

Continuing Education Fund terms on course operation revised to state clearly responsibilities to safeguard national security

The Labour and Welfare Bureau (LWB) today (September 19) revised the terms for operating courses under the Continuing Education Fund (CEF) with immediate effect to state expressly the responsibilities of the relevant institutions/organisations to safeguard national security.

In response to the recommendations of the Audit Commission and the Legislative Council Public Accounts Committee, the Government has revised the CEF terms and conditions to provide expressly for the responsibilities of the relevant institutions/organisations in safeguarding national security. The LWB has issued letters to all institutions/organisations under the CEF to explain to them their responsibilities, including ensuring that all key personnel involved in the management, operation or delivery of the CEF courses (such as responsible persons, course directors, course instructors, etc) acquire a correct understanding of and comply with the Law of the People's Republic of China on Safeguarding National Security in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (National Security Law); do not perform or engage in any act or activity that constitutes an offence under the National Security Law or is contrary to the interest of national security; and are not under police investigation for, charged with or convicted of any offence endangering national security under the National Security Law. Institutions and organisations are required to acknowledge in writing within two weeks after the issue of the above letter to confirm their understanding of the revised terms and ongoing compliance with relevant requirements. Based on the above requirements, the Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications and the Office of the CEF have also made corresponding amendments to the relevant CEF guidelines and documents.

The spokesman stressed, "All institutions/organisations operating CEF courses must observe the laws in Hong Kong, including the National Security Law, and discharge their duty to safeguard national security. The Government will closely monitor the situation. In case of any suspected breach of national security requirements in the CEF terms and conditions, the LWB will suspend or even de-register the CEF courses of the institutions/organisations concerned, and refer the cases to law enforcement agencies for follow-up."