

LCQ15: Talent training for the insurance sector and the asset and wealth management sector

Following is a question by the Hon Chan Kin-por and a written reply by the Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury, Mr James Lau, in the Legislative Council today (October 30):

Question:

In view of the persistent shortage of talents faced by the insurance sector as well as the asset and wealth management sector, the Government launched a three-year Pilot Programme to Enhance Talent Training for the Insurance Sector and the Asset and Wealth Management Sector (Pilot Programme) in August 2016 to help promote these two sectors and enhance the professional competence of their practitioners. The initiatives under the Pilot Programme include public education, financial incentive schemes for professional training, summer internship programmes and a work-and-learn programme. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

- (1) of the respective numbers of participants in the professional training, summer internship and work-and-learn programmes since the launch of the Pilot Programme, as well as the latest progress of the various initiatives;
- (2) whether it has assessed the effectiveness of the training and promotional efforts under the Pilot Programme; if so, of the details; if not, the reasons for that;
- (3) whether it will regularise the Pilot Programme to train talents for and attract new blood to the two sectors on an on-going basis, so as to seize the opportunities brought by the development of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area and the "Belt and Road" Initiative; and
- (4) whether it will consider establishing an academy of insurance so as to assist the insurance sector in training talents more effectively; if so, of the details and the timetable; if not, the reasons for that?

Reply:

President,

Our response to the various parts of the question is as follows:

- (1) To nurture a rich pool of talents in support of the continued development of our financial services industry, the Government launched a three-year Pilot Programme to Enhance Talent Training for the Insurance Sector and the Asset and Wealth Management Sector (Pilot Programme) in 2015-16. The key

outcomes of the initiatives under the Pilot Programme since August 2016 are set out below:

	Key Outcomes (August 2016 – September 2019)
Insurance Sector	
(i) Financial Incentive Scheme for Professional Training (FIS)	4 476 participants in 96 training courses.
(ii) Internship Programme for Undergraduate Students	210 students.
(iii) Training Allowance for Work-and-Learn Programme (WLP)	15 participants have completed or are participating in WLP.
(iv) Public Education Programme	Advertisements reached 8.8 million people while social media publicity generated 0.5 million clicks. School outreach programmes, various seminars and competitions attracted around 3 000 participants.
Asset and Wealth Management (WAM) Sector	
(v) FIS	Reimbursement for 1 434 applications in 80 to 90 eligible courses (each with multiple classes).
(vi) Internship Programme for Undergraduate Students	180 students.
(vii) Promotion and Education Initiatives	Promotion activities such as career fairs, career seminars, engagement events with industry practitioners/regulators reached out to over 1 500 participants. Online media campaigns were also launched, recording over 80 000 clicks.

(2) Having reviewed the above initiatives under the Pilot Programme, we presented the findings to the Legislative Council Panel on Financial Affairs in August 2019 on the outcome of the review and our plan to extend the Pilot Programme until 2022-23, subject to the following refinements:

(a) for the insurance sector, (i) expanding the list of organisations that can apply for subsidy under FIS and (ii) discontinuing WLP given the lukewarm response; and

(b) for the WAM sector, (i) relaxing the eligibility of participants and scheme rules to expand the pool of potential beneficiaries under FIS and (ii) expanding the pool of eligible students under the Internship Programme for Undergraduate Students.

(3) We will extend the Pilot Programme until 2022-23 subject to the refinements as outlined in (2) above. We will review the Pilot Programme by 2022-23 and consider the way forward taking into account relevant considerations including the merits, cost-effectiveness and feedbacks from stakeholders.

(4) The Financial Secretary announced the plan for an academy of finance to be set up by the Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA) in the 2018-19 Budget. The Hong Kong Academy of Finance (AoF) was established on June 26, 2019 in collaboration with the HKMA, the Securities and Futures Commission, the Insurance Authority and the Mandatory Provident Fund Schemes Authority. AoF's mission is to serve as a centre of excellence for developing financial leadership, and a repository of knowledge in monetary and financial research, including applied research. The insurance sector is one of the key targets for AoF's leadership development programme.

We will continue to explore and devise, in consultation with industry players and stakeholders, initiatives and programmes to promote and facilitate the development of financial services industry (including the insurance sector).