

For information
on 20.7.2021

Legislative Council Panel on Manpower

Greater Bay Area Youth Employment Scheme

Purpose

This paper briefs Members on the Greater Bay Area Youth Employment Scheme and its latest development.

Background

2. The Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (GBA) is accorded the status of key strategic planning in the country's development blueprint. Through close cooperation amongst Guangdong, Hong Kong and Macao, promoting coordinated economic development of GBA, and leveraging the complementary advantages of the three places, new impetus will be injected into the economic development of the area. This will, at the same time, create huge development opportunities for Hong Kong enterprises and young people.

3. The Greater Bay Area Youth Employment Scheme (the Scheme) is one of the initiatives announced by the Chief Executive in the 2020 Policy Address. The HKSAR Government has allocated HK\$376 million from the Anti-epidemic Fund to encourage and support young people to work in the GBA Mainland cities, thereby fostering their appreciation of the latest development of Hong Kong and GBA Mainland cities, and grasping of the career development opportunities in the area. The Scheme was launched on 8 January 2021.

Content of the Scheme

4. The Scheme encourages enterprises with businesses in both Hong Kong and the Mainland cities of GBA to employ university graduates from Hong Kong and station them to work in the GBA Mainland cities. To deepen Hong Kong young people's understanding of the innovation and technology (I&T) development in GBA, and to complement the establishment of an

“international technology innovation hub” in GBA, among the 2 000 places offered by the Scheme, around 700 of them are designated for I&T positions¹.

5. Participating enterprises shall engage the target graduates under Hong Kong Law, offer them a monthly salary of not less than HK\$18,000 and station the graduates in the GBA Mainland cities to work and receive on-the-job training (graduates taking up I&T posts shall work in both Hong Kong and GBA Mainland cities, with each place taking up about 6 to 12 months). The graduates shall report for duty no later than 31 August 2021. To encourage enterprises to participate in the Scheme and compensate their additional expenses in training the graduates, the HKSAR Government will pay enterprises a monthly allowance of HK\$10,000 for each graduate engaged up to 18 months.

6. Hong Kong residents holding bachelor's degrees or above awarded by local universities/ tertiary institutions or universities/ tertiary institutions outside Hong Kong in 2019 to 2021 and are legally employable in Hong Kong are eligible to join. Graduates applying for I&T posts should have degrees related to science, technology, engineering and mathematics (“STEM”), or possess relevant hands on skills of the above subjects.

Publicity and Promotion

7. The Labour Department (LD), in conjunction with the Innovation and Technology Bureau, is responsible for coordinating and implementing the Scheme. A dedicated website (www.jobs.gov.hk/gbayes) has been set up to provide latest information on the Scheme. The dedicated website links up with LD’s Interactive Employment Service (iES) website to facilitate enterprises interested in participating in the Scheme to submit job vacancy information. Eligible graduates can also search and apply for suitable job through the iES website.

8. Since the launching of the Scheme, the HKSAR Government has been actively liaising with the business sector, including co-organising online seminars with business associations and chambers to promote the Scheme to their employer members and encourage various enterprises to participate. The Scheme has received active support from many business associations and

¹ I&T posts include, but are not limited to, work related to research and development, information technology, data analysis, system development, digital marketing, engineering, information security, as well as technology-related intellectual property, and technology transfer.

enterprises. The Scheme Secretariat has received job vacancies of various positions from different industries which created employment and training opportunities in GBA for the graduates.

9. The HKSAR Government has launched a series of publicity activities, including advertising in newspapers, recruitment magazines, recruitment websites and major modes of public transport; launching radio Announcements in the Public Interest; promoting the Scheme on different websites, mobile apps and online search tools in order to reach more young people and encourage eligible graduates to participate in the Scheme. LD has also staged large-scale physical and online job fairs in March to provide a convenient and effective platform for recruitment by participating enterprises and job application by eligible graduates. More than 700 job seekers visited the event in person and 2 145 online applications were recorded. On the other hand, the HKSAR Government has approached universities and degree-awarding institutions, as well as the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation and Cyberport, to enlist their support in promoting the Scheme. In April and May 2021, eleven online briefing sessions were co-organised with the universities to introduce the Scheme and encourage their graduates to enroll in it.

Supportive Measures for Eligible Graduates

Employment rights and benefits

10. Graduates participating in the Scheme will be employed by Hong Kong enterprises and stationed in the GBA Mainland cities. Both parties are required to sign a written employment contract which specifies that the employment contract must be in compliance with relevant Hong Kong legislation and fall under the purview of Hong Kong Law. All job vacancies submitted by participating enterprises will be vetted by the Scheme Secretariat to ensure their compliance with the Scheme requirements. In addition, upon the engagement of graduates under the Scheme, LD will follow up with the graduates to protect their employment rights and benefits.

Information on working and living in GBA

11. The HKSAR Government has set up a dedicated website for the Scheme and vacancies received under the Scheme have been uploaded to the website after vetting. Eligible graduates can search and apply for suitable job vacancies through the website. LD has uploaded details of the Scheme, as well as practical information about working and living in GBA to the dedicated

website for reference by the graduates so as to help them prepare for working and living in GBA. In addition, LD's Youth Employment Start has organised three talks since March by inviting guest speakers with rich knowledge of the Mainland to share their experience of working and living on the Mainland (including GBA) with young people who are interested in the Scheme or are preparing for their employment in GBA.

Support for living in the Mainland

12. To support the Scheme, the Guangdong Provincial Government has announced that, during the implementation of the Scheme, regions with the means may provide living allowances not exceeding RMB1,000 (HK\$1,190) per month to each participating graduate. Furthermore, participating graduates in need of living and emotional support in the Mainland may seek assistance through the Guangdong 12355 Hong Kong and Macao Youths hotline to obtain various information and support on working and living in the Mainland. Hotline staff may refer the graduates to obtain offline follow-up services from youth organisations as the situation warrants.

Quarantine

13. Hong Kong residents currently entering Shenzhen from Hong Kong are required to undergo 14 days of centralised quarantine and medical surveillance. To facilitate the graduates to start working in GBA as soon as possible, the HKSAR Government has arranged the graduates to travel to Shenzhen as a group and undergo the 14-day centralised quarantine, with the first batch departed on 12 July.

Latest Progress

14. The Scheme has received active support from business associations and enterprises since its launch on 8 January. As at 30 June, over 377 enterprises offered more than 2 887 job vacancies, including 1 411 general posts and 1 476 I&T posts. Participating enterprises come from various industries, including many well-known enterprises as well as small and medium enterprises.

15. As at 30 June, job-seekers have submitted a total of 9 013 applications for job vacancies under the Scheme through the online application function of the Scheme's dedicated website. The Scheme allows enterprises to recruit via different channels, and graduates may apply directly to participating

enterprises without going through the dedicated website. To get a fuller picture of the application status, a survey on the participating enterprises was conducted earlier on. Based on the survey, it is estimated that, together with job applications received through other channels, the total number of job applications should have exceeded 18 000.

16. At present, enterprises are still recruiting graduates to fill job vacancies under the Scheme. Enterprises having successfully recruited eligible graduates may submit preliminary applications for allowance after the graduates have reported for duty. As at 30 June, the Scheme Secretariat has received 350 preliminary applications for allowance.

Concluding remarks

17. The HKSAR Government will closely monitor the implementation of the Scheme, review it in a timely manner, and adjust the implementation details when necessary.

Labour and Welfare Bureau
Innovation and Technology Bureau
Labour Department
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