

Senior appointment at Hong Kong Monetary Authority

The following is issued on behalf of the Hong Kong Monetary Authority:

The Hong Kong Monetary Authority (HKMA) announced today (February 2) that the Financial Secretary, on the advice of the Governance Sub-Committee of the Exchange Fund Advisory Committee, has approved the appointment of Mr Archie Ng as Executive Director (Corporate Services) with effect from February 14, 2024. Mr Ng will succeed Mr Donald Chen who has taken over the role of Executive Director (Banking Policy) since December 2023.

As Executive Director (Corporate Services), Mr Ng will be responsible for corporate development, media relations and public engagement, human resources, administration, finance, information technology and digitalisation work in the HKMA. The CV of Mr Ng is attached at Annex.

EDB promulgates criteria for qualifying as Universities of Applied Sciences

The Education Bureau (EDB) today (February 2) promulgated the criteria for qualifying as Universities of Applied Sciences (UAS) and invited eligible self-financing post-secondary institutions to submit applications. The EDB accepts applications all year round.

The EDB has appointed the Hong Kong Council for Accreditation of Academic and Vocational Qualifications (HKCAAVQ) as a consultant to draw up the criteria for qualifying as UAS, with reference to experiences in other places, including Australia, Canada, Finland, Germany, Mainland China, Switzerland and the United Kingdom, covering aspects such as governance, management, quality assurance, learning environment and learner support, as well as industry collaboration and recognition.

Generally speaking, self-financing post-secondary institutions should fulfil the following requirements to be qualified to make an application for becoming a UAS:

1. Having obtained a university title; and
2. Possessing the vision, commitment, capabilities and experience in operating an institution that embodies the key features of UAS, including:

(a) the vision, maturity and capability in providing high-level vocational and professional education and training (VPET) programmes pitching at Levels 5 to 7 under the Hong Kong Qualifications Framework, blending theory and practice with substantial workplace learning and assessment, having flexibilities in curriculum design, admission and delivery mode, and having recognition and support from industries and professions; and

(b) the experience in providing applied degree programme(s) at least in one area of applied sciences for which it has attained the programme area accreditation or self-accrediting status, and the commitment to developing and providing more applied degree programmes.

Applications from eligible institutions to the EDB should include a self-evaluation against the criteria for qualifying as a UAS for the purpose of undergoing an Institutional Review by the HKCAAVQ. The relevant criteria and application procedures are set out in the Manual for Institutional Review for UAS at the HKCAAVQ website (www.hkcaavq.edu.hk/en/accreditation/institutional_review/). The EDB will take into account the outcome of the Institutional Review and any other relevant factors when considering the application.

An EDB spokesman said, "As announced in the Chief Executive's 2023 Policy Address, the EDB has been pressing ahead with the establishment of UAS to raise the status of VPET at the degree level, providing an alternative pathway to success for young people who aspire to pursue a career in professional skills sectors. UAS aims to nurture students with applied skills and knowledge through providing applied degree programmes with an applied focus blending theory and practice, and closely collaborating with the industries and incorporating substantial internship and work-based learning opportunities in their programmes."

To bolster the development of UAS and encourage institutions to offer more applied degree programmes, the EDB will provide, among others, the following financial and related support:

1. Priority will be accorded to eligible programmes of UAS for inclusion under the Study Subsidy Scheme for Designated Professions/Sectors (SSSDP) and eligible applications from UAS when considering applications for relevant support measures, including the EDB's Quality Enhancement Support Scheme and Enhancement and Start-up Grant Scheme for Self-financing Post-secondary Education;
2. Additional subsidies of \$5,000 for non-laboratory-based programmes and \$8,000 for laboratory-based programmes will be provided to full-time students enrolling in applied degree programmes under the SSSDP that have undergone the relevant accreditation; and
3. A start-up fund has been set aside to support UAS and prospective post-secondary institutions to form an alliance of UAS for joint promotion, including collaboration with UAS on the Mainland and overseas, initiating collaboration and research about applied education at the post-secondary level, and organising joint promotion activities, in order to enhance the

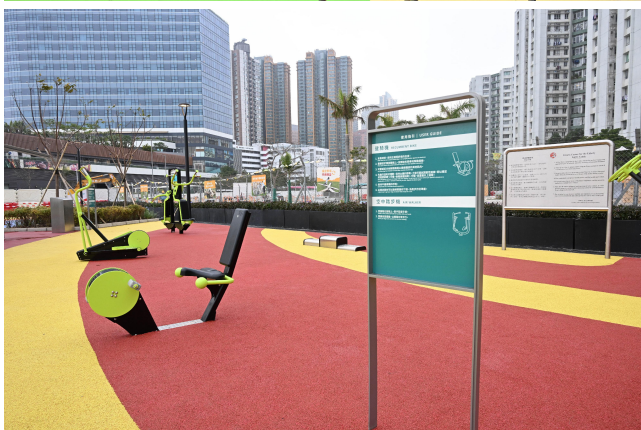
status of VPET in society and among parents and students.

[Hung Hom Urban Park \(Phase 1\) opens today \(with photos\)](#)

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) announced today (February 2) that the newly built Hung Hom Urban Park (Phase 1) in Kowloon City District is open for public use from today, providing a pleasant and relaxing leisure space for public enjoyment.

Occupying an area of about 2 200 square metres on Wa Shun Street near Hung Hom Ferry Pier, the Park provides a number of recreational facilities to meet the needs of people of all ages, including exhibition area of fire engine, elderly fitness corner, pavilion, lawn and drinking fountain.

Members of the public who plan to visit the Park can walk from Exit C1 of the Whampoa MTR Station for about seven minutes, or take various bus and minibus routes to get there. For enquiries, please contact the Kowloon City District Leisure Services Office of the LCSD at 2711 0541 during office hours.



Grading of beach water quality released

The Environmental Protection Department (EPD) today (February 2) released the latest grading of water quality for four gazetted beaches that are open all year round for swimming.

Four beaches were rated as Good (Grade 1).

Grade 1 beaches are:

Clear Water Bay Second Beach	Golden Beach
Deep Water Bay Beach	Silverstrand Beach

Compared with the grading released last week, there was no change in the grading for these beaches.

Under the present grading system, beaches are classified into four grades, namely Good (Grade 1), Fair (Grade 2), Poor (Grade 3) and Very Poor (Grade 4), according to the level of E. coli in the water. Grades are calculated on the basis of the geometric mean of the E. coli counts on the five most recent sampling occasions.

While the ratings represent the general water quality at the beaches, an EPD spokesman reminded members of the public that water quality could be temporarily affected during and after periods of heavy rain. Bathers should avoid swimming at beaches for up to three days after a tropical cyclone or heavy rainfall.

A summary of beach grades is published weekly before the weekend. The latest beach grades based on the most current data may be obtained from the EPD's website on Beach Water Quality (www.epd.gov.hk/epd/beach) or the beach hotline, 2511 6666. Members of the public can also obtain the latest daily water quality forecast information for all beaches that are open for swimming through the Beach Water Quality Forecast mobile application (available for download from: www.epd.gov.hk/en/BWQApp) or the dedicated beach water quality forecast page (www.epd.gov.hk/en/BWQForecast) on the EPD's beach thematic website.

Effective Exchange Rate Index

The effective exchange rate index for the Hong Kong dollar on Friday, February 2, 2024 is 104.6 (down 0.2 against yesterday's index).