

Speech by CS at roundtable discussion on vocational education and skills enhancement for value-added and diversified economy (English only)

Following is the speech by the Chief Secretary for Administration, Mr Matthew Cheung Kin-chung, at a roundtable discussion on vocational education and skills enhancement for a value-added and diversified economy held in London, the United Kingdom today (September 27, London Time):

Mark (Director, Schools and Skills of British Council, Mr Mark Herbert), Carrie (Executive Director of the Vocational Training Council, Mrs Carrie Yau), Jeff (Director of British Council, Hong Kong, Jeff Streeter) distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

Good morning. I am most honoured to join you all at this roundtable discussion. Gathering here today are prominent academics and experts from the UK and Hong Kong who will share their valuable experience and insights on skills training and youth enhancement.

Talent is the most important element in driving economic growth and upward social mobility. The current-term Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Government is determined to develop Hong Kong into a regional talent hub for the long-term economic development and social progress of this Asia's World City. To this end, we have injected new resources and introduced a series of measures to strengthen our education infrastructure and improve various areas of our education system including vocational and professional education and training as well as self-financing post-secondary education.

Investment in Education

Education is founded on dedication and commitment. The HKSAR Government accords the highest priority to education. In fact, it has long been the lion's share of Government's spending. Through learning, young people can explore their potential, cultivate their interests and enhance their strengths so that they are well equipped for the future and able to contribute to the community.

As soon as the current-term Government took office in July last year, we immediately increased the annual recurrent provision to education by HK\$3.6 billion with effect from the 2017/18 school year to roll out a package of priority measures to improve our education system. The 2018-19 financial year will witness a historic high of HK\$113 billion government expenditure on education, an increase of 28 per cent over the previous year and accounting for over one-fifth of Hong Kong's total government expenditure.

Every dollar spent on education is an investment for the future of our youth and Hong Kong as a whole. The HKSAR Government will continue to invest in education and strive for academic excellence. We have earmarked HK\$3.4 billion recurrent expenditure for education. We will come up with the best recommendations in consultation with our education stakeholders.

Quality Post-secondary Education

For students interested in pursuing post-secondary education, we provide quality, diversified and flexible pathways with multiple entry and exit points. There are 20 local degree-awarding post-secondary education institutions in Hong Kong including nine publicly-funded and 11 self-financing institutions. These institutions are well-recognised by their peers across the globe. Four of them are even ranked within the world's top 100 by the 2019 QS World University Rankings. The EMBA programmes offered by two of our universities were ranked the world's top two by the Financial Times in 2017.

To diversify our talent pool and sustain Hong Kong's long-term competitiveness, the HKSAR Government attaches great importance to vocational and professional education and training, or vocational and professional education and training (VPET) in short. We have taken forward a number of policy measures to achieve this ambitious goal. These include regularising the Study Subsidy Scheme for Designated Professions and Sectors from the 2018/19 academic year onwards with an increase in the number of subsidised places to about 3 000 per cohort, and continuing the industrial attachment projects to improve students' employability.

However, Government's efforts alone are never enough. We need the support of relevant sectors of the community including the Vocational Training Council (VTC). Since its establishment in 1982, the VTC has all along been our staunch ally in the promotion and development of VPET in Hong Kong. Today, VTC is offering training courses to more than 250 000 students a year at its 13 member institutions, playing a pivotal role in ensuring skill-based training for our workforce.

The VTC also creates value for its students and our society, aligning vocational and professional education and training services to the ever-changing needs of industry. It enhances apprenticeship training and, through its "Earn and Learn Pilot Scheme", attracts young people to industries with a keen demand for labour while providing apprentices with first-hand experience in the workplace.

The HKSAR Government and VTC work closely with employers, training institutions and secondary schools to encourage more young people to pursue VPET as a valued choice and raise public awareness of the potential and prospect of pursuing VPET. We have stepped up measures to promote VPET on various fronts including introduction of dedicated funding to support job attachment and internship programmes run by the VTC and subsidise students pursuing designated self-financing undergraduate programmes with strong

professional or vocational elements. We are also exploring new strategies to work with secondary schools to facilitate students to pursue VPET programmes.

To sustain the continuous development of the VTC, we fully support the VTC to enhance further its infrastructure, including the development a modern and multi-disciplinary campus in East Kowloon as well as the Aircraft and Marine Engineering Centre within the Hong Kong Institute of Vocational Education Tsing Yi campus.

Lifelong Learning

In view of the dynamic development of the world, we must respond swiftly to the needs of the changing environment. It is imperative for us to enable our people to do so in career as well as personal development through lifelong learning.

We are injecting HK\$1.2 billion into the Qualifications Framework Fund to bolster its functions so as to enhance the recognition of qualifications for different industries including vocational qualifications and provide young people with quality-assured pathways for continuous studies and further career development. At present, the Qualifications Framework is providing common benchmarks for quality assurance in 23 industries.

Internationally, the Qualifications Framework is gaining recognition of our qualifications by our overseas counterparts. We have completed four comparability studies with the qualifications' framework of the European Union, Scotland, Ireland and New Zealand. The studies demonstrate the high standards of our Framework and quality assurance system, boosting their credibility and recognition world-wide. It now stands as a solid foundation in Hong Kong's progressive development into a knowledge-based economy.

Future Prospects

The Belt and Road Initiative pioneered by our Motherland will be the new engine for Hong Kong's economic growth, offering enormous opportunities to our next generation. Covering 4.4 billion people of over 60 countries and accounting for over 30 per cent of global economic value, this national development strategy will certainly create new and abundant opportunities for our young people to unleash their versatile potential.

At the same time, highly promising brilliant prospects are also presented by the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Bay Area (Greater Bay Area) development. It is a mega regional co-operation plan among Hong Kong, Macao and nine Guangdong cities. It has a total population of over 66 million in southern China (about the size of the UK) and a combined gross domestic product of over US\$1.4 trillion or about the size of Australia or Korea.

To help our younger generation establish interpersonal networks, broaden their horizons and assist their future career planning in the wake of these mammoth developments, we have allocated substantial resources to provide an average of more than 70 000 annual places for Hong Kong young people to

participate in exchange and internship programmes on Mainland China including the Greater Bay Area and other places outside Hong Kong.

We have also launched the Pilot Scheme on Corporate Summer Internship on the Mainland and Overseas in collaboration with major enterprises to provide around 250 internship places for Hong Kong young people on the Mainland and overseas.

In parallel, we have signed Working Holiday Scheme agreements with New Zealand, Australia, Ireland, Germany, Japan, Canada, Korea, France, the United Kingdom, Austria, Hungary, Sweden and the Netherlands to provide opportunities for young people in Hong Kong to gain first-hand experience living and working in foreign countries, thereby broadening their horizons. The HKSAR Government will proactively sign more Working Holiday Scheme agreements with suitable partners, including countries along the Belt and Road corridors.

To open up new markets and seize new opportunities in front of us, we need a supply of talent for different sectors. The four pillar industries, comprising trading and logistics, financial services, professional services and tourism, have been a driving force of the Hong Kong economy for years. While the HKSAR Government will continue to improve training resources and policy initiatives to sustain our competitiveness in these areas, we have also identified and promoted emerging industries to help diversify our economy.

Innovation and Technology is one of the key areas that the Government seeks to further develop. To nurture a pool of innovative and IT-savvy talent, we have launched a HK\$500 million Technology Talent Scheme to train and gather more technology talent and to encourage them to pursue a career in innovation and scientific research. One of the initiatives is to establish a Postdoctoral Hub to provide funding support for enterprises to recruit postdoctoral talent for scientific research and product development. We have also injected HK\$3 billion into the Research Endowment Fund to provide studentships for local students enrolled in research postgraduate programmes funded by the University Grants Committee.

In parallel, we have also invested heavily in strengthening the soft-power for our emerging sectors. Our creative industries and culture and arts sector have immense development potential. In 2016, it contributed 4.5 per cent to our GDP and employed 212 800 persons. To nurture a talent pool for the long-term development of this sector, we have injected HK\$1 billion to enhance our support for grooming young talent and raise the community's awareness of creative thinking and design capability. In addition, we have also launched design incubation programmes for fashion and other design disciplines.

To enhance Hong Kong's status as the creative capital in the region, creative industry is identified as one of the 11 Industry Segments and Occupations with keen manpower demand in Hong Kong under the Talent List. The List aims to offer a separate avenue under the Quality Migrant Admission

Scheme to import top-notch talent. We hope that more UK talent of these creative disciplines can make use of this new avenue to tap the vast opportunities in Hong Kong.

The HKSAR Government is also committed to consolidating Hong Kong's status as an international maritime and aviation centre. The maritime and aviation industries account for 4.2 per cent of Hong Kong's gross domestic product. To enhance further our air passenger and cargo capacity, we are actively assisting the Airport Authority of Hong Kong in implementing the Three-Runway System. Upon commencement of full operation in 2024, the System will substantially strengthen the capacity of the Hong Kong International Airport to handling 100 million passengers and nine million tonnes of cargo annually.

To nurture local and regional air transport management talents, the Airport Authority has established the Hong Kong International Aviation Academy to further strengthen Hong Kong's leading position as a regional and international aviation hub.

Hong Kong is also a major cargo port worldwide. I am most pleased to note that our Transport and Housing Bureau has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Maritime London last September to further strengthen liaison and collaboration between Hong Kong and the United Kingdom in promoting high value-added maritime services and training of maritime practitioners.

To entrench Hong Kong's position as a diversified international maritime centre, we have introduced the HK\$100 million Maritime and Aviation Training Fund to provide training schemes and scholarships and worked closely with the Maritime Services Training Institute under the VTC to provide training courses for new entrants, in-service seafarers, and employees of maritime industry.

At the policy-making level, it is important to chart a holistic plan for nurturing talent in Hong Kong in a sustainable manner. In this connection, the current-term HKSAR Government has set up the Commission on Children, the Youth Development Commission and the Commission for the Planning of Human Resources, all under my chairmanship, to co-ordinate resources and efforts of the Government and relevant sectors to ensure that people of different age groups are prepared to meet the short-, medium- and long-term development needs of Hong Kong and keep up with our country's latest developments as well as the evolving trends in the global market.

Ladies and gentlemen, the HKSAR Government is determined to continue to invest heavily in education and work closely with the industry players locally and from overseas in nurturing our young people and unleashing their potential, thereby sustaining the prosperity and competitiveness of Hong Kong.

On this positive note, I would like to extend my sincerest gratitude to VTC and the British Council for organising this roundtable discussion for

experts in the post-secondary sector to share your valuable experience and insights in enhancing skills training and youth development. My warmest appreciation also goes to Mrs Carrie Yau for travelling all the way from Hong Kong to join me at this event. I look forward to learning more from you today. Thank you.

[Twenty-one students awarded Multi-faceted Excellence Scholarships \(with photos\)](#)

The Permanent Secretary for Home Affairs, Mrs Cherry Tse, today (September 27) officiated at the presentation ceremony for the Multi-faceted Excellence Scholarship and commended 21 scholarship recipients with talents in non-academic fields. Full scholarships will be granted to the awardees for undergraduate study in local universities and post-secondary institutions.

Speaking at the ceremony, Mrs Tse said, "The Multi-faceted Excellence Scholarship has been well received since its launch. The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government aims to encourage young people, through the scholarships, to explore and develop their potential in different areas. The scholarships highlight that academic achievement is not the only criterion for excellence."

Mrs Tse also encouraged young people to hold strong aspirations and determination in order to find the direction for development and gain support from society.

To foster a culture of multifaceted excellence, the Home Affairs Bureau launched the Multi-faceted Excellence Scholarship in late 2014 to support local universities and tertiary institutions in admitting local undergraduate students who excel in sports, arts and/or community services, providing an alternative path for students with talents to receive higher education.

Applicants for the Multi-faceted Excellence Scholarship are nominated by their secondary school principals. After selection, the assessment panel comprising members from various sectors recommends candidates for admission by universities and post-secondary institutions. If deemed necessary, the institutions may conduct interviews with the selected candidates. The institutions give conditional offers to the selected candidates that they intend to admit before the release of the Hong Kong Diploma of Secondary Education (HKDSE) Examination results. If nominees attain HKDSE results that meet the admission conditions and are subsequently admitted for the undergraduate programmes they have applied for, they are awarded the

scholarship.

The awardees of the Multi-faceted Excellence Scholarship this year are listed in the Annex.



[Invitation for Leading Organisers for Hong Kong ICT Awards 2019](#)

The Hong Kong ICT Awards 2019, steered by the Office of the Government Chief Information Officer (OGCIO), will be held in April 2019. The Government is inviting proposals from organisations interested in taking part as Leading Organisers.

All professional bodies, trade associations or other non-profit organisations are eligible to be Leading Organisers, which are responsible for recruiting and screening entries, promoting the Hong Kong ICT Awards through their networks and managing the adjudication process. Selection will be conducted through an open and competitive process based on an established assessment mechanism taking into account the quality of applicants' proposals, capability and track record.

The Hong Kong ICT Awards 2019 will consist of eight award categories. They are:

- * Digital Entertainment Award
- * FinTech Award
- * ICT Startup Award
- * Smart Business Award
- * Smart Living Award
- * Smart Mobility Award
- * Smart People Award
- * Student Innovation Award

Organisations interested in becoming a Leading Organiser should obtain a copy of the Request for Proposal document and a Proposal Form from the Secretariat Office of the Hong Kong ICT Awards 2019 (email: info@hkictawards.hk). The deadline for submission is October 25, 2018.

The Hong Kong ICT Awards aims at recognising and promoting outstanding information and communications technology (ICT) inventions and applications, thereby encouraging innovation and excellence among Hong Kong's ICT talents and enterprises. Through concerted efforts of the ICT sector, academia and the Government, the Awards has developed into a renowned event to recognise innovation and achievements in the local ICT industry. Over 1,500 locally developed ICT products and solutions have been recognised by the Hong Kong ICT Awards since its debut in 2006.

Further details on becoming Leading Organisers are available on the website of the Hong Kong ICT Awards (www.hkictawards.hk). Enquiries can be made to the Secretariat Office at 2582 4318 or by email to info@hkictawards.hk.

Government announces quarterly land sale programme for October to December 2018

The Government announced today (September 27) the quarterly land sale programme for the third quarter of 2018-19, i.e. October to December 2018.

"In the third quarter of 2018-19, the Government will sell by tender four residential sites, with one each on Lantau and in Tai Po, and two in Kai Tak. The total estimated flat yield is about 2 630 units. Including supply from private development and redevelopment projects, the private housing land supply in the third quarter of 2018-19 is estimated to have a capacity to produce about 3 360 flats in total," the Secretary for Development, Mr Michael Wong, said.

To provide more elderly facilities, Mr Wong said that the successful bidder of the Tai Po site (i.e. Tai Po Town Lot 244) will be required to develop a 100-place residential care home for the elderly at the site, subject to planning approval by the Town Planning Board.

He said that the Development Bureau will continue to work in close partnership with the Labour and Welfare Bureau to identify suitable land sale sites and require private developers to construct welfare facilities through land sale conditions.

Mr Wong then reviewed the private housing land supply situation in the first half of 2018-19. On government land sale, six residential sites will have been put up for sale by the end of this month, capable of providing about 2 350 flats in total.

In the past two quarters, the MTR Corporation Limited tendered three property development projects respectively in Yau Tong, at Wong Chuk Hang Station and at Ho Man Tin Station, capable of producing about 2 700 flats in total. On another front, the Urban Renewal Authority tendered its Tung Chau Street/Kweilin Street project and Castle Peak Road/Un Chau Street project in Sham Shui Po, which have a capacity to produce about 470 flats in total.

Together with the supply from private development and redevelopment projects, which can produce around 960 flats in total, the private housing land supply in the first half of 2018-19 has a total capacity to provide about 6 500 flats.

"Including supply in the third quarter, the total private housing land supply in the first three quarters of 2018-19 has a capacity to produce about 9 840 flats in total," Mr Wong said.

"The Government will continue to identify suitable sites for sale, taking into account other land supply sources and market conditions. We will continue to do our utmost in maintaining a stable and sustained private housing land supply."

On land supply for economic uses, in addition to the industrial site in Fanling sold in the first quarter of 2018-19, the Government plans to put up for sale one commercial/hotel site in Kai Tak in the next quarter in response to the keen demand for commercial floor area.

"This commercial/hotel site is capable of providing about 56 900 square metres of gross floor area. The successful bidder will be required to provide floor area for hotel use, which is estimated to provide about 340 to 570 hotel rooms," Mr Wong said.

Mr Wong said that the Government is firmly committed to increasing land supply through a multi-pronged approach to meet the community's housing and economic development needs.

In line with past practice, subject to market conditions and other supply sources, the Government may make adjustments to the land sale programme during the course of the year.

The list of the sites to be tendered in October to December 2018 is attached. The actual tender timetable will be drawn up taking into account the progress of necessary preparatory work. The Lands Department will separately announce the detailed land sale arrangements before individual sites are tendered.

Co-ordination measures drawn up for visitors to Hong Kong during National Day Golden Week

The Tourism Commission, in co-operation with relevant government departments, major tourist attractions, the Hong Kong Tourism Board (HKTB) and the Travel Industry Council of Hong Kong (TIC), has drawn up relevant measures to cope with the tourist flow between Hong Kong and the Mainland during the National Day Golden Week (October 1 to 7), a Government spokesman said today (September 27).

Relevant government departments will strengthen manpower at all control points and co-ordinate transport and cross-boundary services during the National Day Golden Week.

The Inter-departmental Joint Command Centre set up by the Immigration Department, the Police, the Customs and Excise Department (Customs) and other relevant departments will be activated during the period to monitor the situation at each land control point, as well as to maintain close liaison with relevant Mainland counterparts and take contingency actions where necessary.

In addition, the Tourism Commission will maintain effective communications with the tourism authorities in Guangdong and Shenzhen in accordance with the mechanism for information exchange and emergency handling of Golden Weeks.

"It is expected that passenger traffic from October 1 to 7 will be heavier than usual. To avoid congestion during the morning and evening peak hours at various boundary control points, we urge Mainland visitors and local residents to cross the boundary at less busy hours," the spokesman said.

To assist visitors in planning their trips, the Immigration Department will upload the daily arrival figures at all control points to its website (www.immd.gov.hk) from September 29 to October 8. Such information will also be hyperlinked to the HKTB's website (www.discoverhongkong.com) for visitors' reference. In addition, visitors may also check the estimated waiting time at all land boundary control points via the Immigration Mobile Application, which can be downloaded free of charge from the Apple App Store (supports iOS version 5.1.1 or above) and Google Play (supports Android version 2.2 or above).

With the Tourism Commission's co-ordination, major tourist attractions

will extend their opening hours and formulate crowd control measures and contingency arrangements during the National Day Golden Week. The Tourism Commission, in collaboration with the TIC, will also appeal to travel agents and restaurants targeting Mainland tour groups in ensuring that appropriate measures are taken in the orderly management of tourist and coach flows.

As regards tourist education on consumer awareness, the Tourism Commission and the HKTB have deployed staff to distribute souvenirs and leaflets printed with messages concerning consumer rights and channels for lodging complaints to Mainland visitors at the Lo Wu Control Point, the Lok Ma Chau Boundary Control Point, the Hung Hom Control Point and popular attractions, so as to enhance their awareness of the protection of their own rights. An advisory note on consumer rights for Mainland group tour visitors has also been uploaded to the websites of the Tourism Commission and relevant local bodies for Mainland visitors' reference.

Meanwhile, to protect group tour visitors' rights, the TIC will enforce a series of regulatory measures on arrangements for receiving inbound Mainland group tours, which include requiring Hong Kong travel agents to register with the TIC the itineraries of the Mainland inbound tours that they receive together with proof of accommodation within a specified period. During the National Day Golden Week, the TIC will deploy additional manpower for conducting inspections in districts where many of the registered shops are located and offer immediate assistance to tourists and tourist guides. In addition, Customs and the Police will step up inspection of retail shops targeting Mainland tour groups, so as to combat unfair trade practices such as coerced shopping.

The Tourism Commission has provided the hotlines of the relevant local organisations to inbound tour group visitors via the tourism authorities in Guangdong and Shenzhen. During the National Day Golden Week, in case of emergency, Mainland inbound group tourists, tour escorts and tourist guides can seek assistance from the TIC by calling its service hotline 2807 0707 (operating from 9am to midnight). As for enquiries or complaints concerning consumer rights, they can call the HKTB hotline 2508 1234 (operating from 9am to 6pm) or the Consumer Council hotline 2929 2222 (operating from 9am to 5.30pm).