

Quality Assurance Council releases Audit Report on sub-degree operations of Hong Kong Baptist University

The following is issued on behalf of the University Grants Committee:

The Quality Assurance Council (QAC) today (October 16) released the Audit Report on the sub-degree operations of Hong Kong Baptist University (HKBU).

The Audit Report presents the findings on the quality of learning at the sub-degree providing units (SDPUs) of HKBU. The Chairman of the QAC, Mr Lincoln Leong, said, "The QAC is pleased that the Audit Panel concludes that there is effective management of academic quality and standards within the SDPUs of HKBU, which undertake quality assurance in accordance with University expectations. There is also clear evidence of a student-centred culture and a caring attitude towards students. HKBU is in the process of strengthening its arrangements for the oversight of sub-degree provision."

The QAC is pleased with the quality of educational provision at the SDPUs of HKBU. The University's efforts in various areas are commended in the Audit Report. These include the SDPUs' student-centred approach in teaching and learning and student development; the University's strong support for the professional development of staff across SDPUs; and the planning, implementation and monitoring of the adoption of outcomes-based teaching and learning and criterion referenced assessment in the programmes of the College of International Education (one of the four SDPUs of HKBU).

The full report (with HKBU's Institutional Response attached) has been uploaded to the website of the University Grants Committee (UGC) (www.ugc.edu.hk/eng/qac/about/term/publications/report.html).

HKBU has agreed to submit a progress report within 18 months on its follow-up actions.

Background of the quality audit on sub-degree operations of HKBU

The quality audit on the sub-degree operations of HKBU was undertaken by an Audit Panel appointed by the QAC. The Audit Panel was chaired by Emeritus Professor Joan Cooper, and members included Professor Grahame Bilbow, Emeritus Professor Peter Bush, Emeritus Professor Deborah Clayton and Professor Peter Yuen. The Panel reviewed the Institutional Submission, which was prepared by HKBU following a period of self-study, and visited HKBU from January 16 to 18, 2018, to meet with its staff and students. It also met with a number of external stakeholders, such as local employers and graduates of HKBU sub-degree programmes.

Background of the QAC and its auditing activities

The QAC was established in April 2007 as a semi-autonomous non-statutory body under the aegis of the UGC. The UGC is committed to safeguarding and promoting the quality of the UGC-funded universities and their activities. In view of the institutional expansion of university activities and a growing public interest in quality issues, the QAC was established to assist the UGC in providing third-party oversight of the quality of the universities' educational provision. The QAC assists the UGC in assuring the quality of all programmes at the levels of sub-degree, first degree and above (however funded) offered in UGC-funded universities. The QAC fulfils this task primarily by undertaking periodic quality audits of the universities.

Auditing is an external quality assurance process that involves independent peer review by senior academics in the higher education sector. Its principal aims are to confirm that existing arrangements for quality assurance are fit for purpose, that the quality of provision is comparable to international best practices, that universities are committed to continuously improving the quality of their academic programmes, and that students are well taught and well supported so that they are able to achieve the expected academic standards.

Prior to 2016, the QAC's audit activities covered only first degree programmes and above. The first and second QAC audit cycles were completed in 2011 and 2016 respectively. In 2016, the UGC assumed the role of the overseeing body of the quality audits on the sub-degree operations of UGC-funded universities, with the involvement of the QAC as the audit operator. The audit visits to universities in this cycle are being conducted up till early 2019.

[Persons in custody at Lai King Correctional Institution attain good examination results \(with photos\)](#)

Young female persons in custody at Lai King Correctional Institution (LKCI) of the Correctional Services Department (CSD) were presented with certificates at a ceremony today (October 16) in recognition of their study efforts and achievements.

In the past year, 20 persons in custody at the institution sat for various academic and vocational examinations including the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education (HKDSE) Examination and examinations covering beauty

therapy, the food and beverage service, elementary Cantonese cooking and kitchen operations, elementary laundry skills, retailing and customer services held by the City and Guilds International Limited, the Christian Action, the Society of Rehabilitation and Crime Prevention, Hong Kong and the Vocational Training Council. They achieved eight merits out of 58 certificates obtained. A total of nine persons in custody were presented with 37 certificates today. One person in custody achieved a score of 21 marks overall in the six papers taken in this year's HKDSE Examination – the highest score so far obtained by a female young person in custody.

Officiating at the ceremony, the Chairman of the Board of Directors of Yan Oi Tong (YOT), Dr Louisa Lo, said that the CSD places equal emphasis on safe custody and education, and spares no effort in implementing appropriate rehabilitation programmes with the aim of fully preparing persons in custody to reintegrate into society after their release. Its mission is in line with the principles of YOT, which promote the education and overall nurturing of youths as well as supporting the community. With their shared visions, YOT and the CSD strive to provide quality education to adolescents and help different sectors of the community, so as to build a society embraced by love and benevolence, she said.

During the ceremony, a representative of persons in custody expressed her gratitude for the department's support of rehabilitation, while her mother shared her joy at seeing the positive changes in her daughter while she underwent training. The ceremony ended with marvellous music and dancing performances by persons in custody.

Also attending the ceremony were the Assistant Commissioner of Correctional Services (Rehabilitation), Ms Ng Sau-wai, representatives of non-governmental and community organisations, community leaders and family members of the certificate recipients.

LKCI accommodates female persons in custody aged from 14 to under 21. The CSD provides half-day education programmes and half-day vocational training for persons in custody to help them rehabilitate and prepare for their reintegration into society.



Two illegal workers jailed

Two Indian illegal workers were jailed by Shatin Magistrates' Courts yesterday (October 15).

Immigration Department (ImmD) investigators received a referral from the Hong Kong Police Force to further investigate an illegal employment case in October 2017. Enforcement officers arrested a male Indian worker, aged 21, who was found working as an odd-job worker in a shop in Tsuen Wan. Upon identity checking, he produced for inspection a recognisance form issued by the ImmD, which prohibits him from taking employment. Further investigation revealed that he was a non-refoulement claimant. An employer suspected of employing the illegal worker was also arrested and the investigation is ongoing.

During an anti-illegal worker operation mounted on October 11, ImmD investigators raided a loading area of an industrial building in Tsuen Wan. A male Indian illegal worker, aged 30, was arrested. When intercepted he was conveying goods. Upon identity checking, he produced a recognisance form issued by ImmD, which prohibits him from taking employment. Further investigation revealed that he was a non-refoulement claimant. An employer suspected of employing the illegal worker was also arrested and the investigation is ongoing.

The two illegal workers were charged at Shatin Magistrates' Courts yesterday with taking up employment after landing in Hong Kong unlawfully and remaining in Hong Kong without the authority of the Director of Immigration and while being a person in respect of whom a removal order or deportation order was in force. They were sentenced to 22 months and two weeks', and 15 months' imprisonment respectively.

The ImmD spokesman warned that, as stipulated in section 38AA of the Immigration Ordinance, illegal immigrants or people who are the subject of a removal order or a deportation order are prohibited from taking any employment, whether paid or unpaid, or establishing or joining in any business. Offenders are liable upon conviction to a maximum fine of \$50,000 and up to three years' imprisonment. The Court of Appeal has issued a guideline ruling that a sentence of 15 months' imprisonment should be applied in such cases.

The spokesman reiterated that it is a serious offence to employ people who are not lawfully employable. The maximum penalty is imprisonment for three years and a fine of \$350,000. The High Court has laid down sentencing guidelines that the employer of an illegal worker should be given an immediate custodial sentence. According to the court sentencing, employers must take all practicable steps to determine whether a person is lawfully employable prior to employment. Apart from inspecting a prospective employee's identity card, the employer has the explicit duty to make enquiries regarding the person and ensure that the answers would not cast any

reasonable doubt concerning the lawful employability of the person. The court will not accept failure to do so as a defence in proceedings. It is also an offence if an employer fails to inspect the job seeker's valid travel document if the job seeker does not have a Hong Kong permanent identity card. The maximum penalty for failing to inspect such a document is imprisonment for one year and a fine of \$150,000.

Under the existing mechanism, the ImmD will, as a standard procedure, conduct initial screening of vulnerable persons, including illegal workers, illegal immigrants, sex workers and foreign domestic helpers, who are arrested during any operation with a view to ascertaining whether they are trafficking in persons (TIP) victims. When any TIP indicator is revealed in the initial screening, the officers will conduct a full debriefing and identification by using a standardised checklist to ascertain the presence of TIP elements, such as threat and coercion in the recruitment phase, and the nature of exploitation. Identified TIP victims will be provided with various forms of support and assistance, including urgent interference, medical services, counselling, shelter, temporary accommodation and other supporting services. The ImmD calls on TIP victims to report crimes to the relevant departments.

Effective Exchange Rate Index

The effective exchange rate index for the Hong Kong dollar on Tuesday, October 16, 2018 is 105.2 (down 0.1 against yesterday's index).

Appointment to Standing Committee on Directorate Salaries and Conditions of Service

The Government announced today (October 16) that the Chief Executive has re-appointed Mrs Ann Kung Yeung Yun-chi as a member of the Standing Committee on Directorate Salaries and Conditions of Service (the Directorate Committee), from November 1, 2018, to March 31, 2021.

The Directorate Committee advises the Chief Executive on matters relating to the structure, pay and conditions of service of the directorate ranks in the civil service. It is chaired by Dr Pang Yiu-kai. Other serving members are Dr Clement Chen Cheng-jen, Mr Peter Sit Kien-ping, Mr Ivan Sze

Wing-hang and Mrs Betty Yuen So Siu-mai.