

LCQ8: Instrumental music training courses and activities of the Music Office

Following is a question by the Hon Yung Hoi-yan and a written reply by the Secretary for Home Affairs, Mr Caspar Tsui, in the Legislative Council today (October 27):

Question:

The Music Office under the Leisure and Cultural Services Department currently enhances the music knowledge and appreciation ability of members of the public through instrumental and ensemble training as well as various music activities. The Instrumental Music Training Scheme (IMTS), implemented by the Music Office, comprises training courses on more than 30 Chinese and Western musical instruments. In this connection, will the Government inform this Council:

(1) of the number of classes of training courses on Chinese and Western musical instruments offered as well as the number of activities organized by the Music Office, in each of the past five years, and set out the number of participants by course title and name of activity;

(2) of the number of activities that have been postponed, cancelled or changed to be conducted online since January 2020 due to the Coronavirus Disease 2019 epidemic and set out, by name of activity, the relevant details, including the changes in the arrangements for and contents of the activities, as well as the number of participants affected;

(3) of the to-date number of classes of courses that have been changed to be taught online due to the epidemic; the impacts of online teaching on trainees' learning progress, and the number of trainees who need to take more time than that of face-to-face classes to complete the courses; and

(4) whether the Music Office has compared the results of the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music examinations with the exit qualifications of IMTS in terms of recognition; of the advantages of the qualifications awarded under IMTS, and the places in which the universities' music schools recognize such qualifications?

Reply:

President,

After consulting the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD), my reply to the various parts of the Member's question is set out as follows:

(1) The Music Office under the LCSD has organised 1 799 music promotional activities and 5 740 music training programmes for 869 233 participants over

the past five years. The numbers of events held and participants, with a breakdown by year, are at Annex 1.

(2) Since 2020, 463 music promotional activities and 523 music training programmes have been postponed, cancelled or held online due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Details are set out at Annex 2.

(3) As impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, all classes under the Instrumental Music Training Scheme (IMTS) were conducted online to tie in with the Government's anti-epidemic measures. Young beginners had more difficulties in learning hand positioning and postures on musical instruments when classes are being held online. For instructors of intermediate and advanced classes, online teaching also poses much limitation on demonstrating the subtle difference in timbre. To ensure progress for trainees in achieving the learning objectives of the programme, the Music Office has extended the programme duration of 2019/20 for one year to 2020/21. With the exception of the 280 classes (with 1 327 trainees) of Chinese and Western wind instruments which continue to go online out of hygiene consideration, face-to-face teaching has resumed for all instrument classes since April this year.

(4) The Music Office is not empowered to award academic qualifications. The objective of its IMTS is to provide affordable fundamental training of musical instruments. The Music Office, therefore, does not compare the attainment qualification of its trainees against the examination results issued by the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music in terms of the recognition received. Neither does it have plans to seek recognition from any universities nor conservatories for qualifications obtained under the IMTS.