

Chairman of Steering Committee on Promotion of Vocational and Professional Education and Training and Qualifications Framework welcomes “The Chief Executive’s 2023 Policy Address”

The following is issued on behalf of the Steering Committee on Promotion of Vocational and Professional Education and Training and Qualifications Framework:

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The Chairman of the Steering Committee on Promotion of Vocational and Professional Education and Training and Qualifications Framework, Dr Daniel Yip, welcomed the various new initiatives announced in "The Chief Executive's 2023 Policy Address" today (October 25) to further promote the development of vocational and professional education and training (VPET) in Hong Kong.

The Policy Address announced a series of measures to promote VPET at multiple levels, which include developing universities of applied sciences (UAS) and providing financial and related support, encouraging institutions to offer more applied degree programmes, supporting the Vocational Training Council to establish the Hong Kong Institute of Information and Technology, and collaborating with the relevant Mainland authorities to take forward the mutual recognition of sub-degree level qualifications.

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Dr Yip said, "The new initiatives announced by the Chief Executive in the Policy Address, in particular the support for the development of UAS and encouraging post-secondary institutions to offer more applied degree programmes, will further raise the status of VPET at the degree level, nurturing more talent equipped with applied skills for society, and grooming maestros in different trades. We also support UAS to closely collaborate with professional skills sectors and incorporate substantial internship and work-based learning opportunities in their programmes, which will help students develop applied skills and create impetus for Hong Kong's development. In addition, we are glad to know that the Government will set aside a start-up fund to support prospective post-secondary institutions to form an alliance of UAS for joint promotion in the post-secondary education sector, in order to further enhance the status of VPET in society and among parents and students."

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The Steering Committee will continue to maintain close communication and co-operation with the Government, adopting a multipronged approach to promote the positive image of VPET and fostering closer partnerships between institutions and industries.

[Youth Development Commission welcomes initiatives on youth development announced in “The Chief Executive’s 2023 Policy Address”](#)

The following is issued on behalf of the Youth Development Commission:

The Youth Development Commission (YDC) warmly welcomed the policy initiatives on supporting youth development in "The Chief Executive's 2023 Policy Address" delivered by the Chief Executive, Mr John Lee, today (October 25).

The Vice-Chairman of the YDC, Mr Kenneth Leung, said, "I am pleased that the Chief Executive has emphasised in the Policy Address that the Government will sustain its efforts in promoting youth development, continue to implement and enhance the some 160 measures in the Youth Development Blueprint, and organise the Youth Development Summit in mid-2024 as the opening and highlight of the 2024 Youth Festival. Moreover, I agree with the statement in the Policy Address that the Government would further support youth innovation and entrepreneurship, broaden young people's horizons and strengthen youth engagement."

He expressed appreciation of the Government's acceptance of suggestions raised by members of the YDC, and said that the YDC would work proactively and closely with the Government and other stakeholders to follow up on the implementation of relevant policy initiatives in the Policy Address and the Blueprint to promote youth development.

Chaired by the Chief Secretary for Administration, Mr Chan Kwok-ki, the YDC strives to enhance policy co-ordination within the Government for promoting youth development and enable a more holistic and effective examination of and discussion on issues of concern to young people. Since its establishment, the YDC has implemented a wide spectrum of programmes to promote youth exchange, internship, entrepreneurship, life planning, positive thinking and more. It has also actively supported the Government in formulating and implementing the Blueprint, so as to promote the all-round development of young people and nurture a new generation of young people with an affection for the country and Hong Kong, and are equipped with a global perspective, an aspiring mindset and positive thinking.

TAC Chairman welcomes “The Chief Executive’s 2023 Policy Address”

The following is issued on behalf of the Transport Advisory Committee:

The Chairman of the Transport Advisory Committee (TAC), Professor Stephen Cheung, welcomed the transport-related initiatives announced in "The Chief Executive's 2023 Policy Address" delivered today (October 25).

Professor Cheung said, "The Policy Address announced that the Government plans to publish the Hong Kong Major Transport Infrastructure Development Blueprint by the end of this year, which will outline the implementation of all major transport infrastructure, including the enhanced Three Railways and Three Major Roads proposals and the new two railways and one major road projects. I welcome the Government's continued effort to improve our railway and major road networks, boosting the sustainable development of Hong Kong and facilitating the commuting of the public. The Policy Address also announced the implementation of smart and green mass transit at East Kowloon, Kai Tai and Hung Shui Kiu/Ha Tsuen to promote green transport and, at the same time, fully embody the principle of "bringing forward infrastructure construction and increasing development capacity", unleashing the development potential along the infrastructure and strengthening the connectivity with other cities in the Greater Bay Area, thereby sustaining the momentum of Hong Kong's long-term development.

"Furthermore, the Policy Address also announced measures for advancing the development of digital government, including the provision of automated parking systems in newly completed government car parks and short-term tenancy car parks. I welcome the Government's stepped-up efforts to promote this smart mobility initiative, which seeks to meet the public's demand for parking spaces by utilising technology to optimise space efficiency and increase parking density.

"I am also pleased to note that the Government has set indicators for different measures in order to enhance transparency and ensure their timely implementation. The TAC will, as always, continue to earnestly offer views on various traffic and transport policies and measures for the Government to proceed with building and enhancing our transportation system, with a view to elevating and consolidating Hong Kong's status as an international metropolis and regional logistics hub."

Chairman of Committee on Self-financing Post-secondary Education welcomes "The Chief Executive's 2023 Policy Address"

The following is issued on behalf of the Committee on Self-financing Post-secondary Education:

The Chairman of the Committee on Self-financing Post-secondary Education, Professor Anthony Cheung, welcomed the various new initiatives announced in "The Chief Executive's 2023 Policy Address" today (October 25), which develop Hong Kong into an international post-secondary education hub, and support the self-financing post-secondary education sector to enhance the quality of teaching and learning, tying in with the further development of vocational and professional education and training (VPET), with a view to nurturing talent with professional skills to address community needs.

The Policy Address announced a series of initiatives, which include taking forward the development of post-secondary education in the Northern Metropolis, and launching a new round of the Land Grant Scheme (LGS) and Start-up Loan Scheme (SLS) to support self-financing institutions in upgrading premises, so as to further develop Hong Kong as an international post-secondary education hub. The initiatives also include supporting suitable self-financing institutions to develop into universities of applied sciences (UAS) by providing financial and related support, providing additional subsidies to encourage institutions to offer more applied degree programmes, as well as collaborating with the relevant Mainland authorities to take forward the mutual recognition of sub-degree level qualifications, in order to strengthen the positioning of VPET at the post-secondary level.

Professor Cheung said, "The new initiatives announced in the Policy Address will further facilitate the parallel development of the self-financing and publicly funded post-secondary education sectors, providing young people with quality, flexible and diverse opportunities for further studies. Land is an important resource for the self-financing sector. Through the Northern Metropolis development and the launch of a new round of the LGS and the SLS, we believe that self-financing institutions can develop and improve campuses in support of more quality teaching activities. We also welcome the Government's initiatives to press ahead with the development of UAS and applied degrees, which can encourage self-financing institutions to develop their distinct niche areas, leveraging the advantages of the self-financing sector in terms of its flexibility and applied focus to respond to the market's manpower needs. On the other hand, the self-financing sector is the main provider of sub-degree level education. We look forward to the Government taking forward the mutual recognition of cross-boundary sub-degree level qualifications, with a view to broadening the articulation pathways of

graduates of sub-degree programmes."

The Committee will continue to maintain close communication with the Government, with a view to advising the Government on the development of the self-financing post-secondary education sector.

University Grants Committee welcomes "The Chief Executive's 2023 Policy Address"

The following is issued on behalf of the University Grants Committee:

The Chairman of the University Grants Committee (UGC), Mr Tim Lui, welcomed the Chief Executive's proposal of developing Hong Kong into an international post-secondary education hub in "The Chief Executive's 2023 Policy Address", and said that the UGC would work closely with the eight UGC-funded universities to take forward various relevant measures.

Mr Lui said, "Thanks to the significant investment in higher education by the Government over the years, there are currently five universities in Hong Kong within the world's top 100. We therefore possess ample advantages of developing into an international post-secondary education hub. The various initiatives proposed in the Policy Address can further attract more talent from all over the world to come to Hong Kong, and provide our local students with more learning opportunities to broaden their perspectives, thereby bringing Hong Kong's higher education to new heights."

According to the relaxation measures announced in the Policy Address, the enrolment ceiling of non-local students of taught programmes (i.e. undergraduate degree, sub-degree and taught postgraduate degree programmes) of UGC-funded universities will be doubled from currently a level equivalent to 20 per cent of local student places to 40 per cent starting from the 2024/25 academic year. Universities may progressively admit more non-local students having regard to their own conditions. It should be noted that all non-local students of UGC-funded taught programmes do not receive public funding, and that the number of such non-local students is accounted for separately from local student places so as to ensure that study opportunities for local students will not be affected.

The UGC also welcomed the 50 per cent increase in the quota of the Belt and Road Scholarship as well as other related initiatives by the Government. The UGC will further support universities' participation in more publicity and recruitment activities at different places to proactively promote the unique advantages of Hong Kong's higher education to the world. This will

attract more outstanding students of different origins and cultural backgrounds to study in Hong Kong, and further enhance the quality, capacity and vibrancy of Hong Kong's higher education sector.

In addition, the UGC launched the Funding Scheme for Mainland and Global Engagement and Student Learning Experience last year for UGC-funded universities to support more students to participate in exchange activities outside Hong Kong, with emphasis on the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area to encourage students to set their sights on opportunities on the Mainland as well as to promote multicultural interactions on campus. From the 2023/24 academic year, the UGC will inject an additional funding of \$100 million into the Funding Scheme to benefit more students who were unable to leave Hong Kong for exchange activities in the past few years due to the pandemic.

Further to last year's decision to gradually increase the number of publicly funded research postgraduate student places from 5 595 to 7 200 in each academic year, the Policy Address proposes to gradually increase the quota of the Hong Kong PhD Fellowship Scheme to 400. The UGC believed that such move would attract more talent to study and conduct research in Hong Kong, thereby boosting Hong Kong's research capability and achievements.

"The various initiatives for building an international post-secondary education hub and developing the 'Northern Metropolis University Town' in the Northern Metropolis as announced in the Policy Address will inject unprecedented impetus for growth into Hong Kong's higher education sector. The UGC will work together with our funded universities to seize the immense opportunities ahead, and contribute proactively towards realising the splendid vision of developing Hong Kong into an international post-secondary education hub," Mr Lui added.