

# LCQ3: Technology Talent Admission Scheme

Following is a question by the Hon Gary Fan and a reply by the Acting Secretary for Innovation and Technology, Dr David Chung, in the Legislative Council today (June 20):

Question:

The Government announced last month the rolling out of a three-year Technology Talent Admission Scheme (TechTAS) to implement a fast-track arrangement for the admission of overseas and Mainland technology talents. Regarding the acquisition of the right of abode in Hong Kong by persons who came to Hong Kong under various admission schemes, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) of the respective numbers of persons who applied for and were granted entry into Hong Kong in each of the past three years under the Quality Migrant Admission Scheme, the Capital Investment Entrant Scheme, the Admission Scheme for Mainland Talents and Professionals, and the Immigration Arrangements for Non-local Graduates, as well as the number of persons, who had come to Hong Kong under the various schemes, acquiring the right of abode in Hong Kong in the past three years (with a breakdown of the figures and their percentages by Mainland resident and resident of other regions);

(2) given that the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation and the Hong Kong Cyberport Management Company Limited will be responsible for examining the TechTAS applications submitted by their tenants, incubatees, grantees or occupants, as well as making recommendations to the Innovation and Technology Commission (ITC) on the applications concerned, of the criteria adopted and the mechanisms based upon by these two companies and the ITC when considering the relevant applications; and

(3) given that under the TechTAS, the ITC will consider admission applications from technology talents who do not meet the relevant academic requirements but possess good technical skills in specialty areas, proven professional abilities or relevant experience and achievements, of the criteria adopted and mechanism based upon by the ITC when considering such types of applications; the specific measures to be put in place to ensure that the TechTAS will recruit the technology talents needed by Hong Kong without becoming nothing more than a shortcut for Mainland residents to acquire the right of abode in Hong Kong?

Reply:

President,

My reply to the question raised by the Hon Gary Fan is as follows:

(1) According to the information provided by the Immigration Department, the statistics on applications received and approved under the Quality Migrant Admission Scheme, the Admission Scheme for Mainland Talents and Professionals, the Immigration Arrangements for Non-local Graduates and the Capital Investment Entrant Scheme for the past three years are set out at Annex 1.

The statistics on persons approved for admission to Hong Kong under the immigration schemes mentioned in the question who have acquired right of abode in the past three years, in accordance with applicants' status in Hong Kong at the time of application for the right of abode, are set out at Annex 2.

The Immigration Department does not maintain statistical breakdowns by region of applicants who have acquired right of abode.

(2) and (3) Persons admitted under the Technology Talent Admission Scheme (TechTAS) must be employed by the applicant technology company/institute, and be engaged principally in conducting research and development (R&D) in Hong Kong in the seven technology areas of biotechnology, artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, robotics, data analytics, financial technologies and material science. On academic requirements, persons admitted should be degree-holders in science, technology, engineering or mathematics (STEM) from a well-recognised university. "Well-recognised universities" refers to the top 100 universities in the latest publications of STEM-related ranking tables of the QS World University Rankings, the Times Higher Education World University Rankings and the Academic Ranking of World Universities. Those with a bachelor's degree only should possess a minimum of one year of work experience in the relevant technology area, while those with a master's or doctoral degree are not subject to a work experience requirement.

Persons not meeting the academic requirements as mentioned above but possessing good technical skills in speciality areas, proven professional abilities and/or relevant experience and achievements supported by documentary evidence can be considered on a case-by-case basis under exceptional circumstances.

Upon receiving quota applications from its tenants or incubatees, the Hong Kong Science and Technology Parks Corporation (HKSTPC) and the Hong Kong Cyberport Management Company Limited (Cyberport) will examine the materials submitted, and make recommendations to the Innovation and Technology Commission (ITC). The ITC will take into consideration the HKSTPC's and the Cyberport's recommendation before deciding whether or not to approve the quota.

Each quota application will be assessed on its own merits having regard to the following considerations:

(i) the knowledge or skillsets of the required technology talent must align

with the applicant company or institute's technology activities;  
(ii) the number of quotas requested is justified for the applicant company or institute (e.g. having regard to considerations such as business volume, venue and expansion plans of the applicant company or institute);  
(iii) the applicant company or institute has demonstrated genuine difficulties in recruiting local talent in the technology areas concerned;  
and  
(iv) the academic qualifications or other expertise as well as the remuneration packages of the required non-local talent are suitable.

One of the key requirements of the TechTAS is that, at the stage of quota application, the applicant technology company or institute should demonstrate that talent with the relevant skills, knowledge or experience is short in supply or not readily available in Hong Kong. This is to ensure that the TechTAS can effectively assist technology companies or institutes in attracting technology talent in shortage in Hong Kong from around the world to conduct R&D in Hong Kong.

Similar to persons admitted under the other admission schemes as mentioned above, persons admitted under the TechTAS who have ordinarily resided in Hong Kong for a continuous period of not less than seven years may apply for the right of abode in Hong Kong in accordance with the law. The TechTAS will not become a shortcut in applying for right of abode in Hong Kong.