

## Hong Kong Customs and universities join hands to enhance induction programmes and encourage in-service education (with photos)

â€‹Hong Kong Customs has all along attached great importance to staff training with a view to enhancing enforcement effectiveness. To enrich induction training and encourage in-service education, the department has entered into two memoranda of understanding (MoU) with two local universities this month. This is a significant step to map out the department's staff development strategy.

The Commissioner of Customs and Excise, Mr Hermes Tang, signed an MoU with the President of the Open University of Hong Kong (OUHK), Professor Wong Yuk-shan, on June 11. All new trainee Inspectors and Customs Officers enrolled since May this year would take two new modules offered by the OUHK, namely "Social Studies in Law Enforcement" and "Psychological Studies in Law Enforcement", as one of the components of the induction programmes. The contents of the two modules combine both theories and practices. Apart from various concepts of criminology, sociology and psychology, the modules also cover practical knowledge in conflict management, psychological skills, media relations, etc, so as to fully enhance Customs officers' practical foundation training.

Upon completion of relevant programmes, graduate Inspectors and Customs Officers will be awarded the "Certificate in Law Enforcement and Customs Management" by the OUHK. They will be entitled to an exemption of 30 credits when pursuing the "Bachelor of Social Sciences in Law Enforcement and Security Management" (or with Honours). Together with the credit exemption offered by the OUHK since 2004, qualified Customs Officers will be granted at most an exemption of 50 credits, therefore, saving about one-third of curriculum time and course fee. Officers holding local accredited Higher Diplomas or Associate Degrees may even gain further credit exemptions.

Apart from the co-operation with the OUHK, Hong Kong Customs also established co-operation ties with City University of Hong Kong (CityU). The Deputy Commissioner of Customs and Excise, Ms Louise Ho, and the Vice-President (Development and External Relations) of CityU, Professor Matthew Lee, today (June 19) witnessed the signing of the MoU by the Assistant Commissioner (Administration and Human Resource Development), Mr Ellis Lai, and the Director of the School of Continuing and Professional Education (SCOPE) of CityU, Dr Louis Ma. Under the co-operation, the SCOPE of CityU will integrate the element of public service management into the induction programmes of which the graduates can gain an exemption of 36 credits when enrolling in the "Advanced Diploma in Management Studies" offered by the SCOPE of CityU. The Advanced Diploma course is also articulated with the "Bachelor of Arts (Honours) in Public Administration and Management" jointly

organised by the SCOPE of CityU and De Montfort University of the United Kingdom to facilitate Customs officers to study the degree course.

Mr Tang expressed his gratitude to the two universities for joining hands with Hong Kong Customs in enhancing the department's staff training and encouraging continuous education. He said that the MoUs would not only raise the professional standard and academic status of Customs induction programmes, but also facilitate in-service education and encourage lifelong learning, which are extremely meaningful to the career prospects of Customs officers.

Mr Tang added that following the Hong Kong Customs College obtaining the accreditation approval from the Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications in December 2018 to include the Customs induction programmes for Inspectors and Customs Officers in the Qualifications Register, the new MoUs reached between the department and the universities marked another milestone in the departmental staff training development.

He said that Customs' work is becoming more extensive and diversified in recent years. The department will continue to enhance staff training and promote in-service education in order to secure sustainable development of human resources.

