or amendment relating to a matter in which he had a pecuniary interest, whether direct or indirect, or speak on any such matter, except where he disclosed the nature of that interest. He reminded members to declare interests, if any, in the matter under discussion.

#### **IV. Issues related to the governance and regulation of the self-financing post-secondary education sector**

(LC Paper No. CB(4)469/13-14(01) -- Paper provided by the Administration

LC Paper No. CB(4)469/13-14(02) -- Background brief on issues related to the governance and regulation of the self-financing post-secondary education sector prepared by the LegCo Secretariat)

#### **Written submissions from organizations not attending the meeting**

(LC Paper No. CB(4)469/13-14(15) -- Submission from The Hong Kong Institute of Education (*English version only*)



LC Paper No CB(4)491/13-14(03) -- Submission from 社工銜  
接學位關注組 (*Chinese  
version only*)

LC Paper No CB(4)491/13-14(04) -- Submission from 東華學  
院教協會員關注組  
(*Chinese version only*)

#### Meeting with the Administration and related deputations

7. Members noted the background brief prepared by the Secretariat [LC Paper No. CB(4)469/13-14(02)] and the submissions from deputations not attending the meeting.

#### Briefing by the Administration

8. At the invitation of the Chairman, Secretary for Education ("SED") briefed members on the recent development of the self-financing post-secondary education sector as set out in the Administration's paper [LC Paper No. CB(4)469/13-14(01)]. He highlighted that it was the Government's policy to support the parallel development of the publicly-funded and self-financing post-secondary education sectors. The existing regulatory framework comprised relevant legislation, as well as a basket of administrative measures to enhance the quality assurance, governance and transparency of the sector.

#### Oral presentation by deputations/individuals

9. A total of 23 deputations/individuals presented their views. Their major concerns were summarized in the **Appendix**.

#### Response by the Administration to deputations' views

10. SED thanked the deputations for presenting their views. On the recommendation of establishing a single quality assurance body as recommended by the University Grants Committee ("UGC") in its report entitled "Aspirations for the Higher Education System in Hong Kong" published in 2010, he advised that the Administration had been implementing incremental measures to enhance the quality assurance mechanism and would explore the possibility of eventually setting up a single quality assurance body. Regarding concerns about tuition fees, SED said that a number of student financial assistance and support measures had

been put in place. In his 2014 Policy Address, the Chief Executive had announced the introduction of further initiatives as set out in the Administration's paper [LC Paper No. CB(4)469/13-14(01)].

11. Regarding the existing legislative framework, SED recalled that when the Administration consulted the Panel on its proposed amendments to the Post Secondary Colleges Ordinance (Cap. 320) ("PSCO") and the Post Secondary Colleges Regulations (Cap. 320A) ("PSCR") at the meeting held on 14 January 2013, members considered that the Administration should first address the concerns about quality assurance and effective regulation of the self-financing post-secondary education sector before introducing the amendment bill into the Legislative Council ("LegCo"). Nevertheless, SED noted that quite a number of deputations attending this meeting had called for early amendments to PSCO in order to remove the obsolete provisions. The Administration would look into the matter carefully.

12. Permanent Secretary for Education ("PS(Ed)") noted that some institutions had expressed different views on whether a single quality assurance body should be set up for the entire post-secondary education sector. While exploring the possibility of setting up a single quality assurance body, the Government had been implementing incremental administrative measures to enhance the prevailing quality assurance mechanism. The Tripartite Liaison Committee (comprising the Education Bureau ("EDB"), the Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications ("HKCAAVQ") and Joint Quality Review Committee ("JQRC")) had been transformed into the Liaison Committee on Quality Assurance ("LCQA") by engaging the Quality Assurance Council ("QAC"). The goals of LCQA were to promote in a more efficient and effective manner sharing of good practices among all the quality assurance bodies and enhance consistency and transparency.

13. On support measures, PS(Ed) supplemented that as a result of improvements to the Financial Assistance Scheme for Post-secondary Students, the means-tested grants provided to students pursuing self-financing post-secondary programmes were on par with those provided for students on publicly-funded programmes. The Self-financing Post-secondary Education Fund also provided scholarships for meritorious students. At the institutional level, the sector might benefit from the Sixth Matching Grant Scheme and the Research Endowment Fund.

## Discussion

### *Provision of post-secondary education*

14. Dr Fernando CHEUNG declared that he was teaching at the Hong Kong Polytechnic University. Dr CHEUNG noted with concern that the number of publicly-funded first-year-first-degree ("FYFD") places had remained unchanged at 14 500, with a slight increase to 15 000 since the double cohort year in 2012. Instead of increasing publicly-funded FYFD places, the Administration had merely encouraged the development of self-financing sub-degree programmes under a market-driven approach. Dr CHEUNG was of the view that the policy on the provision of post-secondary education should be critically reviewed.

15. Mr MA Fung-kwok referred to paragraph 25 of the Administration's paper and enquired about the details of the proposed subsidy scheme to support students to pursue programmes in designated disciplines. SED explained that to address concerns about the shortage of manpower in certain sectors, such as the shortfall in nursing care personnel to provide services to the elderly, the new scheme would subsidize up to 1 000 students per cohort to pursue self-financing undergraduate programmes in selected disciplines to meet Hong Kong's manpower needs. EDB would work with relevant bureaux and departments on the implementation details, such as identifying relevant accredited self-financing undergraduate programmes. SED added that the scheme would benefit three cohorts of students to be admitted in the 2015-2016 to 2017-2018 academic years.

### *Governance of the self-financing post-secondary sector*

16. Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung enquired whether serious problems had been identified in the governance of self-financing post-secondary institutions and the measures, if any, to be taken to tackle the problems.

17. SED noted from the deputations' presentation that the self-financing post-secondary sector had strived to enhance their governance and ensure the quality of their programmes. He said that although there had been incidents regarding admission arrangements and over-enrolment by individual institutions in the double cohort year of 2012, the sector had put in place measures to tackle the problems and safeguard against the recurrence of similar incidents.

18. Dr Kenneth CHAN declared that he was an associate professor of the Department of Government and International Studies at the Hong Kong

Baptist University. Referring to paragraph 11 of the Administration's paper, Dr Kenneth CHAN sought further information on the consultancy study commissioned by the Committee on Self-financing Post-secondary Education ("CSPE").

19. In reply, DS(Ed)1 said that the CSPE had engaged a consultant to conduct a consultancy study to identify major development and models of good practices on governance and quality assurance. It was expected that the consultancy study would be completed at around mid-2014 and a code of practice would be developed based on the findings of this consultancy study for further advancing the development of the sector.

20. The Deputy Chairman declared interest as a representative of LegCo Members sitting on the Court of the University of Hong Kong ("HKU"). He remarked that the Administration had not set out in its paper the way forward on the governance and regulation of the self-financing post-secondary education sector. In this regard, PS(Ed) said that the Administration had explained the different aspects of the regulation and governance of the self-financing post-secondary education sector, including the latest developments which indicated the way forward.

*Proposed amendments to PSCO and its subsidiary legislation*

21. The Deputy Chairman recalled that when considering a funding proposal to provide a start-up loan to a post-secondary institution at a recent meeting of the Finance Committee, Members had urged the Administration to expedite its work in amending PSCO to remove anomalous and obsolete requirements. Dr Helena WONG considered that the Administration should also propose amendments to enhance the governance of self-financing post-secondary institutions. Panel members enquired about the timetable of the legislative exercise.

22. SED and PS(Ed) noted members' views on a comprehensive review of PSCO. Earlier on, the Administration had proposed amendments that were technical in nature to remove anomalous and obsolete legal requirements under PSCO. However, when being consulted on the proposed amendments to PSCO and its subsidiary legislation at the meeting on 14 January 2013, some members considered that the Administration should provide a satisfactory response to concerns about quality assurance and effective regulation and governance of the self-financing post-secondary education sector before introducing the proposed amendments. Nevertheless, noting the views of some members and deputations expressed at this meeting about the need to modernize the

legislation early, SED said that the Administration would re-visit the matter having regard to such views.

*Concerns about quality assurance*

23. Mr Michael TIEN pointed out that currently, the self-financing post-secondary education sector primarily consisted of three different components and were governed under different regulatory frameworks. Some institutions enjoyed self-accrediting status while some were subject to external accreditation. On account of the diversity of the sector, Mr TIEN enquired how the Administration could effectively ensure the quality of post-secondary programmes offered by UGC-funded and self-financing institutions.

24. PS(Ed) advised that all self-financing post-secondary institutions were subject to statutory regulation although the governing legislation might differ among institutions. Meanwhile, the Administration had implemented a basket of administrative measures to facilitate the development of the sector. Initiatives included the matching grant, interest-free start-up loans, provision of land at nominal premium, etc. UGC-funded institutions benefiting from these initiatives would need to undertake that their sub-degree operations benefitting from these initiatives should be subject to periodic external quality audits in future.

25. Mr Abraham SHEK declared interest as a member of the Council and a representative of LegCo Members sitting on the Court of HKU. He also declared that he was a member of the Court of the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology ("HKUST"). Mr SHEK remarked that when exploring the possibility of setting up of a single quality assurance body, the Administration should strike a proper balance between institutional autonomy on the one hand and a consistent standard in the quality of programmes offered by institutions on the other hand.

26. PS(Ed) said that QAC under the aegis of UGC was conducting quality audits of UGC-funded institutions and their academic programmes at degree level or above, however funded. UGC was also conducting a study on good practices in the governance of renowned universities around the world. The findings would be provided to local institutions for reference.

27. Secretary General of UGC said that the current self-financing post-secondary sector comprised self-accrediting institutions with a longer history and established internal quality assurance system and relatively

newer non-self-accrediting institutions. It was necessary to take into account the needs and levels of maturity of different institutions when considering the establishment of a single quality assurance body for the entire post-secondary education sector.

28. Given that graduates of self-financing sub-degree programmes might wish to articulate to senior years of UGC-funded undergraduate programmes, Dr Kenneth CHAN considered that a reliable quality assurance mechanism for the self-financing post-secondary sector was essential for ensuring that sub-degree holders would be up to the standard required for further undergraduate studies.

29. Ms Starry LEE declared that she was a member of the Council of HKUST. She said that Members of the Democratic Alliance for the Betterment and Progress of Hong Kong were supportive of the setting up of a single quality assurance body. Some members including Ms LEE, Mr MA Fung-kwok and Dr Helena WONG enquired about the progress of and the timetable for setting up the single quality assurance body as recommended by UGC.

30. In this connection, SED and PS(Ed) advised that while the Administration had engaged stakeholders to work in the direction of setting up a single quality assurance body, it was not practicable at this stage to provide a concrete timetable for its establishment. They nevertheless reiterated that the Administration had been implementing incremental administrative measures to enhance the quality assurance mechanism, such as establishing a working group comprising representatives of UGC, UGC-funded institutions, HKCAAVQ and EDB to plan for and oversee the implementation details of periodic external audits and reviews on the self-financing operations under the aegis of UGC-funded institutions.

31. Mr LEUNG Yiu-chung enquired about the details of the work of the aforesaid working group. Dr Teddy SO of Yew Chung Community College remarked that there was no common platform that allowed all self-financing post-secondary institutions to exchange views on issues of common concern. He advised that currently there were more than 20 institutions offering self-financing post-secondary programmes but only 14 institutions were members of the Federation for Self-financing Tertiary Education.

32. In this regard, PS(Ed) clarified that the aforementioned working group had been set up to plan for and oversee the implementation of the external quality audits of sub-degree operations under the aegis of

UGC-funded institutions. Although a single quality assurance body had not yet been formed, various measures had been put in place to safeguard quality assurance of the self-financing post-secondary sector.

33. On the accreditation services provided by HKCAAVQ, Ms Starry LEE enquired whether the standards applied in the accreditation exercise were benchmarked internationally. She also sought further information on the revalidation, if any, of accredited programmes, and whether the academic performance of graduates of the accredited programmes would be assessed.

34. Dr Catherine IP of HKCAAVQ said that HKCAAVQ had established its network and collaboration with quality assurance bodies worldwide through the signing of Memoranda of Understanding/Memoranda of Cooperation. To benchmark its standard of services, HKCAAVQ would arrange peer review by overseas quality assurance bodies. HKCAAVQ had engaged the International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education ("INQAAHE") to conduct an external review on its operation. The review panel from INQAAHE was expected to visit HKCAAVQ in mid-2015. Dr IP further said that accreditation was not a one-off exercise and a mechanism was in place for revalidation of programmes and periodic review of institutions that had obtained Programme Area Accreditation status.

35. Due to time constraint, the Chairman invited Dr Catherine IP of HKCAAVQ to provide further information on its accreditation services in response to Ms Starry LEE's concerns in writing after the meeting.

*(The Chairman left the meeting at this juncture and the Deputy Chairman took the chair.)*

#### **V. Measures to address issues arising from the drop in secondary student population**

(LC Paper No. CB(4)469/13-14(03) -- Paper provided by the Administration

LC Paper No. CB(4)469/13-14(04) -- Updated background brief on measures to address issues arising from the drop in secondary student population prepared by the LegCo Secretariat

LC Paper No. CB(4)469/13-14(05) -- Submission from Joint Committee of the Secondary School Councils and the Secondary School Heads Association of 18 Districts (*Chinese version only*)

LC Paper No. CB(4)469/13-14(06) -- Submission from The Association of Heads of Secondary Schools of Tsuen Wan, Kwai Chung and Tsing Yi (*Chinese version only*)

LC Paper No. CB(4)477/13-14(01) -- Submission from Wong Tai Sin District Secondary School Heads Association (*Chinese version only*)

LC Paper No. CB(4)477/13-14(02) -- Submission from Hong Kong Prevocational Schools Council (*Chinese version only*)

LC Paper No. CB(4)491/13-14(05) -- Letter dated 17 March 2014 (with wording of a motion) from Hon IP Kin-yuen to the Chairman of Panel on Education (*Chinese version only*)

LC Paper No CB(4)491/13-14(06) -- Submission from Hong Kong Professional Teachers' Union (*Chinese version only*)

36. Members noted the background brief prepared by the Secretariat [LC Paper No. CB(4)469/13-14(04)] and submissions from various deputations [LC Paper Nos. CB(4)469/13-14(05) and (06), CB(4)477/13-14(01) and (02), and CB(4)491/13-14(06)]. The Deputy Chairman drew members' attention to his letter to the Chairman containing



the wording of a motion [LC Paper No. CB(4)491/13-14(05) tabled at the meeting] proposed by him.

### Briefing by the Administration

37. At the invitation of the Deputy Chairman, Under Secretary for Education ("US(Ed)") briefed members on the outcomes of the basket of targeted relief measures to address the temporary decline in Secondary One ("S1") student population in the first year of implementation, details of which were set out in the Administration's paper [LC Paper No. CB(4)469/13-14(03)].

*(The Chairman resumed the chair.)*

### Discussion

#### *Impact of the decline in S1 student population on secondary schools*

38. Ms Starry LEE was concerned about the possible closure of secondary schools as a result of the decline in S1 student population. She enquired about the number of secondary schools that operated two S1 classes only in the 2013-2014 school year and the number of secondary schools that had to apply for the development option in the 2013-2014 school year. US(Ed) informed members that in the 2013-2014 school year, seven public sector secondary schools operated two S1 classes and no secondary school had to apply to the EDB for the development option or cease its operation.

39. Dr Elizabeth QUAT was concerned that since "Band 1" secondary schools were more popular among parents, "Band 3" secondary schools would have a higher risk of closure due to under-enrolment of students as a result of the decline in S1 student population. Dr Helena WONG was concerned that although according to the Administration, there was no "school closure" policy, some schools would have no alternative but to cease operation as a result of under-enrolment.

40. US(Ed) said that as parents would choose a school which would be most suitable for their children, they would not invariably choose "Band 1" schools. He stressed that the relief measures aimed at preserving the stability and strengths of schools and the teaching force. However, the possibility of school closure could not be completely ruled out because individual schools might cease operation for various reasons.

41. Dr Priscilla LEUNG was of the view that the Administration should consider ways to develop a diversified secondary school sector, such as by assisting some schools which did not excel in academic performance to develop their unique strength and areas of excellence so that they could maintain their characteristics and sustain operation in the face of the drop in S1 student population.

42. Mr Tommy CHEUNG said that he was a member of the school management committee of a Direct Subsidy Scheme ("DSS") school. He pointed out that it was quite common for some DSS school students to pursue senior secondary education overseas after completing their junior secondary education in Hong Kong. He was concerned that should this trend persist, secondary classes in DSS schools would eventually be depleted of students, which would have an adverse impact on the subsidy received by DSS schools. Mr CHEUNG raised the question of whether the Administration would allow DSS schools to admit more students at S1 with the total number of students of the school to be capped, instead of capping the number of students at S1.

43. Whilst noting Mr CHEUNG's view, US(Ed) said that for the time being, there was no plan to introduce any change to the policy on student admission in respect of DSS schools.

44. Dr Kenneth CHAN considered that it was incumbent on the Administration to seize the opportunity of the decline in S1 student population to enhance the quality of education, such as implementing small class teaching, instead of focusing solely on various temporary relief measures to preserve schools and avoid redundancy of teachers. In this regard, US(Ed) highlighted that whether small class teaching in secondary schools should be adopted would require careful consideration. It should not be implemented simply for the sake of alleviating the impact of the temporary decline in student population on secondary schools.

45. Ms Starry LEE remarked that some "Band 1" schools currently using English as the Medium of Instruction ("MOI") were concerned about the increasing intake of students from schools of lower bandings. As these students might not be very strong in their English language abilities, schools currently using English as their MOI might ultimately be required to change their MOI if they were unable to fulfil the "student ability" criterion under the fine-tuned MOI arrangements. US(Ed) advised that the policy on MOI was a separate matter and should be considered in the context of teaching and learning so that the learning effectiveness of students would not be compromised. The current school-based MOI

arrangements of public sector secondary schools were underpinned by the prescribed criteria of student ability, teacher capability and support measures.

*Issues related to sustaining the teaching force*

46. Mr CHEUNG Kwok-che said that although one of the targeted relief measures was to extend the retention period for surplus teachers to three years, some secondary schools, notably "Band 3" schools, might have difficulty in recruiting teachers if the surplus teachers resigned during this retention period. He considered that the Administration should strengthen the manpower support for "Band 3" schools.

47. On the teacher manpower of secondary schools, US(Ed) said that on the basis of the relaxation of the criterion for approving S1 classes to 25 students per class starting from the 2012-2013 school year, secondary schools were allowed to operate two S1 classes with a minimum intake of 26 students, i.e. 13 students per class on average from the 2013-2014 school year. This would bring about a better teacher-to-student ratio. If there were surplus teachers arising from the packing of S1 classes in these schools, the schools concerned could flexibly deploy the surplus teachers for other worthwhile learning and teaching activities, such as providing support to cater for learner diversity.

48. Dr Fernando CHEUNG said that since students with special educational needs ("SEN students") usually studied in "Band 3" secondary schools due to their relatively weaker academic performance, adequate resources should be provided to these schools to cater for SEN students. Dr CHEUNG suggested that a higher weighting should be given to SEN students in determining the number of students for approving S1 classes. This would provide greater incentive for schools to admit SEN students and individual schools would have sufficient teaching manpower to cater for SEN students. US(Ed) noted members' concern over the support for SEN students, which had also been raised at the Subcommittee on Integrated Education. He said that Dr CHEUNG's suggestion would require careful study since the number of SEN students enrolled in a school and the level of support required by individual students might vary from time to time.

49. Mr Tommy CHEUNG said that in anticipation of the rebound in student population a few years later, the Administration should consider strengthening the professional development of serving teachers. The Chairman and the Deputy Chairman considered that while the targeted

relief measures implemented by EDB might be conducive to retaining the serving teachers, they could hardly attract young people to join the teaching profession.

50. US(Ed) noted members' views and highlighted that during the period when the secondary school sector experienced a temporary decline in secondary student population, schools could make use of the opportunity to make arrangement for their teachers to attend professional training to enhance their capacity to meet future challenges.

51. To allow sufficient time for discussion, the Chairman extended the meeting for 15 minutes to 5:45 pm.

*S1 places allocation arrangements*

52. Dr Helena WONG declared that she was a member and the Secretary of the Hong Kong Professional Teachers' Union ("HKPTU"). She referred to the survey conducted by HKPTU, as set out in the submission [LC Paper No CB(4)491/13-14(06)], and highlighted that about 80% of school principals opined that the targeted relief measures could not address the problems arising from a large number of surplus S1 places in individual districts, notably Shatin, Tuen Mun and the Eastern District. She was concerned that students in these districts would have a greater chance to get admitted to schools of a higher banding, thereby resulting in a mismatch between the level of attainment of some students and the prevailing requirements of certain schools. In addition, "Band 3" schools would suffer from under-enrolment and might eventually cease operation. In her view, the "2-1-1 option" implemented in the 2013-2014 school year was hardly effective. Hence, the number of students allocated to each S1 class should be further reduced in the 2014-2015 school year. Dr Kenneth CHAN shared a similar view.

53. Dr Elizabeth QUAT noted that according to the submissions received by the Panel, the estimated surplus S1 places for the 2013-2014 and 2014-2015 school years were 3 500 and 4 500 respectively. She sought confirmation from the Administration on whether the progressive reduction in the number of students allocated per S1 class, namely the "2-1-1 option"/"1-1-1 option" implemented from the 2013-2014 school year, would be able to address the increase in the estimated number of surplus S1 places in the 2014-2015 school year.

54. US(Ed) stressed that when putting in place the basket of targeted relief measures, including the district- and school-based "2-1-1

option"/"1-1-1 option", EDB had taken into account the views of different stakeholders and the anticipated rebound in secondary student population in a few years' time. It was worth to note that with the implementation of the relief measures in the 2013-2014 school year, only 12 out of the 388 public sector secondary schools participating in the Secondary School Places Allocation ("SSPA") exercise had each packed one S1 class (i.e. reduction of a total of 12 classes), which was far less than some stakeholders' projection of over 100 classes. US(Ed) further clarified that the estimation of the number of classes to be reduced should not be made simply by dividing the estimated number of surplus places by the number of students to be allocated to each class because there were other factors which would affect the number of S1 classes operated by a school. In the absence of any new justifications, the Administration would continue with the implementation of the progressive reduction of the number of students allocated per S1 class under the district- and school-based "2-1-1option"/"1-1-1 option" in the coming school years.

55. DS(Ed)2 explained that the Administration had projected the number of surplus S1 places with reference to the projected changes in student population. For the 2013-2014 school year, there would be a year-on-year drop of over 5 000 S1 students and the estimated number of surplus S1 places was about 3 200. For the 2014-2015 school year, the year-on-year drop of S1 students was about 2 800 and the estimated number of surplus S1 places was about 4 500. She further pointed out that not every S1 class was required to enrol students up to the full class size (i.e. 32 students under the "2-1-1 option" in the 2013-2014 school year) under the current relaxed criterion for approving S1 classes (i.e. 25 students per class). Hence, some schools could still operate the same number of classes even with less students enrolled for S1 than that in the last school year. It was therefore difficult to estimate with precision the number of S1 classes which would be reduced in the 2014-2015 school year.

56. Notwithstanding the explanation, Mr CHEUNG Kwok-che considered it important for the Administration to make a realistic projection on the number of classes which might be reduced in the 2014-2015 school year so that advance planning could be made. The Deputy Chairman concurred with Mr CHEUNG. He also expressed his regret that both SED and PS(Ed) had left the meeting and did not attend for the discussion of this agenda item.

57. Mr Michael TIEN noted the diversity of views among different stakeholders. For instance, parents were concerned about the chance of admission of their children to schools of their preference being dampened

upon reduction of places per S1 class. Some secondary schools were worried about the impact of under-enrolment of S1 students. Some "Band 1" schools that currently used English as MOI expressed the concern that if there was an increased intake of students of lower bandings, the MOI arrangement of the schools might be affected. Mr TIEN highlighted the need to ensure that the relief measures should strike a proper balance between the diverse needs of different stakeholders.

58. The Chairman asked whether the Administration would consider implementing additional measures to address the special circumstances of individual districts, in particular those districts with a large number of surplus S1 places. Ms Starry LEE enquired whether the number of students allocated to each S1 class could be further reduced according to the needs of the districts concerned.

59. US(Ed) reiterated that the progressive reduction in the number of students allocated to each S1 class under the "2-1-1 option"/"1-1-1 option" was the broad consensus reached by EDB with the secondary school sector and had taken into account varying circumstances among districts and schools. Any further reduction in the number of students to be allocated to each S1 class in particular districts might not necessarily solve the problem arising from surplus places in these districts. Parents might be worried about less chance of admission for their children as a result of such further reduction, and might therefore decide to apply for places in schools outside the school net to which their children belonged.

60. At about 5:45 pm, the Chairman sought members' view on further extending the meeting to complete discussion of the item. Members raised no objection.

#### The motion

61. The Chairman referred to the letter from the Deputy Chairman containing the wording of a motion [LC Paper No. CB(4)491/13-14(05)] and reminded members that the meeting had been extended beyond its appointed time. He recalled that upon conclusion of the previous agenda item IV, he had requested the Deputy Chairman to take over the chair as he had to attend briefly another meeting. Assuming that the Deputy Chairman had already sought the agreement of members to deal with the motion at this meeting, the Chairman said that he had not raised this matter after resuming the chair. Mr CHEUNG Kwok-che said that the Chairman should proceed to deal with the motion as a copy of the wording of the motion had already been laid on the table before members.

62. At the invitation of the Chairman, the Clerk advised that in accordance with House Rule 24A(e), a motion might be dealt with and disposed of during the period of extension of a committee meeting provided that the motion had been proposed and agreed to be dealt with during the original appointed meeting time. At the beginning of this agenda item, the Deputy Chairman had told members that he intended to move a motion under this item. This took place within the original appointed meeting time. However, at that juncture, a quorum was not present and subsequently, there was no express agreement among members to deal with the motion. Under such circumstances, the Clerk suggested that it might not be procedurally sound to come to the view that there had been an agreement among members during the original appointed meeting time to deal with the motion.

63. The Deputy Chairman stated that he had reminded members of the motion at about 4:50 pm while the Panel meeting was in progress, and that the lack of a quorum at that juncture might not necessarily mean that there was no agreement among members to deal with the motion. The Chairman suggested and members agreed to deal with the motion at the next meeting to be held on 14 April 2014.

*(Post-meeting note: The letter containing the wording of Mr IP Kin-yuen's motion tabled at the meeting was issued to members vide LC Paper No. CB(4)491/13-14(05) on 19 March 2014. On the instruction of the Chairman, the motion was included on the agenda of the Panel meeting to be held on 14 April 2014. Members were notified vide LC Paper No. CB(4)495/13-14 on 20 March 2014.)*

## **VI. Any other business**

64. Due to the heavy agenda of the next regular meeting, the Chairman said that he would consider extending the duration of the next regular meeting beyond 7:00 pm. Members would be notified the meeting arrangements in due course.

65. There being no other business, the meeting ended at 5:55 pm.

**Panel on Education**

**Meeting on Tuesday, 18 March 2014, at 2:30 pm**

**Agenda item IV: Issues related to the governance and regulation of the self-financing post-secondary education sector**

**Summary of views and concerns expressed by deputations/individuals**

No.	Name of deputation/individual	Major views and concerns
1.	Yew Chung Community College	While welcoming the setting up of the Self-financing Post-secondary Scholarship Scheme for students pursuing self-financing post-secondary programmes, the institution was of the view that the Scheme would mainly benefit those students pursuing programmes of duration longer than two years but not those on two-year sub-degree programmes. This was because applications had to be made on the basis of the academic results for the preceding two academic years. The institution considered that details of the assessment criteria under the Quality Enhancement Support Scheme ("QESS") should be clearly spelt out to facilitate application by institutions. The institution highlighted the need to put in place a common forum for all self-financing post-secondary institutions in Hong Kong to exchange views.
2.	Hong Kong Buddhist College [LC Paper No. CB(4)469/13-14(07)]	The institution considered that the Government should strengthen support for the development of the self-financing post-secondary education sector, such as by redeploying the resources earmarked to subsidize students to study overseas to support the development of local self-financing post secondary institutions. Partial subsidy should be provided to all students pursuing self-financing post-secondary programmes. To ensure a level playing field, all post-secondary institutions validated by the Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications ("HKCAAVQ") should be eligible to offer the publicly-funded New Yi Jin Diploma programme.
3.	The Hong Kong Polytechnic University [LC Paper No. CB(4)469/13-14(08)]	The institution shared the findings of a benchmarking exercise conducted recently that the performance of its graduates and the quality of its programmes were comparable to that of community colleges in the United States. In the institution's view, the existing quality assurance and regulatory mechanisms in respect of the self-financing post-secondary sector were effective.
4.	Hong Kong Institute of Technology	The institution expressed its support for the setting up of a single quality assurance body for the self-financing post-secondary education sector so as to ensure consistency and fairness. While agreeing that relevant amendments could be made to the Post Secondary Colleges Ordinance (Cap.320) ("PSCO") to enhance the governance and regulation of the sector, the institution considered the setting up of a single quality assurance body a more effective means to achieve the



No.	Name of deputation/individual	Major views and concerns
		same goal. The institution highlighted the difficulties to provide support for students with special educational needs due to the lack of resources provided by the Government in this regard.
5.	The Open University of Hong Kong	The institution suggested that the Administration / the self-financing post-secondary education sector should explore ways to provide student hostels with a view to enhancing university education.
6.	The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology	While the institution did not offer any self-financing post-secondary programmes, it supported the development of sub-degree programmes to provide more study pathways for young people. Sub-degree graduates who were admitted by the institution to articulate to its senior-year undergraduate programmes performed well academically.
7.	Hong Kong College of Technology	The institution highlighted the diversity of the self-financing post-secondary education sector as different pieces of governing legislation were in place and the study programmes offered were subject to different quality assurance requirements. Hence, the institution urged the Government / members to take into account the diversified nature of the sector when considering the regulation of the sector.
8.	The University of Hong Kong	The institution informed the Panel that HKCAAVQ, the University Grants Committee ("UGC"), and the Heads of Universities Committees had formed a Tripartite Working Group to formulate broad recommendations on a quality assurance mechanism for the self-financing post-secondary sector. The Education Bureau also participated as an observer. The institution considered that the Administration should draw reference from overseas jurisdictions such as Japan, South Korea and the United States where many renowned universities were privately run but were in receipt of government subsidies. It agreed that the existing PSCO should be reviewed and suitably amended to keep pace with the development of the private university sector.
9.	SCAD Hong Kong [LC Paper No. CB(4)469/13-14(09)]	The institution expressed support for the implementation of a single quality assurance body so as to create a level playing field for all locally-accredited post-secondary programmes. It also explained that the existing quality assurance system had resulted in separate and unequal treatment of locally accredited non-local post-secondary programmes.
10.	Kaplan Business and Accountancy School [LC Paper No. CB(4)469/13-14(10)]	The institution expressed support for the setting up of a single regulatory body to oversee all self-financed sub-degree programmes to promote the healthy development and maturity of the self-financing post-secondary education sector. The institution suggested that an overall student number allocation policy similar to the one practiced by UGC for all UGC-funded institutions should

No.	Name of deputation/individual	Major views and concerns
		be introduced. While welcoming the transformation of the Tripartite Liaison Committee into the Liaison Committee on Quality Assurance, it considered the arrangement inadequate in regulating the present situation of the sector.
11.	City University of Hong Kong [LC Paper No. CB(4)496/13-14(01)]	To enhance students' learning experience and increase their international exposure, the institution suggested that additional funding from QESS should be allocated for promoting students' participation in overseas exchange programmes and internship programmes.
12.	Hong Kong Baptist University [LC Paper No. CB(4)477/13-14(03)]	The institution urged the Administration to set up a common standard to regulate 2-year and 4-year self-financing post-secondary programmes. Guidelines should be clearly set for the self-financing post-secondary education sector on both the hardware (such as institutional facilities, teaching equipment, maximum student capacity, etc.) and software (such as number of teaching staff, student-teacher ratio, etc.) provided by the institutions. The institution also suggested that the Administration should provide greater financial assistance to students pursuing self-financing study programmes.
13.	Tung Wah College [LC Paper No CB(4)491/13-14(01)]	The institution expressed support for the establishment of a single, publicly-funded quality assurance body so as to create a level playing ground for all self-financing post-secondary institutions. It also stressed the importance of organizational, financial and academic autonomy for the institutions. While supporting the Government's direction in reviewing and revising PSCO, the institution would look forward to a less restrictive and more updated ordinance.
14.	Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications [LC Paper No. CB(4)469/13-14(11)]	HKCAAVQ expressed support for the Administration's initiative to establish an external quality audit mechanism for sub-degree programmes of the UGC-funded institutions.
15.	Hong Kong Shue Yan University [LC Paper No. CB(4)469/13-14(12)]	The institution, being the only private university regulated under PSCO, expressed support for the technical amendments proposed by the Administration in November 2012 to remove anomalous and obsolete requirements on self-financing post-secondary institutions. The institution cited a recent incident that the prolonged process of seeking accreditation and the approval of the Chief Executive in Council for its new programme could have been shortened if PSCO was suitably amended to change the approving authority from the Chief Executive in Council to the Permanent Secretary for Education.

No.	Name of deputation/individual	Major views and concerns
16.	Centennial College [LC Paper No. CB(4)469/13-14(13)]	The institution emphasized the importance of a high degree of autonomy and flexibility in institutional operation and development. It expressed support for the establishment of a single oversight body for the post-secondary education sector to coordinate quality assurance activities currently conducted by the Quality Assurance Council, the Joint Quality Review Committee ("JQRC") and HKCAAVQ in order to maintain consistency and ensure sustainability of the institutions of the sector. The institution also urged the Administration to thoroughly review PSCO to further streamline the procedures so as to put in place a more facilitating legislative framework for the healthy development of the sector.
17.	Joint Quality Review Committee [LC Paper No. CB(4)469/13-14(14) ]	JQRC highlighted the distinction between self-accrediting institutions which usually had a longer history and established internal quality assurance systems, and newer non-self-accrediting institutions. It considered that self-accrediting institutions should retain their autonomy in offering study programmes without requiring external accreditation. Nevertheless, JQRC recognized the need to rationalize the functions currently performed by different quality assurance bodies and supported the establishment of an oversight body to coordinate their activities.
18.	The Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts	While welcoming the introduction of a quality assurance system across the post-secondary education sector, the institution was of the view that due consideration should be given to the uniqueness of each institution, its pedagogy and the programmes it offered.
19.	The Chinese University of Hong Kong	In formulating a single quality assurance mechanism for the post-secondary education sector in the longer term, the institution stressed that it was necessary to take into account the unique vision and mission of individual institutions of the sector. The institution also welcomed the establishment of a quality assurance mechanism in the longer run to replace JQRC in overseeing self-financing sub-degree programmes offered by UGC-funded institutions.
20.	HKBU Self-financing Programmes Concern Group	The Group was of the view that the provision of higher education had become commercialized. It expressed serious concern about the exorbitant tuition fees charged on self-financing programmes, resulting in a heavy financial burden on students. For instance, the tuition fee of self-financing degree programmes of the College of International Education of the Hong Kong Baptist University had risen by 19% in the 2013-2014 academic year. The Group called for greater transparency in the financial operations of self-financing post-secondary institutions, in particular in setting the level of and increase in tuition fees. It also urged the Government to relax the requirements regarding students' application for financial assistance.

No.	Name of deputation/individual	Major views and concerns
21.	Students' Union of Tung Wah College	The Union referred to recent incidents which occurred at the Tung Wah College, and considered that they reflected mis-management on the part of the institution. The Union was gravely concerned that EDB had not exercised sufficient regulatory oversight over the practices and governance of self-financing post-secondary institutions. It urged the Administration to introduce necessary amendments to PSCO to provide for the participation of student representatives and teaching staff in the governing body of the institutions.
22.	Hong Kong Professional Teachers' Union [LC Paper No CB(4)491/13-14(02)]	The Union was of the view that the Government had not exercised sufficient regulation over the self-financing post-secondary sector despite its rapid growth in the past decade. The over-admission of students by a number of institutions and the recent incidents of mis-management at Tung Wah College were clear examples of the lack of regulatory oversight. The Union urged the Government to set up a single quality assurance body for the entire sector as recommended by UGC in its Report on Higher Education Review 2010, and to ensure that sufficient publicly-funded articulation places were available for graduates of sub-degree programmes.
23.	Professor Thomas WONG Former President of Tung Wah College	Professor WONG considered that the division of functions between the board of governors and the council of an institution, as well as the composition of these two bodies, should be clearly spelt out in PSCO to ensure effective governance and balanced representation. He was gravely concerned about the long time taken in the process of accreditation, approval and review of self-financing post-secondary programmes and the possible abuse, if any, which might arise. He suggested that the cap on the admission of students from the Mainland, Taiwan and Macao should be relaxed to allow self-financing institutions greater flexibility in admission.

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