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Panel on Education

Subcommittee on Promoting the Development of Hong Kong into an International Education Hub

Purpose

This paper reports on the deliberations of the Subcommittee on Promoting the Development of Hong Kong into an International Education Hub (“the Subcommittee”) formed under the Panel on Education (“the Panel”).

Background

2. President XI Jinping has pointed out that a leading country in education is led by higher education. Hong Kong should strive to introduce overseas educational resources and go global, so as to make our country an influential and important education hub in the world.

3. As a cosmopolitan city, Hong Kong’s education is highly internationalized and diversified, with the potential to become an international education hub. The Chief Executive’s 2023 Policy Address sets out the strategic directions and objectives for enhancing the quality of education in Hong Kong, with a view to developing Hong Kong into “an international post-secondary education hub and a cradle of future talents”, so as to bring greater benefits to Hong Kong students. The Chief Executive’s 2024 Policy Address further proposes to establish the “Study in Hong Kong” brand and make every effort to develop Hong Kong into an international post-secondary education hub, so as to give full play to Hong Kong’s education as an integral part of the national education system and tie in with our country’s education development goal.

The Subcommittee

4. At its meeting on 3 May 2024, the Panel decided to set up a subcommittee to explore ways to expedite the development of Hong Kong into an international education hub. The Subcommittee commenced its work in June 2024 and its terms of reference are set out in **Appendix 1**.

5. Hon TANG Fei and Prof Hon William WONG Kam-fai are the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the Subcommittee respectively. The membership list of the Subcommittee is in **Appendix 2**. The Subcommittee has held four meetings and visited Hong Kong Metropolitan University (“HKMU”)¹ to learn about the important role played by vocational and professional education and training (“VPET”) in promoting Hong Kong into an international education hub.

6. To facilitate members’ discussion, the Subcommittee has requested the Research Office of the Legislative Council Secretariat to conduct a study on how the United Kingdom and Australia have developed themselves into international education hubs and prepare a [Fact Sheet](#).

Deliberations of the Subcommittee

Policy objectives and development strategies

7. Members generally support the development of Hong Kong into an international education hub and consider that the setting of clear objectives and strategies is the key to successful implementation of the initiative.

8. According to the Administration, many countries and cities in the world have the aspirations to become an education hub, and each economy has considered its own unique characteristics and developed its own positioning and strategies. In the case of Hong Kong, the Government’s goal is to build on our strengths to attract more outstanding talents from around the world, provide local students with broader international perspectives, and nurture a diversified pool of talents, with a view to strengthening Hong Kong’s momentum of development while contributing to national development; and the strategy is to build on our strengths with local universities as our anchor whilst promoting networks for connection and partnerships at the national, regional and international levels.

¹ HKMU has become the first University of Applied Sciences in Hong Kong since March 2024.

9. There are views that the development of Hong Kong into an international education hub should not focus solely on post-secondary education. In particular, as Hong Kong has more than 50 international schools and the International Baccalaureate examination results of Direct Subsidy Scheme schools rank among the best globally, basic education already has considerable potential to facilitate Hong Kong as an international education hub. Some members, however, agree with the Administration's strategy of focusing on developing an international post-secondary education hub first.

10. As advised by the Administration, it is a well-considered decision to focus on developing an international post-secondary education hub at this stage. The Government is committed to supporting the development of a vibrant international school sector to meet the demand for international school places from non-local families living in Hong Kong and families coming to Hong Kong for work or investment. If non-local primary and secondary students are admitted to study in Hong Kong on their own², the various support and ancillary arrangements (including accommodation and visas, etc.) will have to be improved to cater for their needs in areas such as learning, living, personal growth and mental health. Some members have pointed out that if the Administration decides to admit non-local primary and secondary students to study in Hong Kong on their own, it will have to review the relevant legislative arrangements and establish a comprehensive guardianship system in the first place.

11. Some members have pointed out that while the development of an international education hub can bring economic benefits to Hong Kong, institutions should aim at nurturing talents and exporting the soft power of the country, and should not arbitrarily discontinue the offering of disciplines that do not have substantial economic benefits. At the same time, the Administration should review the strategies of developing Hong Kong into an international education hub on an ongoing basis, so as to keep abreast of the times and seize new opportunities to further promote internationalization and diversification of post-secondary education in the light of the complex and volatile international environment.

12. The Administration has taken note of members' views and stressed that cultivating values and nurturing people is the core mission of education; nurturing a new generation is the goal of the SAR Government; and it is the direction of the SAR Government to strive to create multiple pathways for students to provide strong impetus for Hong Kong's growth,

² That is, dependent children who are not admitted under various talent admission schemes.

and to leverage Hong Kong's role as an international education hub to contribute to the building of a leading country in education.

High-level coordination

13. The Chief Executive announced in the 2024 Policy Address the establishment of the Committee on Education, Technology and Talents. Led by the Chief Secretary for Administration, the Committee will coordinate and drive the integrated development of education, technology and talents, with a view to establishing an international education hub.

14. Members recognize the establishment of the Committee on Education, Technology and Talents to promote Hong Kong as the focal point of international high-calibre talent, thereby establishing an international education hub. However, some members have expressed concern as to how the Committee will formulate a targeted work plan for building and promoting the "Study in Hong Kong" brand, and whether there will be duplication of efforts between the Committee and other similar committees/programmes, such as the Hong Kong Talent Engage Office under the Labour and Welfare Bureau.

15. The Administration has responded that the Committee on Education, Technology and Talents held its first meeting in December 2024 to discuss the work plan on promoting Hong Kong into an international hub for high-calibre talent. To enhance the system, aggregation and synergy of policies, the Committee will coordinate cross-bureaux efforts in promoting integrated development of education, technology and talent.

Vocational and professional education and training as an enabler

16. Some members are of the view that the boundaries among academic, comprehensive and career-oriented universities are becoming increasingly blurred and there is a trend of convergence. If an international post-secondary education hub is to be promoted, the Administration should not only focus on comprehensive universities. Hence, members are pleased to note that the Administration has been actively promoting the high-quality development of VPET, including the establishment of universities of applied sciences ("UASs")³, so as to enhance the status of VPET at degree level and nurture more professionals with applied knowledge and skills. In addition, members have stressed that VPET plays a very important role in developing Hong Kong as an international education hub. Hence, they hope that the Administration will continue to coordinate and support self-financing post-

³ There are currently two UASs: HKMU and Saint Francis University.

secondary institutions to develop into UASs, and advise on the development and planning of UASs.

17. The Administration has responded that the Government is committed to promoting the development of VPET under the strategy of “fostering industry-institution collaboration and diversified development” and as a pathway parallel to conventional academic education, so as to nurture higher-quality talent with applied knowledge and skills. In particular, the Government is actively promoting the development of UAS to provide an alternative pathway to success for young people who aspire to pursue careers in professional skills sectors. In this connection, the Government has provided a series of financial and ancillary support measures to encourage self-financing institutions to plan ahead and develop along the relevant direction, and support UASs and prospective self-financing post-secondary institutions to form an “Alliance of Universities of Applied Sciences” (“UAS Alliance”)⁴ for joint promotion at both local and international levels.

18. Members are of the view that the Administration should make good use of the international connections of the UAS Alliance to publicize the achievements of VPET in Hong Kong and help UAS Alliance strengthen its exchanges and cooperation with institutions of applied sciences in different places, so as to become a VPET platform in Asia and attract more non-local students (in particular those from the member states of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (“ASEAN”)⁵ and the Belt and Road (“B&R”) countries) to enrol in VPET programmes in Hong Kong, thereby supporting the development of Hong Kong as an international post-secondary education hub.

19. Members have suggested that the Administration should, in collaboration with the UAS Alliance, keep a close watch on global developments and encourage institutions to offer new disciplines in response to market demand; and enhance the quality and recognition of VPET to establish a brand for VPET disciplines (similar to the culinary programmes offered by Le Cordon Bleu in France). This will not only enhance the competitiveness of students in their career development pathways, but also attract students from all over the world to come to Hong Kong to take VPET programmes, thereby developing an international post-secondary education

⁴ The UAS Alliance was officially launched in November 2024. The Alliance comprises four post-secondary institutions as founding members, with HKMU and Saint Francis University as full members, and Tung Wah College and Technological and Higher Education Institute of Hong Kong as associate members.

⁵ ASEAN member states include Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam.

hub.

20. Some members have pointed out that the two existing UASs are self-financing institutions, which set their tuition fees on a self-financing basis. The tuition fees are therefore not affordable to some non-local students who intend to pursue VPET. On the other hand, those better-off non-local students may tend to opt for the programmes offered by the University Grants Committee (“UGC”)-funded universities, which are more well-known with similar tuition fee level.

21. According to the Administration, the SAR Government and various post-secondary institutions provide a wide range of scholarships to recognize outstanding students and attract more students from outside Hong Kong to pursue studies in Hong Kong. HKMU has further explained that as a self-financing institution with limited financial resources, it introduced scholarships and bursaries specifically for non-local students in the past few years to alleviate their financial pressure. HKMU has also started to plan how to further enhance its financial support particularly for students from less well-off families in the future.

22. Some members are of the view that in order to promote the successful development of VPET, the Administration should seek to raise the status of VPET and improve the community’s perception towards VPET, including supporting secondary schools to implement Qualifications Framework (“QF”) programmes to link up with UAS’s programmes for the provision of an articulation pathway; reviewing the reporting of the results of Applied Learning subjects; linking up with the programmes offered by Mainland and overseas VPET institutions; providing internship opportunities and arranging job-matching for students; expanding the scope of programmes under the Study Subsidy Scheme for Designated Professions/Sectors; and considering the inclusion of UAS as publicly-funded universities in the long run.

Stepping up publicity and promotion

23. Members have noted that UGC has earmarked \$20.47 million for the Heads of Universities Committee’s Standing Committee on Internationalisation (“HUCOMSCI”) to promote the “Study in Hong Kong” brand. Some members have enquired about the specific publicity strategies of HUCOMSCI.

24. As advised by the Administration, the eight UGC-funded universities have jointly set up HUCOMSCI and established the “Study in Hong Kong” brand to attract more students from outside Hong Kong to

pursue further studies in Hong Kong. The Education Bureau (“EDB”) and the UGC Secretariat have been actively collaborating with HUCOMSCI to enhance the publicity and promotion of the “Study in Hong Kong” brand, expand the international network and recruit more students from different regions to pursue further studies in Hong Kong. To support the universities in stepping up their efforts in this regard, UGC has allocated funding for HUCOMSCI to organize overseas promotion activities, such as participating in international higher education exhibitions, including Asia-Pacific Association for International Education Conference and Exhibition, NAFSA: Association of International Educators Annual Conference and Expo, and European Association for International Education Conference and Exhibition. Delegations of universities also participate in overseas education expo and recruitment roadshows every year through HUCOMSCI to strengthen the ties with their overseas counterparts.

25. Members are of the view that stepping up overseas promotion of Hong Kong’s post-secondary education can help develop Hong Kong into an international education hub. However, the existing strategies for promoting the “Study in Hong Kong” brand lacks focus. A task force should be set up to formulate effective promotion plans and draw reference from the practices of other places to establish an official body (e.g. the British Council, Study in Australia), so as to promote Hong Kong as an international education hub and assist institutions in recruiting non-local students progressively.

26. In addition, some members have pointed out that the content and standard of the Announcement in the Public Interest (“API”) promoting the “Study in Hong Kong” brand need to be improved. They have suggested that the content of API should focus on post-secondary education, with detailed information on Hong Kong’s top universities (including UASs), world-renowned scientific research, development with Mainland institutions, and the advantages of the Greater Bay Area, etc. The Administration can also briefly introduce Hong Kong’s quality kindergartens, primary schools and secondary schools in API, with a view to attracting enterprises and investments, as well as attracting and retaining talents.

27. The Administration has noted members’ views and explained that Hong Kong’s overseas Economic and Trade Offices (“ETOs”) have been supporting EDB in promoting the “Study in Hong Kong” brand overseas. Moreover, the Secretary for Education (“SED”) has travelled with representatives of post-secondary institutions to participate in education expos or related promotional activities in different places. As for API, EDB has undertaken to review and enhance its content.

28. The Chief Executive's 2024 Policy Address announced that Hong Kong will strive to host international education conferences and exhibitions, so as to promote the development of Hong Kong into an international post-secondary education hub. Members agree that this will accentuate Hong Kong's image as an international education hub. Some members have pointed out that Hong Kong should also organize more large-scale exhibitions and exchange conferences on academic and scientific research. This will not only bring together education and scientific research talent from all over the world, but also showcase the outstanding achievements of Hong Kong's post-secondary education to the world, thereby facilitating the promotion of the "Study in Hong Kong" brand. There are views suggesting that the Administration should draw reference from the Singapore Government in earmarking resources to encourage post-secondary institutions and academic staff members to organize academic research exhibitions.

29. As advised by the Administration, the Government will showcase the strengths of Hong Kong's education through publicity on various fronts to export Hong Kong's higher education, including participating in international academic events and promoting the "Study in Hong Kong" brand. This endeavour is not confined to UGC-funded universities, and self-financing institutions will also participate actively. The Government will take the form of a "Hong Kong Team", under which SED will lead different institutions to jointly promote the characteristics of Hong Kong's education, so as to enhance other places' understanding of Hong Kong's higher education and promote international collaboration.

Improving hostel facilities

30. Members are of the view that accommodation is a fundamental requirement for non-local students studying in Hong Kong and a key factor in attracting talent to universities. However, shortage of student hostel places will become more acute when a large number of non-local students coming to Hong Kong, thereby discouraging them to come to Hong Kong. Members are concerned whether future supply of student hostels can cope with the anticipated increase in the number of non-local students.

31. As advised by the Administration, under the Hostel Development Fund ("HDF"), the UGC-funded universities are provided with a capital grant covering up to 75% of the construction costs for 15 student hostel projects to provide a total of about 13 500 additional hostel places, with a target for gradual completion by 2027. Based on the data provided by the UGC-funded universities, the total number of hostel places (including publicly-funded, privately-funded and temporary hostel places) available for

allocation in September 2023 was around 37 600. Taking into account the future supply from the projects under HDF, the number of hostel places will gradually increase to around 50 000 in the coming few years, to cater for the needs of students, including those arising from the additional intake.

32. Members have urged EDB to play its leading role and improve hostel facilities in a holistic and multi-faceted manner. First of all, the Administration should formulate medium to long-term hostel targets. Then it should proactively explore with relevant departments, institutions and various sectors flexible and innovative ways to increase the supply of hostels, including allocating idle lands in the vicinity to the post-secondary institutions concerned for the construction of academic buildings or hostels; relaxing the plot ratio of land adjacent to universities in rural areas to allow for greater flexibility in university expansion; and providing financial incentives (such as tax concessions) to encourage enterprises to participate in the development of student hostels. In addition, the Administration are invited to consider providing non-local students with a guaranteed term of hostel residence.

33. According to the Administration, a pilot scheme will be launched to streamline the processing of applications in relation to planning, lands and building plans, so as to encourage the market to increase the supply of student hostels by converting hotels and other commercial buildings on a self-financing and privately-funded basis. The Government will also make available suitable sites for the private sector to build new hostels, having regard to market demand. In addition, under the prevailing mechanism, the universities may apply to the Government for granting additional sites for campus expansion if they have strong justifications and specific proposals, which will then be considered by the bureaux and departments concerned from relevant perspectives such as policy, resources, practical circumstances, planning and land administration, etc. The universities could also as necessary apply for a relaxation of development parameters for the proposed sites, including building height restrictions and plot ratios, etc, which will be processed in accordance with the statutory procedures and established arrangements by the Town Planning Board and relevant departments.

34. Some members have suggested that the Administration should, in the long run, seek the support of the silver-hair power and invite quality silver-hair families to serve as host families for non-local students on a trial basis, so as to enable non-local students to gain rich living experience and understanding of the Hong Kong society, and to feel a sense of home. The Administration has responded that it has considered the host family arrangement as one of the ways to increase the number of hostels. However, given the small living space in Hong Kong, such an arrangement

may not be suitable. As mentioned above, the Government is adopting a multi-pronged approach to increase the number of hostels.

Optimizing admission and programme offering arrangements

35. Members are pleased to note that the Administration has taken on board Members' suggestion to increase the non-local student quota of UGC-funded universities. However, members are of the view that consideration should be given to relaxing and standardizing the non-local student quota of self-financing post-secondary institutions, so as not to miss out on top-notch talents.

36. As advised by the Administration, there is currently an admission quota of 10% to 20% for Mainland, Macao and Taiwan ("MMT") students enrolling in full-time locally accredited self-financing local sub-degree and undergraduate (including top-up degree) programmes, but not for postgraduate programmes. To date, a total of six local self-financing post-secondary institutions have obtained approval from the Ministry of Education ("MoE") to admit Mainland students to their degree programmes (including undergraduate and postgraduate programmes)⁶. EDB has obtained approval from MoE to increase in phases the quota for MMT students of full-time locally-accredited self-financing local sub-degree and undergraduate (including top-up degree) programmes of the abovementioned six institutions to 40% with effect from the 2025-2026 academic year. EDB will continue to keep in view the operation of these institutions and liaise with MoE to explore feasible further enhancements as and when appropriate.

37. Some members have pointed out that at present, many Hong Kong institutions set up campuses in the Mainland. Students of the Mainland campuses may take programmes co-organized by the Mainland and Hong Kong campuses, which generally require them to attend classes in Hong Kong for two or more days a week. However, those students can hardly attend all classes in Hong Kong as they are ineligible for applying student visas. In this connection, the Administration should liaise with the relevant departments and help these students to apply for special student visa, so as to enhance cross-boundary learning and attract more non-local students.

38. The Administration has responded that under the prevailing requirements, a person who takes up studies in a full-time locally-accredited

⁶ Namely, HKMU, Hong Kong Shue Yan University, The Hang Seng University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong Chu Hai College, Tung Wah College, and Technological and Higher Education Institute of Hong Kong under the Vocational Training Council.

post-secondary programme (including eligible short-term courses) or part-time locally-accredited taught postgraduate local programme may apply to the Immigration Department for a visa/entry permit to enter Hong Kong for study, while locally-accredited post-secondary programmes refer to programmes leading to degrees awarded by local degree-awarding institutions. Moreover, a student who is admitted on exchange in full-time locally-accredited local programmes at sub-degree level for not more than six months or exchange in full-time locally-accredited local or non-local programmes at undergraduate or above level for not more than one year may also make an application. If any joint programmes offered by an institution meet the above requirements, students concerned may submit applications under the mechanism. The SAR Government will continue to liaise closely with the relevant post-secondary institutions and assist them in maintaining communication with the relevant departments and the Mainland authorities on the immigration arrangements for the relevant students.

39. Members have relayed that many overseas students tend to choose institutions which they are more familiar with, such as those where they have participated in short-term programmes. Members have therefore suggested that institutions should offer more summer programmes or study tours for non-local secondary students, so that they will choose institutions in Hong Kong for further studies. In addition, institutions around the world will recruit outstanding non-local students through international competitions. Members have suggested that the Administration should step up efforts in facilitating the post-secondary education sector in organizing international competitions including the WorldSkills Competition for the VPET sector.

40. Members are worried that the recent controversy over fake academic qualifications may have adverse impact on the development of Hong Kong into an international education hub. They suggested that the Administration should discuss with institutions ways to strengthen the monitoring of student admission, including cooperating with educational institutions in various places, enhancing the functions of the Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications (“HKCAAVQ”) to assist in the accreditation of students’ academic qualifications, and setting up a platform similar to the China Higher Education Student Information (“CHSI”) website in the Mainland for unified accreditation of students’ academic qualifications, so as to ensure the authenticity of the academic qualifications of non-local students.

41. According to the Administration, each university has its own admission policy arrangements and academic qualification review mechanism. If malpractices are identified, universities will certainly take serious follow-up actions. Regarding the academic qualifications of

Mainland students, institutions can accredit their qualifications through the Chinese Service Centre for Scholarly Exchange in the Mainland. In fact, institutions may also request HKCAAVQ to give advice on the accreditation of academic qualifications.

Enhancing academic and research standards

42. Members have pointed out that Hong Kong should promote high-quality teaching and research in order to develop Hong Kong into an international education hub. Consideration can therefore be given to formulating key performance indicators for post-secondary institutions to enhance teaching and research standards, so as to attract more non-local students. Besides, local students' educational standards should also be upgraded through learning and exchanges with non-local students.

43. The Administration recognizes that if Hong Kong is to become an international education hub, local students should be encouraged to "go global". Hence, it has been assisting post-secondary institutions in strengthening exchanges and collaboration with institutions outside Hong Kong to enhance academic and research standards, create a diversified learning environment and broaden students' horizons.

Promoting inclusive culture on campus

44. Members are of the view that institutions, local students and non-local students will all benefit if non-local students can integrate into the student community and campus environment. Members are concerned as to how institutions promote cultural interactions to enhance exchanges between local and non-local students.

45. As advised by the Administration and UGC-funded universities, universities have set up global affairs offices/student support offices and put in additional commitment, efforts and resources to implement various measures to enhance support for non-local students in different aspects, ranging from learning to daily life, as well as to organize on-campus activities to bring together and link up local, Mainland and international students, as so to promote harmony and inclusion among different communities in universities.

46. Members are pleased to note the efforts made by post-secondary institutions in creating a richer and more diversified cultural atmosphere on campus, with a view to promoting and facilitating inclusive culture on campus. Members have further suggested that institutions should provide support on all fronts for non-local students in terms of cultural exchanges,

interpersonal networking, personal development, language learning and employment support, etc., including matching hostel places for local and non-local students, organizing Chinese/Cantonese classes, providing more internship opportunities, and fulfilling students' personal needs by providing religious facilities on campuses (e.g. providing Halal certification for non-local students practising Islam).

Talent retention

47. Members are pleased to note that the Government has temporarily lifted the restrictions on part-time employment for non-local postgraduate students and full-time non-local undergraduate students pursuing locally-accredited local programmes. Members are of the view that this will enhance non-local students' personal experience and understanding of the work life in Hong Kong, encouraging them to stay in Hong Kong for development after graduation. The Administration may consider further relaxing the restrictions on part-time employment to benefit more non-local students. Some members have enquired how the student affairs offices of universities will assist non-local students in seeking for part-time jobs. As explained by the Administration, post-secondary institutions will provide internship opportunities for non-local students and endeavor to help them upgrade their capabilities in preparation for employment.

48. Members are of the view that the Administration should endeavour to encourage non-local graduates to stay and work in Hong Kong and contribute to society. Some members have suggested that consideration should be given to appealing retirees or senior civil servants to interact with non-local students in their spare time, so as to enable them to familiar with Hong Kong, integrate into the community and develop a sense of belonging to Hong Kong, thereby choosing to stay in Hong Kong for development after graduation.

Summary of Recommendations

49. The Subcommittee recommends that the Administration should:

Policies and objectives

- (a) first establish the positioning and development strategies for building Hong Kong as an international education hub, and then formulate a comprehensive strategic development blueprint. The positioning and development strategies should cope with the complex and volatile international environment, with the aims of

seizing new opportunities to further promote internationalization and diversification of post-secondary education, nurturing talent and exporting the soft power of the country;

- (b) review the positioning and development strategies for developing international education hub on an ongoing basis; compile annual reports with an analysis of the number of incoming students, cost-effectiveness of the policy; and formulate corresponding strategies;
- (c) review kindergarten, primary and secondary education to complement the development of international post-secondary education hub and explore the feasibility of establishing an international education hub in the long run;

Promoting vocational and professional education and training to facilitate the development of an international education hub

- (d) coordinate and support more self-financing post-secondary institutions to become UASs, and advise on the development and planning of UASs, so as to raise the status of VPET and attract non-local students to pursue further studies in Hong Kong;
- (e) promote strategic coordination among self-financing post-secondary institutions and assist them in developing their distinct niche areas, with a view to developing branded VPET programmes (e.g. creative arts and hospitality management) as in the case of the culinary programmes offered by Le Cordon Bleu in France and enhancing the quality of VPET in Hong Kong and its recognition in the international community;
- (f) assist the UAS Alliance in leveraging its international connections to systematically publicize the achievements of VPET in Hong Kong, strengthen exchanges and cooperation between the UAS Alliance and the relevant institutions in different places, and promote cooperation between Hong Kong's VPET and enterprises, with a view to developing Hong Kong into a VPET platform in Asia and attracting more non-local students to enrol in VPET programmes;
- (g) join hands with the relevant institutions to enhance the competitiveness of Hong Kong's VPET, including encouraging the relevant institutions to keep in view international environment and offer new disciplines having regard to market needs, so as to

enhance the applicability of disciplines and meet the manpower demand; further promoting the development of QF and mutual recognition of qualifications of the two places, so as to facilitate the interconnected flow of talent; speeding up the development of programmes and streamlining the vetting and approving procedures for offering new programmes, so as to cope with the rapid development of emerging industries;

- (h) explore the possibility of introducing a degree apprenticeship scheme to provide a more diversified and attractive development pathway for talent required by new industries, so as to lay the foundation for developing Hong Kong into an international VPET hub;

Strengthening publicity and international cooperation

- (i) set up a task force to think out of the box and formulate targeted publicity strategy plans to step up the promotion of the “Study in Hong Kong” brand on all fronts, including drawing reference from the practices of other places to establish an official body (e.g. the British Council, Study in Australia) for promoting Hong Kong as an international education hub and assisting institutions in recruiting non-local students progressively; and enhancing the existing API (e.g. focusing on promoting the strengths of Hong Kong’s post-secondary education);
- (j) target specific countries for promotion (e.g. member states of ASEAN and B&R countries), with the SAR Government taking the lead in promoting the “Study in Hong Kong” brand to these countries with overseas ETOs (e.g. by organizing talks in schools) to enable international students to gain a better understanding of the education system and living environment in Hong Kong;
- (k) explore and develop emerging markets actively and introduce policy measures (e.g. Muslim student-friendly measures) to broaden the student base;
- (l) continue to strive for hosting large-scale international education expos in Hong Kong and provide resources to encourage post-secondary institutions (including academic staff members in their personal capacity) to organize conferences on academic and scientific research and invite educational institutions and students from all over the world to participate, so as to showcase the

outstanding achievements of Hong Kong's post-secondary education;

Support for non-local students

- (m) coordinate and facilitate post-secondary institutions to improve hostel facilities to meet the basic requirements of non-local students who pursue further studies in Hong Kong by :
 - (i) exploring with relevant departments, institutions and various sectors flexible and innovative ways to increase the supply of hostels to cope with the growth of non-local students, e.g. promoting the conversion of hotels and vacant school premises into hostels; strengthening public-private partnership by incorporating new provisions in suitable new land development projects to require the provision of a certain number of student hostels; providing financial incentives (such as tax concessions) to encourage enterprises to participate in the construction and development of student hostels; allocating idle lands in the vicinity to the post-secondary institutions concerned for the construction of academic buildings or hostels; relaxing the plot ratio of land adjacent to universities in rural areas, etc.;
 - (ii) enhancing hostel policy, e.g. guaranteeing a minimum term of hostel residence and stipulating the ratio of hostel places for local and non-local students; and
 - (iii) studying the feasibility of inviting silver-hair families to be host families for non-local students in the long run;
- (n) encourage universities to cooperate with the business sector to provide more scholarships and bursaries, so as to provide opportunities and support for more non-local students with potential to pursue their studies in Hong Kong;
- (o) liaise with the relevant departments to help Mainland students apply for special student visa for coming to Hong Kong to attend classes for two or more days a week, with a view to enhancing cross-boundary learning;
- (p) allocate resources to assist institutions in providing more diversified cultural exchange platforms to further support

non-local students in adapting to campus life, including matching hostel places for local and non-local students, organizing campus integration activities, providing counselling services, organizing Chinese/Cantonese classes, providing more internship opportunities, and providing religious facilities on campuses, so as to promote inclusive culture between local and non-local students and create an international academic atmosphere;

Support for local post-secondary institutions

- (q) further relax the non-local student quota of self-financing institutions on the premise of not affecting the supply of local student places and the quality of students and teaching;
- (r) further assist local post-secondary institutions in taking forward “One University, Two Campuses”, so as to make good use of the educational resources available under “One University, Two Campuses” and implement mutual recognition of academic qualifications;
- (s) support local post-secondary institutions to cooperate with overseas institutions in offering joint or double degree programmes, so that students can go to the relevant institutions for internships and exchanges, thereby enhancing Hong Kong’s reputation in international education;
- (t) support local post-secondary institutions to enhance the quality of academic research and teaching, and to participate in the assessments of international ranking institutes, so as to enhance their international influence;
- (u) encourage institutions to offer more summer programmes or study tours for non-local secondary students, so as to attract them to choose to pursue further studies in Hong Kong;
- (v) draw reference from the experience of other places and subsidize local post-secondary institutions to organize more international competitions (including the WorldSkills Competition for the VPET sector), so as to identify and attract talents to study or teach in Hong Kong;
- (w) assist institutions in strengthening the monitoring of student admission to ensure the authenticity of the academic qualifications of non-local students, including cooperating with education

institutions in various places, enhancing the function of HKCAAVQ in assisting in the accreditation of students' academic qualifications, and setting up a platform similar to the CHSI website in the Mainland for unified accreditation of students' academic qualifications;

Talent retention

- (x) assist non-local students in integrating into Hong Kong, including further relaxing the restrictions on part-time employment for non-local students and cooperating with enterprises to provide internship opportunities, so as to enhance non-local students' personal experience and understanding of the work life in Hong Kong, and encourage them to stay in Hong Kong for development after graduation; and liaising with retirees or senior civil servants for having interactions and exchanges with non-local students in their spare time to enable them to get to know Hong Kong, integrate into the community and develop a sense of belonging to Hong Kong;
- (y) make full use of the development of the “eight centres”, the Greater Bay Area and the Northern Metropolis to attract strategic enterprises to provide more job positions, and cooperate with local and international enterprises to provide internship and employment opportunities for non-local students; and
- (z) expedite the development of the Northern Metropolis, explore ways to strengthen cooperation between enterprises and research institutes in the region and those in the adjacent Greater Bay Area, and promote the development of industry-academia-research collaboration, so as to consolidate the “Study in Hong Kong” brand and attract and retain talents.

Advice sought

50. Members are invited to note the deliberations and recommendations of the Subcommittee.

Panel on Education

**Subcommittee on Promoting the Development of Hong Kong
into an International Education Hub**

Terms of reference

To comprehensively review the existing education system of Hong Kong, analyze and assess the effectiveness of relevant education policies and support measures in promoting the development of Hong Kong into an international education hub, and provide concrete policy proposals to the Government with a view to improving the existing education system of Hong Kong, and formulating short-, medium- and long-term goals as well as relevant support measures for taking forward the internationalization of education in Hong Kong.

Panel on Education

**Subcommittee on Promoting the Development of Hong Kong
into an International Education Hub**

Membership list

Chairman	Hon TANG Fei, MH
Deputy Chairman	Prof Hon William WONG Kam-fai, MH
Members	Dr Hon Starry LEE Wai-king, GBS, JP Prof Hon Priscilla LEUNG Mei-fun, GBS, JP Hon Mrs Regina IP LAU Suk-yee, GBM, GBS, JP Prof Hon CHOW Man-kong, JP Hon LAM Chun-sing Hon Dennis LEUNG Tsz-wing, MH Hon Kenneth LEUNG Yuk-wai, JP Hon Lillian KWOK Ling-lai Hon Benson LUK Hon-man
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Clerk	Ms Angel WONG
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