

Final report of consultants on review of legal education and training issued

The following is issued on behalf of the Standing Committee on Legal Education and Training:

The Standing Committee on Legal Education and Training (SCLET) today (May 15) released the Final Report of the Consultants on the Comprehensive Review of Legal Education and Training in Hong Kong.

The Chairman of the Standing Committee, Mr Justice Robert Tang Ching, said, "The Final Report comprises 38 recommendations in total, covering various aspects of Hong Kong's system and provision of legal education and training.

"In particular, it reviews the existing structure of legal education and training, the academic stage of legal education, the Postgraduate Certificate in Laws, the proposal for a 'Common Entrance Examination' and regulatory framework relating to the training contract, pupillage and the overseas qualifying examinations."

He said the Standing Committee will carefully study the Final Report in the coming months, before it tenders its comments and recommendations on the way forward to the Government for consideration in due course.

The Standing Committee is a statutory committee established in 2005 by section 74A of the Legal Practitioners Ordinance (Cap 159). Its main functions include keeping under review the system and provision of legal education and training in Hong Kong and to make recommendations on such matters.

This report is the first substantial review of legal education and training in Hong Kong since the Redmond Roper Report on Legal Education and Training in Hong Kong: Preliminary Review published in 2001.

The Standing Committee in 2013 resolved that it was time to undertake a further review in the context, chiefly, of

- * Continuing expansion of legal education and training in Hong Kong, including the recognition of a third law school and the provision of graduate law degrees,
- * Perceived concerns over access to the profession, and consistency in standards of education and training, and
- * Changes to the delivery of legal services and new demands on the profession, including the impacts of technology, globalisation, and increasing integration of Hong Kong and Mainland legal markets.

The consultants initially appointed in 2015 were:

* Mr Woo Kwok-hing, QC, formerly Vice-President of the Court of Appeal of the High Court and a former chairman of the Electoral Affairs Commission;

* Professor Tony Smith, Professor of Law at the Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand, and Honorary Bencher of the Middle Temple; a former Chairman of the Faculty of Law at the University of Cambridge, and a former Chair of the Committee of Heads of University Law Schools (UK); and

* Professor Julian Webb, Professor of Law and Director of the Legal Professions Research Network at the University of Melbourne, Australia, and Academic Bencher of the Inner Temple; formerly Professor and Director of the UK Centre for Legal Education at the University of Warwick.

Following Mr Woo's resignation from the Review in October 2016, Mr Anthony Rogers, QC, Chairman of the Clearing and Settlement Systems Appeals Tribunal, Hong Kong, and former Vice-President of the Court of Appeal, took over chairmanship of the group.

A consultants' interim report was issued in October 2017. The SCLET received the Law Society of Hong Kong's response to the interim report on May 8, 2018, which has been uploaded to the website of the SCLET.

The Final Report, the Overview and Consultation Responses (November 2015 to February 2018) (as well as the Chinese text of the Overview and Recommendations) can be accessed on the website of the SCLET at www.sclet.gov.hk/eng/index.htm. The Chinese text of the full Report will be made available as soon as possible.