

# Consultation on review of self-financing post-secondary education starts

The Task Force on Review of Self-financing Post-secondary Education released a consultation document today (June 25) to solicit views from members of the public on its preliminary recommendations.

The Chairman of the Task Force, Professor Anthony Cheung, said that the review is premised on the belief that nurturing talent is crucial to the continued development of society, and education is an important social investment. When deliberating on the further development of self-financing post-secondary education, the Task Force has followed the guiding principles of "providing student-oriented quality education", "meeting societal needs and developing Hong Kong's advantages", and "facilitating diversified development of post-secondary education". The Task Force is determined to address the issues concerned through this comprehensive review.

The Task Force considers that the Government should conduct a comprehensive review of policy and measures in support of privately-run institutions in order to further achieve its policy objective of "parallel development". The Task Force also endorses that the self-financing post-secondary education sector should be complementary to the publicly-funded sector, and should maintain its role in providing flexible options and adding diversity to the higher education sector as a whole. To meet the societal needs for talent, the Task Force considers that it is the Government's responsibility to assist in improving the quality of self-financing post-secondary programmes and enhancing the overall academic capacity of privately-run institutions. In addition, there is a need for the self-financing post-secondary sector to conduct reforms so that its development will evolve in tandem with the times.

The Task Force recommends the Government to enhance its support for the self-financing institutions with the following major preliminary recommendations: encourage the self-financing post-secondary institutions to identify their roles and positioning in the higher education landscape; formulate clear policies to improve the quality and governance of self-financing institutions; review and update relevant legislation to foster the development of the self-financing sector; enhance and align the regulatory framework for all institutions providing self-financing locally accredited local programmes at sub-degree and/or undergraduate levels; and strengthen the role and functions of the Committee on Self-financing Post-secondary Education. The Task Force also sees the need to reposition Associate Degree and Higher Diploma qualifications and review their curriculum framework and relevance, as well as to further promote Higher Diploma education's importance in promoting the economic development of Hong Kong. In regard to stepping up support measures for self-financing institutions and students,

the Task Force will seek views on the various recommendations for further discussion. The consultation document has been uploaded to the website of the Education Bureau: [www.edb.gov.hk/en/about-edb/press/consultation/index.html](http://www.edb.gov.hk/en/about-edb/press/consultation/index.html).

The Task Force will conduct consultation sessions to collect views from key stakeholders. Members of the public are welcome to tender their views to the Task Force by e-mail to [taskforce\\_sfpe@edb.gov.hk](mailto:taskforce_sfpe@edb.gov.hk).

The consultation exercise will close on August 31. The Task Force will duly consider the views received. It plans to publish its final review report and make recommendations to the Government by the end of 2018.

To follow up on the announcement in the Chief Executive's 2017 Policy Address, a task force was set up by the Education Bureau to consider issues pertinent to the development of the self-financing post-secondary education sector. Over the past several months, the Task Force, chaired by Professor Cheung, has looked into issues such as the role of the self-financing post-secondary education sector, the regulatory regime and support for the sector, and the future of sub-degree education. Making reference to overseas experience and taking into account the views of stakeholders, the Task Force has consolidated its initial observations and recommendations on the issues concerned in the consultation document.