

## Chapter 7

---

# Education

*The Government is committed to improving the quality of education to equip the younger generation to meet the challenges of the 21st century. The New Senior Secondary curriculum implemented under the New Academic Structure since 2009 enables all students to study a broad and balanced curriculum for whole-person development and life-long learning.*

### **Key Achievements in 2011**

#### *Developing Publicly-funded and Self-financing Post-secondary Education*

The Government follows a two-pronged strategy to promote the parallel development of the publicly-funded and self-financing sectors. To meet the future development needs of Hong Kong, it continues to invest heavily in the publicly-funded sector. Starting from the 2012-13 school year, the number of places for the senior year intake will double progressively to 4 000, and the first-year-first-degree (FYFD) places will increase to 15 000 per annum. After implementation of the New Academic Structure (NAS), the number of undergraduates in publicly-funded institutions will rise by about 40 per cent by 2016. By the 2014-15 school year, the annual recurrent grants for the eight publicly-funded institutions will increase by about \$3 billion or 27 per cent, to \$14.3 billion.

The Government provides the self-financing sector with a basket of support measures. Apart from offering land at nominal premium to non-profit-making post-secondary institutions and providing interest-free loans to support institutions in developing premises, grants are also provided to fund initiatives dedicated to enhancing the quality of teaching and learning.

Furthermore, the Government has received nine expressions of interest from local and non-local institutions for a site at Queen's Hill, which will provide a gross floor area of more than 100 000 square metres and is suitable for the development of self-financing tertiary institutions with boarding facilities. The \$2.5 billion Self-financing Post-secondary Education Fund was established in November 2011. The fund provides scholarships and supports worthwhile initiatives and schemes that aim to enhance the quality of self-financing post-secondary education.

By 2015, it is estimated that over one-third of young people in the relevant age cohort in Hong Kong will have access to degree-level education. Including sub-degree education, and over two-thirds of them will have access to post-secondary education.

### *Enhancing Internationalisation of Education*

Education services, being one of Hong Kong's six priority industries, have shown good potential for further development. The Government aims to enhance Hong Kong's position as a regional education hub, nurturing talents to support the growth of the economy and increasing Hong Kong's competitiveness. To achieve this, efforts will continue to be made on internationalising and diversifying the higher education sector.

On the internationalisation front, a number of measures were taken in 2008. The measures include doubling the non-local student quotas of the publicly-funded programmes to 20 per cent; establishing the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government Scholarship Fund to provide scholarships to outstanding local and non-local students; allowing non-local students to take on summer jobs and on-campus part-time jobs; and enabling non-local students to stay in Hong Kong without limitations for 12 months after graduation.

Following implementation of the above measures, the number of non-local students studying in Hong Kong has increased substantially, with about 18 000 non-local students enrolling in University Grants Committee (UGC)-funded programmes and locally-accredited self-financing post-secondary programmes in the 2010-11 school year.

The Government believes that by attracting these students, Hong Kong will enlarge its talent pool and improve the quality of its population, and in turn support various sectors of the economy and increase the city's economic competitiveness. The Government has been working together with higher education institutions to step up exchange and promotion efforts overseas to encourage more students to choose Hong Kong as a preferred place for education.

Following the allocation of four greenfield sites and four vacant school premises, the provision of international school places will be increased to meet the needs of the business community. Coupled with other facilitating measures, more than 5 000 new international school places are expected to come on stream in the coming few years.

### *Support for Schools in Enhancing the Language Learning Environment*

The fine-tuned medium of instruction (MOI) arrangements put in place from Secondary 1 in the 2010-11 school year increase students' opportunities to be exposed to, and to use, English in schools. Under the fine-tuned framework, schools can make professional judgements on their school-based MOI arrangements to meet students' learning needs, taking into consideration the ability of students, the readiness of teachers and schools' support measures.

To strengthen English language learning in secondary schools, \$590 million have been set aside to fund professional development programmes and experience-sharing activities for secondary school teachers. This was further boosted through the launching in the 2010-11 school year, of a 'Refined English Enhancement Scheme' to provide additional funds for enhancing English-language learning and teaching in secondary schools to support the implementation of school-based MOI arrangements. About 390 secondary schools have joined the scheme.

The 'English Enhancement Grant Scheme for Primary Schools' for enhancing English-language learning and teaching was launched in 2009. Some 470 primary schools have joined it.

#### *Enhancing the Pre-primary Education Voucher Scheme*

The Pre-primary Education Voucher Scheme (PEVS), which provides direct subsidies for parents to pay for their children's kindergarten education, has been further enhanced in keeping with the Education Commission's review of the scheme. Starting from the 2011-12 school year, needy families were given greater financial support under the kindergarten fee remission scheme facilitating them to make their own choice of kindergarten services. With effect from the 2012-13 school year, the voucher value will be adjusted annually according to the year-on-year rate of change in the Composite Consumer Price Index.

#### *Hosting the International Education Forum and Expo*

The International Education Forum and Expo (IEFE), hosted by the Education Bureau (EDB) between July 14 and 16, marked the formal launch of the New Academic Structure (NAS) signifying wide recognition and smoother articulation of new education system around the world.

Under the theme 'Learning Journey for the Globalised World', the three-day event comprised a ministerial roundtable, an international conference and an education expo. It showcased the learning opportunities available under the NAS to overseas authorities and education professionals, and provided information on the education systems of different countries and how the NAS articulates to their education systems.

Hong Kong attracted a large number of education ministers to the first Education Ministerial Roundtable. Over 11 000 local educators, parents, students and overseas education professionals participated in the event.

#### *Student Achievements*

As in previous years, Hong Kong students excelled in international competitions in 2011. Hong Kong teams won five gold, five silver and nine bronze medals in the International Mathematical Olympiad, the International Physics Olympiad, the International Olympiad in Informatics, and the International Sustainable World (Energy, Engineering, and Environment) Project Olympiad.

In music, Hong Kong students performed outstandingly in the 7th International Johannes Brahms Choir Festival and Competition, winning the Johannes Brahms Grand Prize and coming top in three categories. One student received first prize in

the Llangollen International Musical Eisteddfod Instrumental Solo under 19 years of age competition.

In the visual arts, the top award, 'Grand Prix 2011', went to Hong Kong participants at the 30th Small Montmartre of Bitola, with three students being crowned among the world's top 10 young artists. In the 39th International Children's Exhibition of Fine Arts Lidice, Hong Kong students won five medals out of a total of 212 medals. One student won a grand prize in the 'International Students' Visual Arts Contest-cum-Exhibition of Hong Kong — Photography 2011: Capturing Eternity' event.

Hong Kong young athletes excelled in various international sports competitions. They won five gold, five silver and six bronze medals in the All China Secondary School Games and the Interport Sports Competitions. In table tennis, they amassed a total of 22 gold, 13 silver and 20 bronze medals in various junior and cadet open competitions, and three bronze medals in Asian Junior Championships. In squash, they garnered six gold, six silver and seven bronze medals in various international competitions for junior squash players.

At the Asian Junior and Cadet Fencing Championships, they won seven gold, five silver and seven bronze medals. At the 6th Asian Junior Wushu Championships, they obtained four gold, five silver and one bronze medals. In cycling, they won one gold, four silver and four bronze medals at the 18th Asian Junior Cycling Championships and a gold medal in the 7th China City Games.

In media art and technology, Hong Kong students were first runners-up at the VAFI 2nd International Children and Youth Animation Film Festival; an Artistic Experiment Award at the 13th Seoul International Youth Film Festival Award; and seven medals at the IT Challenge 2011.

## Major Challenges Ahead

### *Opening up Multiple Study Pathways*

Hong Kong's post-secondary education sector provides young people with high quality and diversified study pathways with multiple entry and exit points. Apart from the 350 degree programmes offered by 15 degree-awarding institutions, various local post-secondary institutions also run about 500 sub-degree programmes covering different academic and professional disciplines.

In addition, there is a wide range of programmes, including 'Project Yi Jin', which provides an alternative route to employment and continuing education for secondary school leavers, vocational education and training programmes, and those provided by post-secondary institutions to enable young people to choose the learning path that best suits their abilities and aspirations and to develop their potential to the full. These programmes provide students with more choices and opportunities and for many of them who have the aptitude for participating in the economic development of Hong Kong's six priority industries: Education Services, Cultural and Creative Industries, Environmental Industries, Innovation and Technology, Medical Services and Testing and Certification.

To open up further multiple study pathways, the Chief Executive proposed in his 2011-12 Policy Address the setting up of an International Cuisine College under the Vocational Training Council to provide training facilities and progression pathways for people aspiring to become professional chefs proficient in international cuisines.

### *Supporting Development and Boosting International Recognition*

In the face of intense global competition, increased investment in research and development is crucial to enhancing Hong Kong's competitiveness as a knowledge-based economy. The Government is a staunch supporter of academic research in tertiary institutions. This is highlighted in its \$18 billion Research Endowment Fund established in 2009.

In recent years, Hong Kong's research activities in a number of fields have attained international recognition. Its universities are accepted as leading institutions in the region and the world, with three of them ranked among the world's top 50 universities by the QS World University Rankings 2011-12.

Underlining its continued support, the Government is injecting a further \$5 billion into the Research Endowment Fund, of which \$3 billion will support academics in self-financing tertiary institutions, to engage in research in their niche fields. The investment income from the remaining \$2 billion will replace the recurrent provision of \$100 million to the Research Grants Council to provide stable research funding for publicly-funded tertiary institutions.

### *Extending Support Services in Schools*

The Government provides extra resources in terms of grants and additional teachers to help ordinary schools cater for students with special educational needs (SEN). The EDB also provides schools with professional support, including educational psychology, speech therapy and audiological services, development of resource packages for use of teachers, and consultative school visits.

To enhance teachers' capacity to cater for students with SEN, structured training programmes will also be provided under a teachers' professional development framework for integrated education.

To enhance support for schools in catering for students' diverse educational needs, the school-based educational psychology service (SBEPS) will be further expanded as announced by the Chief Executive in his 2011-12 Policy Address. The intention is to extend the service progressively from about 55 per cent of all public sector primary and secondary schools at present to cover all public sector schools by the 2016-17 school year.

Under the SBEPS, educational psychologists pay regular visits to schools to render comprehensive educational psychology services at the school system, teacher support and student support levels. They provide assessment and intervention for students, training for parents, consultation and professional development for teachers, as well as professional advice on the school policies and practices for supporting students with SEN.

### *Cultivating Students' Moral Qualities and National Identity*

To further enhance students' moral qualities and to build up their sense of national identity, the Government is working with stakeholders to prepare the curriculum guide on Moral and National Education (MNE) subject (Primary 1- Secondary 6) as pledged in the Chief Executive's 2010-11 Policy Address.

Public consultation on the implementation of the MNE subject was conducted from May to August. The Curriculum Development Council has deliberated the views collected on the mode of delivery, learning content, support measures, etc. and will submit revised proposals to the Government in early 2012 for consideration.

Professional development programmes will be provided to teaching professionals to help them prepare for the launching of the MNE subject. Learning and teaching resources will be produced to support the roll-out of the said curriculum.

### *Facilitating the Development of e-learning Resources in Schools*

Since 1998, the Government has invested nearly \$9 billion into implementing information technology (IT) in education and spent approximately another \$0.4 billion on developing e-learning resources. Schools today have a sound IT infrastructure, taking into account the number of computers as well as the available computer networks and platforms in schools. The Government has recently launched an Internet Learning Support Programme to help low-income families acquire affordable computer equipment and Internet access services.

To support the implementation of e-learning in schools and to provide teachers with appropriate e-learning resources and pedagogical suggestions, the Government has completed the online Depository of Curriculum-based Learning and Teaching Resources for primary schools on four subjects, including Chinese Language, English Language, Mathematics and General Studies.

As regards the depository for the junior secondary levels, the development is in full swing for six Key Learning Areas (KLAs), including Chinese Language, English Language, Mathematics, Science, Technology Education and Personal, Social & Humanities Education. They are expected to be completed by August 2012.

A three-year pilot scheme on e-learning in schools was launched in January 2011 to explore suitable modes and necessary support measures for the development of effective e-learning solutions in schools. Twenty-one school projects have been selected involving a total of 61 schools, comprising 32 primary, 18 secondary and 11 special schools.

Overall, the projects have fully covered all KLAs and key learning stages. The project objectives also include the enhancement of students' information literacy, addressing learner diversity, enhancement of learning effectiveness through the use of IT, and the enrichment of the depository for learning and teaching materials, etc. Total government funding allocated to this pilot scheme amounts to about \$59 million.

The Government also continues to provide teachers with professional development training programmes to sharpen their IT pedagogical skills in adopting e-learning in schools.

## **Overall Education Landscape**

### *Expenditure on Education*

In the 2011-12 financial year, the approved estimate for recurrent government expenditure on education was \$54.5 billion, which was 22.5 per cent of all recurrent government expenditure, while the total estimate for government expenditure on education was \$68.7 billion, or 18.2 per cent of total government expenditure.

### *Education Commission*

The Education Commission is responsible for advising the Government on education objectives and policies. It co-ordinates the work of all major education-related advisory bodies in the planning and development of education at all levels.

The commission also advises the Government on important implementation issues to ensure better co-ordination between policy formulation and implementation. The commission has a chairman, a vice-chairman who is the Permanent Secretary for Education, seven ex-officio members and a number of non-official members.

The seven ex-officio members comprise the chairmen of the Advisory Committee on Teacher Education and Qualifications, the Curriculum Development Council, the Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority Council, the Quality Education Fund Steering Committee, the Standing Committee on Language Education and Research, the University Grants Committee and the Vocational Training Council. The non-official members come from both education and non-education fields.

### *Kindergarten Education*

All kindergartens are required to register under the Education Ordinance. Since 2004, all kindergartens have been required to employ qualified kindergarten teachers. The EDB aims to upgrade further the professional qualifications of kindergarten teachers to certificate level by the end of the 2011-12 school year. Newly appointed kindergarten principals are required to have a bachelor's degree in Early Childhood Education with effect from the 2009-10 school year. Quality assurance for kindergartens is enhanced through a self-evaluation system, supported by an external review process.

The Government enables all school-aged children to have access to kindergarten education within a non-compulsory private-sector system by providing financial support for parents in meeting school fees, assisting with rents, rates and government rents for non-profit-making kindergartens, and reserving premises for kindergartens in public housing estates.

In September 2011, about 157 400 children were enrolled in 946 Kindergartens/Kindergarten-cum-Child Care Centres. The Pre-primary Education Voucher Scheme, introduced in the 2007-08 school year, provides direct fee subsidy

for parents and financial support for professional upgrading of serving kindergarten principals and teachers.

About 82 per cent of students and 80 per cent of kindergartens benefit under the scheme. Eligible children aged above two years and eight months attending eligible local non-profit-making kindergartens can receive an annual fee subsidy of \$16,000 in the 2011-12 school year. A means-tested fee remission scheme is also available to needy families to ensure that no child will be deprived of pre-primary education because of lack of means.

### *School Education*

Twelve-year free education is provided to students in public sector schools with effect from the 2008-09 school year. Admissions to Primary 1 and Secondary 1 in public sector schools are administered through centralised systems. Under the NSS academic structure, Secondary 3 students will normally continue to receive senior secondary education in the same school or attend full-time vocational training courses run by the Vocational Training Council fully subvented by the Government.

In September 2011, a total of 265 620 children were enrolled in 457 public sector primary schools and 392 400 children in 400 public sector secondary schools. Public sector school places made up about 82 per cent of school places. In addition, there were 74 Direct Subsidy Scheme schools, offering about 8.2 per cent of the school places.

As of September 2011, there were 48 international schools, including 15 schools operated by the English Schools Foundation. These schools offer different non-local curricula, including the national curricula of the United Kingdom, the United States, Australia, Canada, France, Germany, Japan, Korea, Singapore and others such as the International Baccalaureate programmes, providing about 37 000 school places.

### *Special Education*

The prevailing policy is that students with severe learning difficulties and multiple disabilities are offered places in special schools for more intensive support based on the assessment and recommendations of the respective specialists/medical professionals and upon parents' consent. Other students with special educational needs are enrolled in ordinary schools. There were 60 special schools, 20 of which have boarding facilities. Together, they provided around 9 100 school places and 1 100 boarding places. In September 2011, some 28 600 students with special educational needs were studying in public sector ordinary primary and secondary schools.

The Government also helps gifted students to develop their capabilities through different programmes. Teacher organisations called 'Gifted Education Teachers Networks' have been set up in different key learning areas to facilitate the sharing of resources and experiences in catering for gifted students.

The Hong Kong Academy for Gifted Education (The HKAGE) began operation in September 2008. From 2008 to 2011, the HKAGE organised and commissioned



challenging programmes for 14 228 gifted students aged 10-18 years. From 2008 to 2011, it provided support for over 7 820 teachers through training programmes and offered advice and support to 16 788 parents through advisory services, talks and seminars; and provided online information through the academy's website for the wider gifted community.

### *Project Yi Jin*

Some 3 000 full-time and part-time students joined the Government's Yi Jin programme in the 2011-12 school year. It was launched in 2000 to provide an alternative route to continuing education for secondary school leavers under the old academic structure and adult learners. Successful completion of the programme earns the students a qualification comparable to five passes in the Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination for employment and continuing education purposes. The programme is run by member institutions of the Federation for Continuing Education in Tertiary Institutions and has both full-time and part-time modules.

### *Vocational Education*

The Vocational Training Council (VTC) is a statutory body established in 1982 to provide a comprehensive system of vocational education and training for school leavers and adult learners. It provided some 240 000 full-time and part-time places during the 2011-12 school year.

The VTC provides a range of quality, internationally recognised full-time and part-time courses varying from those designed for post-secondary 3 up to higher diploma levels. They are offered through its member institutes such as the Institute of Professional Education and Knowledge, School for Higher and Professional Education, Hong Kong Institute of Vocational Education, Hong Kong Design Institute, Hospitality Industry Training and Development Centre, Chinese Cuisine Training Institute, Maritime Services Training Institute, Pro-Act Training and Development Centres, Youth College, Integrated Vocational Development Centre and Shine Skills Centres.

The VTC also plans to establish a new member institute, the Technological and Higher Education Institute of Hong Kong, to provide degree courses in the 2012-13 school year. The council also provides services such as the administration of the apprenticeship scheme, trade testing and certification.

### *Post-secondary Education*

Hong Kong has 15 degree-awarding higher education institutions, eight of which are funded by the public through the UGC. The other seven are the publicly-funded Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts (HKAPA) and the self-financing Open University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong Shue Yan University, Chu Hai College of Higher Education, Hang Seng Management College, Tung Wah College and Caritas Institute of Higher Education. Together with providers offering locally-accredited sub-degree programmes, there are 26 post-secondary institutions in Hong Kong.

There were around 14 800 first-year-first-degree places in institutions funded by the UGC and the HKAPA in the 2011-12 school year. The same age group also enjoyed access to around 4 500 places in self-financing degree programmes. In addition, the UGC-funded institutions and the self-financing degree-awarding institutions provided around 2 000 senior year undergraduate places and 3 900 top-up degree places respectively for graduates of sub-degree programmes and students with other qualifications.

At the sub-degree level, there were around 24 200 self-financing intake places. These were in addition to some 7 400 publicly-funded intake places for sub-degree level courses offered by the City University of Hong Kong, the Hong Kong Polytechnic University, the Hong Kong Institute of Education, the VTC and the HKAPA.

The UGC is a non-statutory advisory body appointed by the Chief Executive to advise the Government on the development and funding of higher education and to administer public grants to the eight higher education institutions. It also plays a major role in quality assurance and in promoting research. The committee comprises local and non-local academics, professionals and community leaders.

Each of the eight higher education institutions funded through the UGC is an autonomous statutory body with its own ordinance and governing body. They enjoy a high degree of academic and institutional autonomy, and are free to manage their own affairs within the parameters of the law.

The eight UGC-funded institutions have distinctive and complementary roles that reflect their different origins, missions and the way they have responded to Hong Kong's evolving needs. The UGC is committed to taking a more strategic approach by developing an interlocking yet individually different higher education system, with each institution fulfilling a unique role based on its strengths.

Locally awarded degrees up to doctoral level are widely recognised by institutions of higher learning around the world. All UGC-funded institutions have self-accrediting status and well-established quality assurance mechanisms. In April 2007, the UGC set up a semi-autonomous Quality Assurance Council under its aegis to provide third-party assurance of quality. The Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications (HKCAAVQ) validates courses and programmes offered by higher education institutions that are not self-accrediting.

### *Qualifications Framework*

Launched in May 2008, the Hong Kong Qualifications Framework (QF) provides a transparent and accessible platform to promote lifelong learning and hence helps enhance the competitiveness of the workforce. It is a seven-level hierarchy that orders and supports qualifications of academic, vocational and continuing education.

The QF is underpinned by a robust quality assurance mechanism. All qualifications recognised under the QF are locally accredited by HKCAAVQ or by the self-accrediting institutions in Hong Kong.

As a public face of the QF, the Government maintains a Qualifications Register (QR), a web-based database that lists the qualifications recognised under the QF and their associated learning programmes. Learners can make use of the QR to map out their own study pathways.

The EDB has so far assisted 17 industries<sup>1</sup> in setting up Industry Training Advisory Committees (ITACs), which comprise key stakeholders from the industries concerned. The ITACs are tasked with drawing up Specifications of Competency Standards for the relevant sectors, which set out the skills, knowledge and outcome standards required of employees in different functional areas of the respective sectors, and provide a basis for course providers to design training programmes to meet the needs of the sectors.

The EDB also developed a Recognition of Prior Learning mechanism in parallel with the implementation of QF to enable employees to obtain formal recognition for the knowledge, skills and experience they have acquired in the workplace, and facilitate further learning without starting from scratch.

### *Adult Education*

The Financial Assistance Scheme for Designated Evening Adult Education Courses provided subsidies for adult learners attending evening secondary courses at designated centres. Over 1 400 students enrolled in the 2011-12 school year.

### *Quality Education Fund*

The Quality Education Fund (QEF) was established in 1998 with an allocation of \$5 billion to support initiatives that promote quality education and schemes that recognise excellence in schools and teachers. Up to the end of the 2010-11 school year, the fund had approved around \$3.89 billion for about 8 080 projects. The QEF also identifies good practices for other schools' reference.

### *School-based Support Services*

The EDB provided school-based support services, including those financed by the Education Development Fund (EDF), to 285 secondary schools, 428 primary schools, 25 special schools and 165 kindergartens/kindergarten-cum-child care centres in the 2010-11 school year.

The Regional Education Offices also offer school-based support services to schools in response to the needs of students, teachers, schools and other stakeholders they serve.

### *Support Measures for Non-Chinese Speaking Students*

Various support measures have been put in place to help non-Chinese speaking (NCS) students integrate into the local education system. Such measures include the provision of focused support and an annual grant to 20 designated primary and 10

<sup>1</sup> Printing and Publishing, Watch and Clock, Chinese Catering, Hairdressing, Property Management, Electrical and Mechanical Services, Jewellery, Information and Communications Technology, Automotive, Beauty, Logistics, Banking, Import and Export, Testing, Inspection and Certification, Retail, Insurance and Manufacturing Technology (Tooling, Metals and Plastics).

secondary schools in the 2011-12 school year. A supplementary guide on teaching Chinese language to NCS students has been developed and issued to schools alongside a series of curriculum resources including learning materials in the form of textbooks. Tertiary institutions have been commissioned to provide on-site support programmes, to run Chinese Language Learning Support Centres offering further support to NCS students and to train Chinese language teachers of schools with NCS students.

### *Support Programmes for Needy Students*

Under the School-based After-school Learning and Support Programmes, 871 schools and 164 non-governmental organisations received subsidies in the 2011-12 school year for organising after-school activities to help some 228 200 needy students improve their learning effectiveness, broaden their learning experience outside the classroom and raise their understanding of the community and sense of belonging. Upon relaxation of the income threshold for full level of assistance under the means test mechanism of the Student Financial Assistance Agency, the funding has been significantly increased from \$175 million to \$204 million to further strengthen support for needy students.

The Hong Kong Jockey Club Life-wide Learning Fund, established in 2002 by the EDB and the Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust, provides financial aid to needy students to participate in life-wide learning activities organised or recognised by schools. In the 2010-11 school year, about \$54.6 million was allocated to 956 participating schools, benefiting 204 950 students (Primary 1- Secondary 7).

## **Regulatory Framework and Governance Structure**

### *Government's Role and Organisation*

The Secretary for Education, who heads the EDB, formulates, develops and reviews educational policies, secures funds from the government budget, and oversees the implementation of educational programmes with the assistance of the Permanent Secretary for Education.

### *Education Ordinance*

School education services are regulated by the Education Ordinance. School operators must comply with its provisions and its subsidiary legislation relating to areas such as registration of schools, teachers and managers, health and safety requirements, fees and charges, and teacher qualifications.

### *Vocational Training Council Ordinance*

The Vocational Training Council Ordinance provides for the establishment, functions and management of the council, which is the main body responsible for vocational education and technical training. Its members comprise representatives of industry, commerce, service sectors, employees and the Government.

### *Post Secondary Colleges Ordinance*

The Post Secondary Colleges Ordinance governs institutions offering post-secondary courses. As at December 2011, there were five approved post-secondary

institutions registered under the ordinance — Hong Kong Shue Yan University, Caritas Institute of Higher Education, Chu Hai College of Higher Education, Hang Seng Management College and Tung Wah College.

#### *Non-local Higher and Professional Education (Regulation) Ordinance*

The Non-local Higher and Professional Education (Regulation) Ordinance regulates non-local courses conducted in Hong Kong through a system of registration. It protects Hong Kong consumers by guarding against the marketing of substandard courses.

#### *Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications (AAVQ) Ordinance and Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications (HKCAAVQ) Ordinance*

The AAVQ Ordinance provides a legal framework for the establishment of the Qualifications Framework (QF) and the Qualifications Register, and the underpinning quality assurance mechanism. The HKCAAVQ Ordinance provides for the establishment, functions and management of the council, which is responsible for quality assurance of the qualifications recognised under the QF.

### **Management of Schools and Tertiary Institutions**

#### *School-based Management*

All aided schools have been devolved with greater autonomy and funding flexibility to implement school-based management. In return, they have to be more transparent and accountable in their operation and include all key stakeholders in their governance structure, including school sponsoring body representatives, the principal, elected teacher, parent and alumni representatives and independent member(s).

#### *External School Review*

The School Development and Accountability Framework, introduced in May 2003, seeks to ensure sustained school development through school self-evaluation, complemented by an external school review (ESR) to give schools the benefit of feedback and suggestions for improvement from a team of reviewers with perspectives across schools. The new phase of the ESR started in the 2008-09 school year. It will continue to be improvement-oriented, and is expected to cover all schools in the public sector in about six years.

#### *Governance of Tertiary Institutions*

Each tertiary institution has its own structure of governance. The structure includes a governing body, called the council or board of governors, and a body to regulate academic affairs, called the senate or the academic board.

### **Curriculum Development**

#### *Curriculum Development Council*

The Curriculum Development Council is an advisory body that makes recommendations to the Government on all matters relating to school curriculum

development — from kindergarten to senior secondary levels. Its members include heads of schools, practising teachers, parents, employers, academics from tertiary institutions, professionals from related fields or related bodies, representatives from the HKEAA and the VTC, as well as EDB officers.

### *The Curriculum*

The school curriculum provides five essential learning experiences: moral and civic education, intellectual development, community service, physical and aesthetic development, career-related experiences for lifelong learning and the whole-person development of students. Curriculum reform progresses in tandem with schools' adaptation to the central curriculum to meet the needs of their students. There have been improvements in students' generic capabilities, values and attitudes, and students are becoming independent learners. Through experience and reflective practice, schools' professional competence is rising and the quality of learning and teaching will be further enhanced.

### *New Senior Secondary Curriculum and the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education Examination*

The New Senior Secondary (NSS) curriculum was implemented in 2009 for Secondary 4 students upwards to Secondary 6. Students will sit for the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education (HKDSE) Examination in Secondary 6. Supported by a flexible, coherent and diversified curriculum, it aims at catering for students' varied interests, needs, aptitudes and abilities. It requires students to take four core subjects and acquire other learning experiences. In addition, they can choose two to three subjects from 20 NSS elective subjects, a range of Applied Learning (ApL) courses and six other language subjects according to their interests.

ApL courses are introduced to Secondary 5 and 6 to cater for students' diverse learning needs by offering studies with stronger elements of practical learning linked to broad professional and vocational fields. In the 2011-13 cohort, 35 ApL courses are offered under six areas of studies – Creative Studies; Media and Communication; Business, Management and Law; Services; Applied Science; and Engineering and Production.

Preparatory work for the first HKDSE Examination to be held in 2012 is in full gear. The HKDSE qualification has gained extensive recognition locally and overseas, in international benchmarking studies such as the NARIC (National Recognition Information Centre) report, the Tariff System of the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) in the United Kingdom. Over 110 overseas tertiary institutions, including renowned universities such as Oxford and Yale, have recognised the new qualification for admission purposes, and more are being added.

Moreover, the Ministry of Education of the Mainland has announced arrangements for a pilot scheme whereby 63 Mainland higher education institutions will consider the admission of Hong Kong students based on their results in the HKDSE and Hong Kong Advanced Level Examination and exempt them from taking the Joint Entrance Examination for Universities in the Mainland. The Mainland Higher

Education Expo, jointly organised by the Ministry of Education and the EDB on December 10 and 11, attracted over 7 500 visitors.

### *Information Technology in Education*

The Government is committed to promoting the use of IT to improve learning and to equip students with the necessary IT skills to meet the challenges of the information age and to become lifelong learners. All schools are connected to the Internet. The student-to-computer ratios are about 4:1 in secondary schools and 6:1 in primary schools.

### *Language Education*

The Standing Committee on Language Education and Research was set up in 1996 to advise the Government on language education matters. It also advises the trustee of the Language Fund on the policy and procedures governing the fund's operation. The fund was set up in 1994 to provide financial support for initiatives to improve Hong Kong people's proficiency in Chinese (including Putonghua) and English.

### *Native-speaking English Teacher Scheme*

The Native-speaking English Teacher (NET) Scheme has helped create an enriched English language learning environment for students. Through implementing literacy programmes and using language arts resources, NETs work with local English teachers in enhancing teaching practices and making learning English more interesting for students. There have been changes in classroom practice, with more innovative teaching strategies being adopted. Students have also shown a more positive attitude towards the learning of English. At present, there are some 415 NETs working in secondary schools and around 457 NETs working in primary schools.

## **Professional Development at Schools**

### *Teachers' Professional Development*

The Advisory Committee on Teacher Education and Qualifications continued to advise the EDB on new developments of initial teacher education and the continuing professional development of teachers.

The Chief Executive's Award for Teaching Excellence (CEATE), organised by the EDB, aims to give recognition to accomplished teachers and foster a culture of excellence in the teaching profession. A total of 104 teachers received awards or certificates of merit in the CEATE (2010-11).

The Hong Kong Teachers' Centre organises conferences, seminars, workshops and experience-sharing sessions to promote continuing professional development for teachers. Physical and mental health activities are also arranged to help teachers maintain work-life balance.

As a non-statutory body, the Council on Professional Conduct in Education (CPC) is advising the Government on measures to promote professional conduct in education and on alleged misconduct cases involving educators that are lodged with the CPC.

### *Principals' Professional Development*

Serving principals continued to engage in professional development to enhance school leadership. Some 1 000 aspirants have attained the Certification for Principalship and about half have become principals. Newly appointed principals were provided with a designated programme which made available induction and support services in the first two years of their principalship.

### **Student Finance**

To ensure that no student is deprived of education due to lack of means, the Student Financial Assistance Agency (SFAA) provides means-tested and non-means-tested financial assistance to students at various study levels. The SFAA also administers a number of privately-funded scholarship schemes.

#### *Financial Assistance for Pre-primary Education*

Eligible children at pre-primary level may apply for non-means-tested fee subsidy under the PEVS, and means-tested fee remission under the Kindergarten and Child Care Centre Fee Remission Scheme. In the 2010-11 school year, fee subsidies and remissions totalling \$1.7 billion and \$239 million were granted to 122 829 and 27 948 students respectively.

#### *Financial Assistance for Primary and Secondary Education*

At the primary and secondary levels, means-tested assistance covers textbook grants, travel subsidies and subsidies for internet access charges. In the 2010-11 school year, \$440.6 million was disbursed to 266 072 students for purchasing textbooks, \$243 million to 185 592 students as travel subsidies and \$150.7 million to 181 619 families as subsidies for internet access by students at home. In addition, examination fees totalling \$7.5 million were waived for 3 316 students taking public examinations.

#### *Financial Assistance for Post-secondary Education*

Means-tested grants and low-interest loans are offered to eligible full-time students pursuing eligible courses at UGC-funded or publicly-funded institutions. In the 2010-11 school year, 28 003 students received \$830.1 million of grants and \$258.9 million of loans.

Eligible students pursuing locally-accredited, self-financing full-time post-secondary programmes are also provided with means-tested grants and low-interest loans. In the 2010-11 school year, \$792.8 million in grants and \$257.4 million in loans were provided to 22 515 students.

Non-means-tested loans operating on a no-gain-no-loss and full-cost-recovery basis are available to students pursuing eligible publicly-funded or self-financing post-secondary programmes, and eligible professional or continuing education courses. In the 2010-11 school year, 26 442 people received non-means-tested loans amounting to \$1.23 billion.

The Government is consulting the public on a package of proposals to improve the non-means-tested loan schemes which include measures to lower the interest



rate, extend the repayment period, tighten the scope of eligible programmes and tackle the loan default problem. If the proposals are generally acceptable to the public, they will be implemented in phases in the 2012-13 school year.

Travel subsidies totalling \$109 million were provided to 45 061 students of post-secondary institutions.

#### *Tuition Fee Reimbursement for Project Yi Jin Students and Adult Education*

All eligible students of Project Yi Jin and designated evening adult education courses may receive a 30 per cent tuition fee reimbursement. Those who pass a means test may receive further fee reimbursement.

#### *Scholarships*

The \$1 billion HKSAR Government Scholarship Fund was established to award Government scholarships on the basis of merit to outstanding local and non-local students studying in full-time publicly-funded programmes at degree level or above in the eight UGC-funded institutions and the HKAPA.

In 2011, the Government injected \$250 million into the fund to extend the benefit to students of full-time publicly-funded sub-degree programmes offered by five institutions (City University of Hong Kong, the Hong Kong Institute of Education, the Hong Kong Polytechnic University, HKAPA and the VTC) from the 2011-12 school year onwards.

In addition, a \$2.5 billion Self-financing Post-secondary Education Fund was set up to offer scholarships to outstanding local and non-local students pursuing full-time locally-accredited self-financing sub-degree or bachelor degree (including top-degree) programmes at non-profit-making education institutions.

Another government scholarship entitled 'Scholarship for Prospective English Teachers' was set up in the 2010-11 school year to attract talent to join the teaching profession. It aims to attract persons proficient in English to pursue local bachelor degree programmes and/or teacher training programmes majoring in English or a relevant subject which will qualify them to become English teachers on graduation.

Privately-funded scholarships administered by SFAA are provided for local and overseas studies mainly on a merit basis.

### **Community Participation in Education**

#### *Home-school Co-operation*

Founded in 1993, the Committee on Home-school Co-operation promotes positive attitudes towards home-school co-operation by encouraging the establishment of Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs). Up to 2011, more than 1 300 PTAs had been established. In 2011, the EDB funded the PTAs' organisation of about 3 000 school-based and district-based home-school co-operation activities.

#### *School Business Partnership*

In 2005, the EDB launched a Business-School Partnership Programme to take students out of the classroom to gain a wider perspective on society. In 2011, about

170 business firms participated in the programme, organising more than 300 activities and benefiting over 160 000 students.

### **Committee on the Promotion of Civic Education**

The Committee on the Promotion of Civic Education was set up to advise on civic education, to implement activities in conjunction with the Government and parties concerned and to provide sponsorship through funding schemes to community organisations to organise activities to promote civic education outside schools. In 2011, the committee concentrated its efforts on developing a positive attitude towards life, building happy families and an integrated and harmonious society, instilling positive core civic values such as 'respect', 'responsibility' and 'love', respect for human rights and the rule of law, and deepening the understanding of the Basic Law, and enhancing a sense of national identity.

The committee runs a website to promote various themes on civic education and provide information on national education through its 'National Education Feature Page'. Events organised by the committee in 2011 included an exhibition which carried the theme 'Cherish yourself and your family, Love Hong Kong and your country' and a competition entitled 'Basic Law Digital Games Development Contest'. The committee also produced civic education materials, which include a family magazine, a youth magazine and a calendar for 2012.

The refurbished Civic Education Resource Centre (CERC), located on the 7th floor of the Youth Square in Chai Wan is now open to the public. The CERC comprises a 'Resource Corner', a 'Civic Square' and a 'Gallery'. Reference materials and teaching kits on civic education and youth development are kept in the Resource Corner. Equipped with audio and visual facilities, the Civic Square can be used for holding training courses, seminars, sharing sessions and organising youth activities and film shows about civic education.

The concept behind the Gallery is the portrayal of a journey through which visitors can experience and explore different aspects of civic education with the aid of videos and interactive games. Guided tour service is provided to group visitors. Thematic exhibitions are held periodically to promote core civic values.

### **Commission on Youth**

The main tasks of the Commission on Youth include advising the Government on matters concerning youth development, strengthening youth national education through its funding scheme, initiating studies on youth, helping to promote youth development, enhancing communication between young people and the Government and organising international exchange programmes. The Youth Programme Co-ordinating Committee (YPCC) was set up under the commission on January 1, 2011 to enhance its district network.

The commission continues to implement youth programmes to bring out and cultivate young people's potential. These include the International Youth Exchange Programme to broaden young people's outlook and world perspective. During the

year, 74 youth delegates visited the UK, Ireland and Singapore under the programme. The commission played host to 24 young people from Ireland and Singapore who made reciprocal visits to Hong Kong.

The commission continues to run the 'Community Participation Scheme for Organising Study Tours to the Mainland' to enhance young people's awareness and understanding of their home country, foster exchange with Mainland people and strengthen their sense of national identity. In 2011, the commission sponsored 135 study tours to the Mainland.

To enhance communication between young people and the Government, the commission organises 'Youth Exchange Sessions' from time to time. It invites senior Government officials (Secretary/Permanent Secretary/Under Secretary) of bureaux, attending the exchange sessions, to communicate directly with the young participants and gather their views on relevant policy issues.

In collaboration with the 18 District Youth Programme committees, the commission's YPCC provides a wide range of cultural and arts, sports and all-round development activities for children and young people aged between 6 and 29. A total of 4 277 activities were organised in the summer of 2011 with a sponsorship donation of \$16.8 million from The Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust.

### **Universiade 2011 Shenzhen**

The Home Affairs Bureau (HAB) sponsored 860 Hong Kong volunteers to assist visitors to the Universiade 2011, held in Shenzhen during the year.

The Universiade is an international multi-sport event, organised for university athletes by the International University Sports Federation. The volunteers were stationed at reception points at the Hong Kong International Airport, Shenzhen Bay/Lok Ma Chau Control Points and Shenzhen venues.

HAB also sponsored visits to the event by 2 000 Hong Kong young people.

#### *Websites*

Education Bureau: [www.edb.gov.hk](http://www.edb.gov.hk)

Home Affairs Bureau: [www.hab.gov.hk](http://www.hab.gov.hk)