

Four degree programmes selected for second round of Pilot Project on Development of Applied Degree Programmes

The Education Bureau (EDB) today (September 15) announced that four degree programmes have been selected for the second round of the Pilot Project on the Development of Applied Degree Programmes.

The Pilot Project aims to review and foster the development of applied degrees in Hong Kong, and further strengthen the vocational and professional education and training (VPET) progression pathway at the post-secondary level. Having assessed the proposals submitted by eligible self-financing post-secondary institutions, the EDB has selected the following four degree programmes for the second round of the Pilot Project:

(a) Bachelor of Business Administration (Honours) (Hotel and Tourism Management Stream) by Caritas Institute of Higher Education;

(b) Bachelor of Business Administration with Honours in Sports and Recreation Management by the Hong Kong Metropolitan University;

(c) Bachelor of Engineering (Honours) in Building Services Engineering by the Technological and Higher Education Institute of Hong Kong of the Vocational Training Council; and

(d) Bachelor of Health Information and Services Management (Honours) by Tung Wah College.

An EDB spokesman said, "The selected programmes are in disciplines with keen manpower demand and have strong industry elements. The relevant institutions will develop applied degree programmes by modifying the programme structure and curriculum of the aforementioned existing degree programmes. The EDB has engaged the Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications to provide assistance to the institutions. Subject to the satisfactory completion of relevant accreditation, the institutions will launch the applied degree programmes in the 2024/25 academic year at the earliest."

The Pilot Project aims to gain practical experience in the development of applied degree programmes and to assess the implications for the higher education system. Launched in the 2022/23 academic year, the four applied degree programmes under the first round of the Pilot Project cover nursing; testing and certification; horticulture, arboriculture and landscape management; and gerontology. Positive feedback was received on the first round of the Pilot Project. In pursuance of the strategy of fostering industry-institution collaboration and diversified development for promoting

VPET as announced in the Chief Executive's 2022 Policy Address, and to follow up on the announcement in the 2023-24 Budget, the EDB launched the second round in March this year.

The applied degree programmes under the Pilot Project have the following distinct and prominent features that differentiate them from other degree programmes:

(a) the qualifications are equivalent to those of conventional academic degrees, i.e. to be pitched at Qualifications Framework Level 5;

(b) a more flexible admission requirement is adopted. Apart from academic results, other relevant factors, for example, skills-based competence and achievements, and work experience will also be considered;

(c) the programmes have an applied focus blending theory and practice, provide substantial internships and work-based learning experience, and prepare graduates for a specific trade or industry, while also supporting articulation to other qualifications; and

(d) there is strong industry involvement in the programme development with trade recognition.